

WHAT IS A MIAM?

A MIAM is a Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting. It is a pre-mediation meeting for both the participant and the mediator to determine suitability for mediation. With some limited exceptions, attendance at a MIAM is now compulsory for all applicants in family legal proceedings.

But a MIAM is more than just a gateway to court proceedings. A MIAM is an opportunity for potential participants to ask questions and learn about mediation and other dispute resolution processes so that they can make an informed choice about how best to resolve issues arising from separation, and it enables mediators to assess the suitability of mediation for the participants. Participants can also discuss other appropriate support services and be provided with information, including about the value of legal advice if they have not yet sought any.

Subject to financial eligibility legal aid is available to meet the total cost of mediation, including the MIAM. You will be asked to provide documentary evidence of your income, capital assets (e.g. property) and savings if you want to be assessed for legal aid. Legal aid is available to people on low incomes and there are some passporting benefits. Please ask us for more information if you think you may qualify, we would be more than happy to assess whether you do qualify. Other Government funding may also be available for mediation (but not the MIAM) in the form of a voucher scheme to meet some of the cost of mediation, and again we are happy to discuss this with you if appropriate. If participants do not qualify for legal aid, the cost of the MIAM is £104.40 including VAT.

All the information received by the mediator from participants attending a MIAM is confidential and cannot be shared with anyone else, including the other potential participant to a mediation, save in the case of concerns over child safety. MIAM meetings are conducted separately for each potential participant to mediation so that issues of safety or other concerns can be discussed freely with the mediator.

Although MIAM meetings may in some cases be compulsory, agreeing to joint mediation meetings thereafter is not; the mediation process is voluntary and both participants need to be willing to attend mediation for it to proceed.

We hope that you will be willing to attend a MIAM and that you will find this helpful.