

## **Divorce- Top Tips on how to Save Time and Money**

The emotional fallout from getting divorced is bad enough – but having to sort out financial matters can make a terrible situation even worse. There is some comfort in knowing that it doesn't have to result in months of arguing, litigation and high legal costs.

Amy Chesterfield, a Family Law specialist at Pictons says "The time it takes to get divorced and how much you have to spend on the process very much depends on how quickly you and your ex-spouse are able to reach an agreement. Here are some simple tips which will help you to reduce any delay and legal fees. The general message is to get organised and do as much of the preparation as you can."

### **1. Organise Your Paperwork**

Providing copies of documents such as bank statements, life insurance policies, mortgage statements etc is very standard within divorce and financial proceedings. If you provide these to your solicitor without delay this will result in less time spent locating and organising paperwork. This will significantly reduce your legal costs.

### **2. Don't Hide Your Assets!**

Solicitors are better than you think at finding assets and they will be far less willing to accept what you say throughout the proceedings if you have attempted to hide assets. This is more likely to result in court proceedings, delays and higher legal fees. In addition, if the court believes you have hidden assets this may result in a far less favourable settlement to you than if you'd disclosed all your assets in the first place.

### **3. Listen Carefully To Your Solicitor's Advice**

Your solicitor's role is not just to represent you; they are also there to advise you so that you can provide informed instructions on how you would like your case to progress. If you're ignoring their good advice and not 'picking your battles' then you'll be wasting your time and money.

### **4. Be Honest With Your Solicitor**

Your solicitor is not a mind reader and every person who has to go through a divorce is different. The process should be a team effort with you and your solicitor. Let your solicitor know what is important to you and what isn't.

### **5. Avoid 'Pub Law'**

You will undoubtedly have friends and family who have either gone through a divorce or know someone else who has. Be careful not to compare your case with anyone else's as every case is different. This will avoid you having unrealistic expectations, whether they are good or bad, about the likely outcome in your case.

### **6. Be Prepared To Negotiate**

Nine times out of ten a financial settlement is resolved by agreement between the two parties. When this happens it not only saves time and money it is also likely that the outcome is one that is more acceptable to you, rather than one imposed by a Judge. An agreement can only be achieved if you are willing to negotiate.