



# Information on keeping you out of court

Virtually all cases involving family Issues are best kept out of Court. The only exception would be where there have been incidents of domestic abuse. At Chafes Hague Lambert Solicitors, we encourage both parties to reach agreement between themselves and there are many ways to achieve this:-

- Reaching an agreement directly between yourselves
- Mediation
- Collaborative law
- Arbitration
- Lawyer led negotiation

If it's not possible to reach an agreement then ultimately the Court will have to make the decision for you. We actively encourage clients to discuss ways forward with their partners or former partners as to where the likely parameters of settlement will lie.

## Mediation

We may suggest clients attend meetings with mediators. Mediators are independent and impartial and are often experienced family solicitors. Over a series of meetings, the mediator helps the parties in reaching an agreement. Often mediation can be cheaper and quicker than more traditional negotiations.

Mediation isn't a substitute for having legal advice. For mediation to be successful we strongly advise you have legal advice throughout the process. We can support you by providing advice throughout the mediation process.

## Collaborative law

Both parties to a family dispute and their respective collaboratively trained lawyers, sign up to an agreement. Everyone concerned commits themselves to resolving issues without going through the court process. No proceedings are formally issued without agreement between all parties and their advisors. In the event that an agreement is not reached then the collaboratively trained lawyers will no longer act for their respective clients and the parties will need legal representation.

**New Mills**  
21-23 Union Road  
New Mills  
High Peak  
SK22 3EL  
01663 743 344

**Urmston**  
2 – 4 Primrose Avenue  
Urmston  
Manchester  
M41 0TY  
0161 747 7321

**Wilmslow**  
22 Church Street  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 1AU  
01625 531 676

## Lawyer led negotiation

At Chafes Hague Lambert Solicitors we strive to reach an agreement for our clients without the need for contested Court proceedings. More often than not agreements are reached through correspondence and communication between the parties' solicitors. We encourage negotiation to continue even if proceedings are issued to avoid the case having to be decided by the Court at a final hearing.

If all else fails then litigation and Court hearings must be regarded as a measure of last resort.

## Why is it best to keep out of Court

The Court process is stressful for both parties in any dispute.

The process is essentially an adversarial one where lawyers must put the best case they can for their client and at the same time find holes and areas of weakness in the other parties' case.

Litigation through Courts is also expensive and very often unnecessary. Parties who reach agreement save themselves a lot of emotional stress and money.

Agreements which are reached between the parties usually work well because both parties have bought into the agreement, and find it acceptable to them. If the matter proceeds to a Court hearing and a Court decides what is to happen then invariably at least one if not both of the parties will in some way be disappointed which can cause further resentment between the parties

**Our family team here at Chafes Hague Lambert can guide you through what requirements you will need, to discuss your situation, please contact us on:**

**Michelle Simpson: Associate**

01663 743 344 (New Mills)

[michelle.simpson@chlsolicitors.co.uk](mailto:michelle.simpson@chlsolicitors.co.uk)

**Kate Wright: Solicitor Apprentice**

01663 743 344 (New Mills)

[kate.wright@chlsolicitors.co.uk](mailto:kate.wright@chlsolicitors.co.uk)

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