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### Fixed Price

first interview for initial advice

This is likely to take no more than 30 minutes and we have a fixed price for this first interview. At this meeting we will listen carefully to your situation and wishes and then explain, in simple terms, what lies ahead, as well as the potential costs and how we charge for our work. Following this appointment, if you instruct us to deal with your matter fully, we will deduct this payment from our final bill.

2

### Making an application to the court

We'll make an application to the magistrates or county court. Once it's received and lodged at the court, it cannot be withdrawn without their permission. When the application is issued, a copy will be returned to you and one will be sent to the Cafcass officer (together with the notice that includes the date of the first hearing). Cafcass will then carry out some welfare checks and we'll ensure that the other party has been personally served with the court documents, so that they're aware of the application and the hearing.

3

### The first hearing

At the first hearing (referred to as the directions hearing), Cafcass provides copies of the welfare report to all parties (and the Judge) and arranges an initial meeting to see if an agreement can be reached. If no agreement is made, then the Judge will hear the case in court and will order Cafcass to outline further directions to move it forward. The case will be given a date for a further hearing.

4

### Cafcass report

Once the Cafcass report is complete and the directions provided have been followed, the Judge will make a final order (if the parties agree to follow the recommendation of Cafcass).

If matters can't be agreed then the case will be given a date for a final hearing and further directions will be given for statements and other evidence, depending on the case.

5

### Final order

At the final hearing, the Judge will hear all the evidence presented and will make a decision which would then be recorded in a final order.

6

### Payment of our fees

At the outset, we'll estimate your charges based on previous cases which are similar to yours. We'll then set up an account for you and send you a monthly bill which includes a breakdown of the work carried out so far.

## Ready for the next step?

We've tried our best to illustrate the normal stages involved in dealing with relationship breakdown where children are involved – but please note that every case is different.

We'll always advise you individually and make you aware of any extra stages required where we can.