

Alternative Options



What you can do if communication and mediation with your ex-partner is proving to be difficult and face-to-face contact is unavailable.

1. Online contact

If your former partner is unwilling to facilitate face-to-face contact, it is still possible to sustain meaningful contact with your child.



As per CAFCASS advice, Skype and FaceTime are great for:

- Younger children: These apps can be used to read stories to your child, sing to them or even play with them
- Older children: Consider watching films/TV at the same time together as these apps allow you to comment and react in real-time



Please consider the age of your child - younger children may find such interactions distressing due to the lack of physical contact.

2. Before you go to court

Applying to court should be seen as a last resort as it is time-consuming and costly.



Before you begin court proceedings you are required to attend a Mediation Information Assessment Meeting (MIAM). In mediation, an impartial and trained mediator who is not connected with your case will help you and your partner to sort out your disputes.



To find your nearest family mediation service, visit the Government's website GOV.UK and search using the words 'family mediation'.

3. Applying to court

If you are a parent of the child or have parental responsibility for them, you can apply to court.



You will need to fill in a form depending on the type of order you wish to apply for:

- Child Arrangements Order
- Specific Issue Order
- Prohibited Steps Order
- Parental Responsibility Order



Please see our FAQ document for more details.

4. The effects of COVID-19

Both MIAMs and court hearings are to be carried out remotely as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.



- These are carried out virtually, usually via Skype for Business, Microsoft Teams, Zoom etc.
- It is highly unlikely that requests for attended meetings will be granted unless there is genuine urgency and remote hearings are not possible.

Resources

For a list of helpful resources please visit www.CAFCASS.org.uk