

Dealing with Delay : The impact of Covid-19 on the Family Court



Kate Smith

The Coronavirus pandemic has caused stress and uncertainty for individuals all over the world, but it has been particularly difficult for those going through divorce or separation. It has unfortunately caused delay to cases already at court, which has understandably lead to frustration and upset as parties' find their cases have been re-timetabled or hearings adjourned. For those contemplating the court system, it has given rise to increased concern about how long the process will now take.

This has however lead to a rise in individuals looking to resolve their separation by alternative means. For those already in proceedings, a private FDR may be an option, whereby the parties appoint a barrister to sit as their judge, rather than wait for the court timetabled hearing. Family

arbitration is also gaining in momentum and for those individuals who are willing to work together, there is of course the option of mediation.

Mediation is a process where the parties come together to discuss their disputes with the assistance of a trained, impartial individual, whose aim is to assist them in reaching a settlement. Issues relating to divorce, separation and children can all be discussed, and resolved, in an amicable and constructive manner.

At K J Smith Solicitors, we have trained mediators who can assist you with resolving all of your family matters. With the country still experiencing social distancing measures, we offer virtual mediation, where the sessions take place via a secure video-conference platform in order to ensure a safe, closed environment, for all involved. Our mediators

are expert family lawyers and are able to guide the conversation and keep both parties on track. Over 80% of family law cases are capable of being resolved through mediation and sessions can be used to discuss both interim and longer term issues and arrangements, which can later be drafted into a legally binding document if necessary. Our aim is that through mediation, relationships and communication can improve in order that long-term solutions can be found in a friendly and relaxed environment.

By Kate Smith, Partner & Beth Pettifer, Paralegal



Beth Pettifer

If you require assistance with any aspect of family law then the team at K J Smith Solicitors can help.

For more information, or to arrange a free 45 minute consultation, please contact our Guildford office today on 01483 370 100 or email guildford@kjsmith.co.uk. Other branches located across the Thames Valley.