

The Future of Mediation in Kent

Community
Legal Service



Important Information

LEGAL AID REFORM!

In the coming weeks you will be hearing that Legal Aid is being subject to the most drastic changes and that after April it will no longer be available for many people.

It is really important that we let you know that despite these changes Legal Aid **WILL STILL BE AVAILABLE** for families experiencing break up and these people will still be able to access assessments to see whether they are eligible for Legal Aid.

We would like you to know that whilst some solicitors will be providing Legal Aid for a small category of people, it is most important that people know that **Legal Aid remains for those who wish to use family mediation!**

They will be able to make full arrangements for their children and for their divorce or separation finances and to present these to the Family Courts.

Instead of contacting their Lawyer they will need to get in touch with **Kent Family Mediation Service** where their eligibility will be assessed.

Those who are able to receive Legal Aid will receive both of the following:-

FREE MEDIATION AND A NUMBER OF FREE HOURS WITH AN AUTHORISED SOLICITOR.

We are all acquainted with the debilitating stress and often mental anguish and illness which accompany the breakdown of family relationships.

***“80% of our clients
have received free
mediation”***

It will help those who are referred to you to know that Legal Aid is still available.

In the future there will be fewer people who are able to qualify for Legal Aid and the concerns surrounding the costs of divorce and litigation can be overwhelming for some family members to consider.

To help us to spread the word amongst the Kent community please display the attached poster where your clients, colleagues and associates can see it.

We at **Kent Family Mediation Service** are deeply concerned about these changes and in order to continue to assist these families, we have been working closely with local Solicitors who support family mediation and are committed to offering a **‘Fixed Fee’** package.



THE KENT FIXED FEE FOUNDATION

Together with a number of local solicitors we are creating:-

THE KENT FIXED FEE FOUNDATION: FIXED FEE SOLICITOR SUPPORTED MEDIATION

This will help families to access the best legal advice during their mediation from solicitors who regard mediation as the best way of coming to mutually acceptable arrangements for family members.

These solicitors will also prepare papers for the court when necessary, as well as offering legal advice for an **affordable fixed fee**, (which will be agreed prior to starting work).

It is believed that some people may now try to represent themselves in Court because they think that they cannot receive free or subsidised help any more.

This should not be necessary and we would like you to help them by letting them know that they need not face this daunting prospect and that **affordable or free options are available**.

Divorce and family breakdown is responsible for **stress, depression and desperation**, which result in huge costs for the NHS.

NEW MEDIATION LOCATIONS!

We are extremely pleased to announce that we now have mediation venues in **all** of the following areas of Kent:-

Ashford
Broadstairs
Bromley
Canterbury
Chatham
Dartford
Dover
Gillingham
Gravesend
Maidstone
Sevenoaks
Sittingbourne
Tunbridge Wells

Kind regards

Joan Bishop

Head of Mediation
Kent Family Mediation Service



If you would like to make a referral on behalf of your clients or require further information about our services, please contact us in confidence.

Telephone: 01795 410457

Email: contact@kentfms.co.uk

Fax: 01795 438943

Website: www.kentfms.co.uk

Facebook: [http://www.facebook.com/ KentFamilyMediationService](http://www.facebook.com/KentFamilyMediationService)