Legal Aid – how eligibility is calculated

It may be worth you doing some **rough calculations yourself** to see if you might qualify for legal aid. If you do want to go ahead with our service, **we will need the documents listed on Pages 2 or 3, of this leaflet before we meet with you**.

NOTE: for **all applications for Legal Aid, you also need to have less than £8000 in savings and the value of any property you own may be taken into account.**

You will usually **qualify** if you receive what is termed a **"passported benefit"** i.e., Income Support, income-based Job Seeker's Allowance, Income related Employment and Support Allowance, Guaranteed Pension Credit or **Universal Credit.**

Otherwise, to see if you qualify on an **income-based calculation** you need **to add up all your income** from any source and then **take off various allowances**.

The main allowable expenditure is £381.86 per child (if living with you) £237.25 for any partner living with you, housing costs which are rent or mortgage only (minus any Housing Benefit and capped at £545 if no children living with you) childcare costs associated with work, any child support payments you are making, and a standard employment allowance of £45.

If you want to do some rough calculations yourself you would essentially:-

a. **Add up all your income** on a **monthly** basis (pay, tax credits, child support payments, child benefit) for you and your partner if living together
b. Your combined gross income needs to be £2657 or less
c. Then **take off allowances as listed above**, including tax and national insurance paid and see if this is £733 or less per month

If you think you do qualify then we would need you to send in the documents listed on the following table. **We must have these documents before we can set up a free initial meeting**.
Documents can be:

• **emailed to admin@childrenfirstfamilymediation.org.uk**

• posted to:
Children First Family Mediation
Bury Business Lodge
Europa House
Barcroft Street
Bury
BL9 5BT

Children First Family Mediation Tel: 0161 763 8793

LEGAL AID ASSESSMENT – DOCUMENTS NEEDED

This must be for you and any new partner if you are sharing income and expenditure with him/her

ALL DOCUMENTS MUST COVER THE 30 DAYS BEFORE YOUR MEETING

IF YOU ARE NOT IN WORK

To enable us to complete your legal aid assessment you must provide the following:

BENEFIT	You	Your partner
Income Support Please provide either a letter from the DWP dated within the last 6 months or a copy of your bank or Post Office statement showing you received Income Support within 30 days before your next meeting		
Income related Job Seekers Allowance Please provide a letter from the DWP dated within the last 6 months to confirm that you receive income based JSA (If you are on contribution based JSA, you must provide other documents – see below)		
Universal Credit Please provide either details of your latest payment from the online system with your name and address on this; a letter from the DWP dated within the last 6 months or a copy of your bank or Post Office statement showing you received UC within 30 days before your next meeting		
Income related Employment and Support Allowance Please provide a letter from the DWP dated within the last 6 months to confirm that you receive income related ESA. (If you are on contribution-based ESA, you must provide other documents – see below)		
Guaranteed Pension Credit Please provide a letter from the DWP dated within the last 6 months confirming you receive Guaranteed Pension Credit. (If you receive Pension Credit but not the guaranteed pension credit element, you must provide other documents – see below)		

(**Please note** that if it does not state the benefit is income related/based you must provide bank statements covering the 30 days before your first meeting and wage slips (if relevant). We may require other documents (see over for details).

LEGAL AID ASSESSMENT – DOCUMENTS NEEDED

This must be for you and any new partner if you are sharing income and expenditure with him/her

ALL DOCUMENTS MUST COVER THE 30 DAYS BEFORE YOUR MEETING

IF YOU ARE WORKING OR STUDYING

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED	You	Your partner
Bank statements		
Employed **Wage slip(s)** (if paid monthly, the wage slip MUST be dated in the 30 days leading up to your next meeting. If paid weekly, all 4 wage slips **MUST** be dated within that period)		
Self-employed or a Company Director **1. last year's accounts/tax return and** **2. proof of all income and business outgoings in the past 30 days** (including drawings, wages, dividends, bonuses, benefits in kind, any other income)		
Students Details of student loans and grants – notification letter and bank statement		

Please mark the following on the bank statements (if it is not shown on the statements, you must provide other documents/proof covering the assessment period):

	You	Your partner
Tax credits received (working and child tax credits)		
Maintenance/child support received		
Pension received		
Housing Benefit received		
Other benefits received		
Student loans or grants		
Any money received from friends or family		
Any other income received		
Maintenance/child support paid		
Rent or mortgage paid		
Childcare costs paid due to work or study		

You must also show that you have less than £8,000 in savings to be eligible. We need this information before we set up an appointment with you.