



INITIAL ADVICE MEETING

1. What is an Initial Advice Meeting?

A meeting of one to two hours, dependant on the complexity of your situation, with **Lisa Broddle**, Head of the Family Team, Solicitor, Family and Collaborative Lawyer, Accredited Family Mediator or with **Tatjana Williamson**, Solicitor and Family Lawyer.

2 What does an Initial Advice Meeting cover?

2.1 You and Your Family

You will tell us about yourself, your concerns, your former partner and your children. Your finances, wishes for the future and anticipated family change.

2.2 Your Children

We will discuss your children and their individual needs, your preferences and those of your former partner. We will consider practical arrangements, communication, Parenting Plans and the court orders that can be obtained if you are not able to resolve arrangements for your children directly with your former partner or with the help of another. We will look at the process options available to parents including discussion between the parents, mediation, the collaborative process, solicitor negotiation, arbitration or the court process.

2.2 Divorce/ Separation/ Civil Partnership Dissolution

We will explain the procedure for obtaining a divorce or dissolution of a civil partnership or separation, the facts that can be used, the forms, court fees, timescales and the decrees or orders that will be obtained. We will apply the law to your circumstances and discuss your preferences.

2.3 Financial Arrangements

We will consider the law, the financial remedies available, such as, transfer of property, lump sum, spousal maintenance, child maintenance and pension sharing. We will look at the statutory factors which are weighed when considering a financial settlement and we will apply your circumstances to the law examining the possible outcomes. We will explain and discuss with you the process options available to resolve the finances on separation or divorce; mediation, collaborative law, solicitor negotiation, personal discussion between the parties with issue specific legal advice, arbitration or the court process. Explaining the processes, the need for disclosure, how remarriage or cohabitation affects financial claims and what could happen in the future if finances are not resolved within the divorce / dissolution / separation process. We will explain child maintenance options; voluntary arrangements, statutory arrangements through the Child Support Agency or by a Consent Order in the court and the formulas used to calculate child maintenance.

2.4 Wills

We will discuss the need for you to have a Will or amend an existing Will, as until your marriage is formally ended, your spouse is entitled to inherit from you either under the Intestacy Rules, if you have not already made a Will or under the terms of your Will if you have made provision is made for them in that Will.

2.5 Your Report Letter and Further Information

In the meeting you will be provided with a folder of information and we will prepare a **Report Letter** setting out your circumstances and our advice so that you may refer to it to consider your best next steps and use to discuss with the people you trust.

3. How much does an Initial Advice Meeting cost?

A reduced rate for the first hour is offered at £240 plus VAT after this the time spent will be charged at solicitors regular hourly rate plus VAT. We request payment at the meeting which can be by cheque, debit card or credit card (fee 1.75%).

4. Administration

You will also need to bring in your passport or photo driving licence plus two other forms of ID which can be utility bills, bank/credit card statements but not a mobile phone statement and no more than 3 months old to verify your address. Copies of these are taken and retained. (If your bill will be paid by a friend or relative we will need to have the same identification/anti-money laundering documents from them please.)

5. What happens after the Initial Advice Meeting?

Once you have reviewed the advice and information and feel ready to progress matters you can return to us for more advice or to proceed with your chosen course of action.

6. What Other Meetings are Available?

If you are considering Mediation or another Dispute Resolution process, wish to explain about your situation and concerns and prepare for mediation or if mediation is not for you obtain a signed **MIAMS** form the **Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting** is for you. If you wish to receive information about the Process Options, Divorce, Separation, Civil Partnership Dissolution, Financial Remedy, Your Children and Wills then an **Options Information Meeting** is for you.

7. How do I make an appointment?

Please contact a member of the Family Team to make an appointment:

Lisa Broddle, Partner, Head of Family Team, Solicitor and Collaborative Lawyer.
Accredited Family Mediator: l.broddle@srb.co.uk

Tanja Williamson, Solicitor and Family Lawyer: t.williamson@srb.co.uk

Michelle Robinson, PA to Family Team: m.robinson@srb.co.uk and familyteam@srb.co.uk

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