



Family department

Fixed fee services

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Introduction

Relationship breakdown presents difficult decisions. With such emotional issues you need support and guidance. Whether you are simply exploring your options, are certain that you want a separation or divorce, or you find yourself on the receiving end of a decision made by your spouse or partner, we can offer a sympathetic and efficient service to guide you.

It is better to take advice as early as possible. Talking to us from the outset can often lead to a better outcome as well as helping to make the process less painful.

We have experience in handling cases dealing with a wide variety of issues and can offer you fixed fee services, if your case is suitable. We appreciate that legal costs are an issue which may cause added stresses at an already difficult time.

We offer fixed fee services for the following:

DIVORCE / CIVIL PARTNERSHIP DISSOLUTION

RESPONDENT IN DIVORCE / DISSOLUTION PROCEEDINGS

AGREED ORDER TO FINALISE FINANCES

ORDER TO FINALISE FINANCES WITH FULL DOCUMENTARY DISCLOSURE

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

CHANGE OF NAME

Below we set out what will be involved in each situation and what the fixed fee will include. All fees quoted are dependant on your case remaining straightforward and on the basis that there are an average number of meetings, letters and phone calls. If your matter becomes more protracted or we are asked to deal with matters not included in the fixed fee our hourly rate will apply. We will provide you with guidance at each stage as to the likely and foreseeable costs. All fees quoted below are exclusive of VAT and expenses such as Court fees.

We appreciate that when you have reached the decision to divorce your spouse or dissolve your civil partnership, you will be having a difficult time. We can help. Under this service we will

- meet you to discuss the way forward in dealing with a straightforward divorce/dissolution where your spouse/civil partner is willing to cooperate.
- take your instructions to draft the paperwork for the Court (the petition) and advise you of the information we need.
- draft the petition and other supporting documentation regarding any children. A form is sent to the Court with the divorce petition, which will outline the arrangements relating to the children. The law encourages couples to try and agree those arrangements. The form (known as a '*Statement of Arrangements*') is usually completed by the person filing the petition.
- contact with your spouse/civil partner or their legal representative before sending the papers to the Court.
- send the papers to the Court, (a fee of £300.00 is payable to the Court) and let you know when they will be sent to your spouse/civil partner
- Once your spouse/civil partner has returned their papers to the Court we will prepare the documents for you to apply for the first of the 2 decrees, the Decree Nisi.
- Once completed we will send the papers to the Court and notify you when the Decree Nisi will be pronounced. We will apply for the Decree Absolute when appropriate, currently a fee of £40 is payable to the Court for this.

Throughout the case we will keep in contact with you and your spouse/civil partner or their Legal Representative. At each step in the process we will write to you to explain what happens next.

If your spouse/partner takes proceedings against you we will

- meet you to discuss the way forward when your spouse/civil partner has started divorce/dissolution proceedings against you and you do not wish to prevent the divorce/dissolution from proceeding.
- provide you with full advice about the proceedings and make contact with your spouse/civil partner or their legal representative.
- go through the Court papers with you and advise you of any relevant issues.
- complete your part of the paperwork and send this to the Court, notifying your spouse/civil partner or their representative.
- continue to communicate with you and your spouse/civil partner or their representative throughout the matter.
- check the Decree Nisi and Decree Absolute and send these to you with an update at each stage.

At each step in the process we will write to you to explain what happens next.

Financial matters are dealt with separately from Divorce/dissolution proceedings but they can still be dealt with amicably and without going to Court. The Divorce or Dissolution proceedings end your marriage or civil partnership but the financial claims which either of you could make are not concluded with this.

In some cases there may not be any financial issues to resolve or you may have already come to a full agreement between you either through discussion or by attending mediation.

We can help you ensure that the agreement you have reached is legally binding and, even if there is nothing to resolve now, that neither of you can bring any other claims against each other in the future. This is achieved by agreeing a Consent Order or Clean Break Order.

We will meet you and liaise with your Spouse/civil partner or their representative and draft the necessary application for the Court. We will help you complete a summary of your finances to provide disclosure of those to your spouse/civil partner and they will also complete the same.

We will send the documents to the Court, who will charge a fee which is currently £40, and notify you when they are returned.

At each step in the process we will write to you to explain what happens next.

Financial matters are dealt with separately from Divorce/dissolution proceedings but they can still be dealt with amicably and without going to Court. The Divorce or Dissolution proceedings end your marriage or civil partnership but the financial claims which either of you could make are not concluded with this.

When you separate you do not necessarily know all the financial information about your partner. Similarly they may not know those details about you. To achieve a final Order in these circumstances you both need to disclose all of the information to each other. This can be done on a standard form and by attaching all the relevant documents.

Under this service we will

- meet you and take your instructions.
- deal with the forms for financial disclosure and liaise with your spouse/civil partner or their representative to share this information.
- go through this information with you and if it is possible to reach an agreement we will draft the documentation necessary for the Court to make this agreement binding and to dismiss any other claims that either one of you may still be entitled to.
- It may be that an agreement cannot be reached, if this is the case we will provide you with our advice as to the options available to you and the costs of each.
- If an agreement is reached we will send the documents to the Court, who will charge a fee which is currently £40, and notify you when they are returned.

At each step in the process we will write to you to explain what happens next.

Parental Responsibility Agreement

£250

Very often when a relationship breaks down children remain living with one person and have contact with the other. Mothers and married couples automatically have Parental Responsibility for the children but this is not so with fathers. The law changed in 2003 and fathers of children born after 1st December 2003, whose name appears on their child's birth certificate, now also have parental responsibility for their child.

When this is not the case and it can be agreed that parental responsibility will be shared we can help by drawing up a Parental Responsibility Agreement. This can also be drawn up to include Step-parents.

We will

- obtain your instructions and advise you throughout the process.
- make contact with your partner or their representative and draft the Agreement.
- agree this with your partner and advise you regarding signing the document.

Once signed by both of you we will deal with the registration of the Agreement and notify you when complete.

Change of Name- Adult or Child

£100

There can be any number of reasons why either an adult or a child wants to change their name. We can advise you regarding this and draw up the necessary documentation.

We will

- meet you and advise regarding the process.
- If appropriate we will draft the Change of Name Deed and finalise this.
- provide you with sufficient copies and advise you on notifying people about the change.

All fees can be paid in stages.

If you would like to discuss any of these options, please contact Amanda Cavinder on 01208 72328 ac@sproulllp.co.uk.