BECKY TAYLOR FAMILY MEDIATION

FREE GUIDE · MIAM PREPARATION

Preparing for Your MIAM Checklist

Everything you need to know and bring to your Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting.

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What is a MIAM?

A MIAM — Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting — is a short, confidential meeting with a trained mediator to explain how family mediation works and whether it could be suitable for your situation.

If you are planning to apply to court about child arrangements or finances, you are usually required by law to attend a MIAM first. This gives you the opportunity to explore mediation before going down the court route.

> "A MIAM is not mediation itself — it is an assessment to see if mediation is right for you."

Key points about MIAMs

- **Individual and confidential:** You meet the mediator alone, not with the other party.
- **Lasts around 45–60 minutes:** Enough time to understand your situation and answer your questions.
- **No commitment required:** Attending a MIAM does not mean you have to proceed with mediation.
- **Fixed cost:** Usually around £120–£150 (some mediators offer reduced rates or vouchers).
- **Safe environment:** The mediator assesses whether mediation is safe and appropriate for you.

Exemptions from attending a MIAM

You may be exempt from attending a MIAM if there is evidence of domestic abuse, child protection concerns, urgency (e.g., risk of harm), or if the other party is in prison or outside England and Wales. Your solicitor can advise if an exemption applies.

What to Expect at Your MIAM

Your MIAM is a structured but informal conversation. The mediator will explain the mediation process, discuss your situation, and assess whether mediation is suitable. Here is what typically happens.

1

Introduction and Confidentiality

The mediator introduces themselves, explains confidentiality rules, and confirms what will and will not be shared with the other party.

2

Understanding Your Situation

The mediator asks about your family circumstances, what issues you need to resolve (e.g., child arrangements, finances), and whether there are any safety concerns.

3

How Mediation Works

You will learn what mediation involves, how long it typically takes, what it costs, and how it compares to court proceedings.

4

Suitability Assessment

The mediator assesses whether mediation is safe and appropriate. This includes checking for domestic abuse, power imbalances, or mental health concerns that might make mediation unsuitable.

5

Next Steps

If mediation is suitable and you want to proceed, the mediator will invite the other party to their own MIAM. If not, you will receive a signed MIAM certificate to use in any court application.

"The MIAM is your opportunity to ask questions, voice concerns, and decide if mediation feels right for you."

What to Bring to Your MIAM

While your MIAM is an informal conversation, bringing the right information helps the mediator understand your situation and give you accurate guidance. Use this checklist to prepare.

Basic Information (Essential)

- [ ] Your full name, date of birth, and contact details
- [ ] The other party's full name and contact details (if known)
- [ ] Details of any children (names, ages, current living arrangements)
- [ ] Whether you are married, in a civil partnership, or were cohabiting
- [ ] Approximate date of separation

Financial Overview (If Discussing Finances)

- [ ] Approximate value of your home and any other property
- [ ] Rough estimate of savings, pensions, and investments
- [ ] Details of any debts or loans
- [ ] Your current income (payslip or benefit statement if available)
- [ ] Monthly living expenses (housing, bills, childcare, etc.)

You do not need full financial disclosure for a MIAM, but having a rough idea of your financial situation is helpful.

Child Arrangements (If Discussing Children)

- [ ] Current living arrangements for your children
- [ ] Existing contact schedule (if any)
- [ ] Any safeguarding concerns or court orders in place
- [ ] Schools and key routines (so the mediator understands stability needs)

Questions and Concerns to Raise

- [ ] Is mediation safe for me given my circumstances?
- [ ] How long does mediation typically take?
- [ ] What happens if we cannot agree on everything?
- [ ] Can I bring a support person to sessions?
- [ ] What are my alternatives if mediation does not work?

Write down any questions or concerns you want to discuss.

What Happens After Your MIAM?

At the end of your MIAM, the mediator will confirm whether mediation is suitable and what the next steps are. There are usually three possible outcomes.

Outcome 1: Mediation is suitable — you agree to proceed

The mediator will contact the other party to invite them to their own MIAM. If both of you agree to mediation, joint sessions will be scheduled. You will agree on the issues to discuss (children, finances, or both) and set a date for your first session.

Outcome 2: Mediation is suitable — you decide not to proceed

You are under no obligation to proceed with mediation. The mediator will provide you with a signed MIAM certificate, which you can use to make a court application if needed.

Outcome 3: Mediation is not suitable

If the mediator identifies safety concerns, power imbalances, or other factors that make mediation inappropriate, they will issue a MIAM certificate confirming this and may signpost you to other services (e.g., domestic abuse support, legal advice).

Common questions

Do both parties have to attend a MIAM?

Each party attends their own individual MIAM with the mediator. You do not meet together at this stage.

What if the other party refuses to attend?

The mediator will make reasonable efforts to contact them. If they refuse, you will receive a MIAM certificate confirming you attended, and you can proceed with a court application.

How much does a MIAM cost?

Typically £120–£150. Some mediators offer reduced rates or accept the Government Mediation Voucher (worth up to £500 for eligible cases involving children).

Ready to book your MIAM?

Book a free, no-obligation call to discuss your situation and find out if mediation is right for you.

BOOK A FREE 30-MINUTE CALL

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