



Separation Agreements Essential for Unmarried Couples Says Pictons

Many couples believe that Separation Agreements are only available to married couples but in fact they are also really useful documents for unmarried couples.

Bhini Phagura, a Family Law solicitor at Pictons says "Entering into a separation agreement for co-habiting couples who aren't married can be valuable. If they separate it helps them to avoid issues such as over household bills, personal possessions, how to deal with joint assets and how best to help any children involved.

"Unmarried couples do not enjoy the same rights as married couples on separation so it is even more of a reason to enter into such agreements to avoid problems in the future which may result in court proceedings."

Entering into a Separation Agreement can be done through an agreement between both parties, through mediation or negotiations between solicitors. Information from both parties including their income, assets and liabilities is needed as part of the process.

The Separation Agreement includes such information as:-

- Whether the family home will be sold and how the proceeds will be divided.
- What will happen with the possessions.
- What the arrangements for the children will be.
- What will happen with any joint debts.

People can leave relationships knowing that their personal affairs have been taken care of and, in the event of a dispute later on, someone can simply show the agreement which was signed by both parties.

For married couples, Separation Agreements can reduce costs when parties decide to start divorce proceedings. Although Separation Agreements are not legally binding, the Courts are becoming more willing to consider them when it comes to divorce proceedings.

If you would like any further advice on Separation Agreements, please contact Bhini Phagura on 01582 870880.

A separation agreement is also known as a Deed of Separation. It records from the start who is to have what and what the parties' responsibilities are. It can also help avoid the need for court proceedings at a later stage.