

Help with fees in family law matters

£593 to issue a divorce application is a hefty amount. Few know that there is a method of obtaining assistance to pay this amount and, indeed, other family court fees.

“Help with Fees” is a government initiative to apply for what is, essentially a discount on court fees. Each fee requires a separate help with fees application. The scheme is designed to either ensure that you pay no court fee, or you receive money off the fee. To be eligible the following factors must be considered if you:

1. Have no savings or investments, or only have a small amount. This must include money saved in ISAs and other savings accounts, any unspent income from previous months, fixed rate or investment bonds, any lump sum (e.g. a redundancy payout), stocks and shares, value of equity in second homes, any money or property outside the UK and any share of any joint savings or investments. These factors must be considered if you have a partner.
2. Receive certain benefits such as, income-based Jobseeker’s allowance (JSA), income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), income support, universal credit (and you earn less than £6,000 a year) and pension credit.
3. If you are a **single** applicant, you must have a monthly income of less than £1,420 plus £425 for each child aged up to 13, and £710 for each child aged 14 or older.
4. If you have a **partner**, you must have a monthly income of less than £2,130 plus £425 for each child you have aged up to 13, and £710 for each child you have aged 14 or older.

There is a helpful calculator on the government website whereby you can work out how much money one would receive to pay towards your fee.

To enable you to provide evidence of your income, you will have to request this from the court. This evidence must be provided within 28 days of the date the letter was sent to you by the court or tribunal.

A declaration must be signed to confirm you believe that you may be entitled to help with fees, and that all of the information you have given is true.

The help with fees application should be sent to the court or tribunal who are dealing with the case. The help with fees application should be sent within 28 days of it being signed or it may be rejected by the court or tribunal.

Once the online application form has been completed you will receive a fees reference number in the format of ‘HWF-XXX-XXX’. This can then be inserted into any application form in the top right hand corner which states ‘help with fees’.

For more information on how to apply for help with fees, please visit this valuable government website link [How to apply for help with fees: EX160A - GOV.UK](#)

Our key contacts at DMP for further advice and assistance on divorce and family law issues are Stephanie Alderwick and Tony Roe:

stephanie.alderwick@dextermontague.co.uk

tony.roe@dextermontague.co.uk

Telephone 0118 939399.

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