

Mediate UK Opens Legal Aid Funded Family Mediation and Launches Free Eligibility Checker

From Monday 10th August 2026, families in England and Wales can access legal aid mediation with Mediate UK, and check free online whether they qualify.

BRACKNELL, BERKSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM, August 7, 2026

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Mediate UK is now offering legal aid funded family mediation across England and Wales, with appointments available from 10th August 2026. Alongside the launch, the service has published a [free legal aid eligibility checker](#), which tells people in a few minutes whether they are likely to qualify before they book anything.



Legal aid mediation is now open at Mediate UK. Check free in minutes whether you qualify: mediateuk.co.uk/legal-aid-guide/

Legal aid for family mediation is means tested only. Anyone who meets the income, savings and capital rules qualifies, whatever the dispute is about and whether or not there has been abuse in the relationship. Where a person qualifies, their Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting, known as a MIAM, and their joint mediation sessions and any associated paperwork are paid for in full.

Rising demand, falling supply

Ministry of Justice figures show legal aid mediation starts rose by 37 per cent in 2024/25, the highest level in 12 years. Supply has moved the other way. Family Mediation Council data shows the number of mediators offering legal aid has fallen by around 50 per cent since 2018, with 238 left in 2025.

What happens when only one person qualifies

Legal aid is not all or nothing. Where one party is financially eligible and the other is not, the eligible party has their MIAM and mediation funded, and the party who does not qualify can have their own MIAM and their first joint session covered as well.



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Jess Knauf, Director of Client Strategy

The family mediation voucher scheme can help with the rest. The voucher is a government contribution of up to £500 per family towards the cost of mediation. It is not means tested, but it applies only where child arrangements are being discussed, and it does not cover the MIAM.

Mediation legal aid and solicitor legal aid are different

The two are routinely confused. Legal aid for a solicitor in most private family cases was withdrawn on 1 April 2013

under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act. It remains available to victims of domestic abuse and in cases involving child safety, where the applicant provides evidence and also passes the means and merits tests.

Legal aid for family mediation was never withdrawn and is available to families on low-incomes.

Key facts

- Mediate UK is a Legal Aid Agency contracted provider for family mediation in England and Wales.
- Legal aid for family mediation is means tested only. It covers the MIAM, the joint sessions and any associated paperwork in full.
- Where one party qualifies and the other does not, the second party's MIAM and first joint session can also be covered.
- The family mediation voucher is worth up to £500, is not means tested, and applies to child arrangements cases only.

Jess Knauf, Director of Client Strategy at Mediate UK, said: "As we mark 15 years of helping families reach agreements without going to court, we want that experience open to people who could not usually afford it. Ninety per cent of clients who completed joint mediation with us last year reached a full or partial agreement, and that record and trust will now benefit families on low incomes."

As part of the launch, Mediate UK have made various legal aid resources. The free checker and a full explanation of what legal aid covers can be found at mediateuk.co.uk/legal-aid-guide/. They also published a brand new site dedicated to explaining and commenting on legal aid at legallaid60.org.uk, and an independent site helping explain family mediation and how it works can be found at mediationguide.co.uk.

About Mediate UK

Mediate UK is a family mediation service working with separating couples across England and Wales, with more than 30 branches and appointments available in person and online. Founded in 2011, it is accredited by the Family Mediation Council, is a Legal Aid Agency contracted provider, and has helped over 23,000 people. Mediate UK is part of Family Legal Ltd. More at mediateuk.co.uk.

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