

Applying to the family court about child arrangements

Online or on paper?

Your application will be processed more quickly if you do it online, but if you cannot use the online service, you can print out a paper application form from the government website: [Apply for a court order to make arrangements for a child or resolve a dispute about their upbringing: Form C100 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/forms/c100). The form you need is called a C100. Many libraries and post offices offer printing services. Please see the relevant section below for more advice:

Is my application urgent?

In rare cases you may be advised to make an urgent application (usually where a child is in danger). The court has the final decision over whether they treat the case as urgent – you will not automatically get a quicker hearing if you tick the 'urgent' box.

Online applications

Before you can apply to the court for child arrangements you must attend a MIAM (Mediation, Information and Assessment Meeting). These can be held face to face or by video. You can find a local mediator here: <https://www.familymediationcouncil.org.uk/find-local-mediator/>. Even if mediation is unsuitable in your case, an authorised mediator must confirm this and give you a reference number which you will need for your application. Some mediation firms offer Legal Aid for people on a low income – ask us for our list if you think you may qualify for this.

You will need to pay a fee of £232 to apply to court. If you are on a low income you can apply for a Fee Exemption. You can do this online here: <https://www.gov.uk/get-help-with-court-fees>. Check this first as you will need the fee exemption reference number to complete the C100.

The C100 website is here: [Making child arrangements if you divorce or separate: Apply for a court order - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/forms/c100). You can fill in the form on a smartphone or a computer. You can save your application at any point and come back to it later (within 28 days).

It is very important to provide all known contact details for yourself and the other party, in particular phone numbers and e-mail addresses. If you do not do this it will cause a delay. If you include a phone number, please ensure that it accepts calls from unknown numbers – a lot of phones block calls from the courts which causes delays.

If you need help, we can offer you 15 minutes' telephone advice with a family solicitor through our Free Legal Advice service. The solicitor can advise you on what to include in your application and answer queries, but they cannot fill in the whole form with you. Please call our office on 01603 496623 to book a Free Legal Advice appointment.

If you need more support to fill in the form, our Family Court Support Service may be able to help you. Please email family@ncls.co.uk for more information.

Paper applications

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You will need to pay a fee of £232 to apply to court. If you are on a low income you can apply for a Fee Exemption using form EX160, available from <https://hmctsformfinder.justice.gov.uk/>. If you cannot access the internet please ask us for a paper form.

If you cannot access the internet to print out a paper C100 form, please contact us. If you are making allegations of harm towards yourself or the child/ren you will also need form C1A.

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When you have finished filling in all the forms, make a copy of everything for yourself.

Then send the following to the court:

- Original completed C100 form
- Original completed form C1A if required
- Payment details for the fee of £232, or the fee exemption form EX160

Only 1 copy of each document is required.

Post your completed forms to:

Norwich Family Court
Bishopgate
Norwich
NR3 1UP

If the child/ren do not live in Norfolk, you need to send the application to their local court. You can find their address on this website [Find a court or tribunal - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/find-a-court-or-tribunal).

Remember, you should not talk to children about a family court case.

Please contact us if you would like this guide in another language.

Norfolk Community Law Service

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