



Sousa Law



COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE

At Sousa Law we have decades of experience guiding couples through divorce and separation. Our trained collaborative lawyers take a sensitive and supportive approach in helping couples find workable solutions.

This guide will provide a comprehensive overview of the collaborative practice, explaining what it is, the benefits it offers, and how to decide if it is the right approach for you and your family.



Free NCDR Information Appointment

Sousa Law offer a free 15-minute online appointment to provide you with further information about ways of resolving matters outside of the Court process and how we can help you and your family through a relationship breakdown in the best way possible.

This can be a joint or individual appointment and it will be followed up with an email providing you with information on next steps.

To book your free 15-minute appointment please contact us using the information below.

Contact Us

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About Us

Sousa Law is a specialist law firm with specific expertise in helping families resolve matters outside of the Court process. We understand that a relationship breakdown can be one of the most difficult and emotionally draining experiences for individuals and families, particularly when there are children to be considered.

Sousa Law provide a sensitive and compassionate approach. We often work with other neutral professionals, including Independent Financial Advisors and Family Consultants to ensure that you have full support with the legal, emotional and financial aspects of your divorce and separation.

All of our Family Lawyers are members of Resolution (www.resolution.org.uk). They provide proactive, child-focused advice and solutions, reducing the need for Court proceedings.

Our Collaborative Lawyers



Catherine Sousa



Emma Sanders



What is Collaborative Practice?

Collaborative Practice is a method of resolving family disputes and it is often referred to as a "no-court divorce process". It focuses on effective communication to address issues, rather than resorting to the adversarial court process. This approach is designed to be more beneficial for both individuals and any children involved, helping to create a healthier foundation for future co-parenting.



How does Collaborative Practice work?

In the Collaborative Process, a couple will each instruct their own collaboratively trained lawyer. From the start, there is a commitment from the couple and their respective lawyers to work together to resolve issues, and not to threaten or issue Court proceedings.

During the process, the couple and their lawyers meet to openly share information. The couple has control over setting the agendas for meetings, allowing them to guide the process according to their needs. The approach can be customised to address specific issues relevant to their family. Negotiations are aimed at reaching a fair and reasonable agreement that works for the couple and their family as a whole.

This process is especially helpful when one or both family members face medical conditions, disabilities, anxiety, or other mental health challenges.



How do Collaborative lawyers work?

When working in the Collaborative Process, the couple and lawyers will commit to resolve matters outside of the Court process. Both lawyers will work with the couple to support them in achieving an outcome that works for the family as a whole.

This will include the collaborative lawyers:

- Understanding key priorities for the family and what matters most to them.
- Identifying any concerns or anxieties clients may have about issues and working through these together so they can find workable solutions.
- Providing advice in joint meetings, even if the lawyers have differing opinions, so the couple hear the same thing, ask questions and avoid any misinterpretation of advice.
- Reality testing different options to ensure agreements are fair and sustainable for the family in the long term..
- Ensuring access to legal, financial and emotional support from other experienced family law professionals where needed.
- Promoting positive co-parenting for any children involved, encouraging healthy communication and relationships even after the process is complete.



The benefits of Collaborative Practice

1. Supported Solutions

Meetings are always conducted in a respectful and dignified manner, helping couples to communicate more effectively during and after the process. If needed, access to other professionals such as Family Consultants, Financial Advisors, and Pension Experts can be arranged to offer a comprehensive approach.

2. Cost Effective

Resolving matters collaboratively results in significantly lower legal fees than those incurred in Court proceedings.

3. Clear Legal Advice

The couple will hear together the advice given by both lawyers, meaning there is less chance of miscommunication. The advice provided will be tailored to help facilitate negotiating a fair and reasonable settlement.

4. Progress At Your Pace

The couple are in control of the pace at which meetings progress. Whilst fast solutions can be achieved, when necessary, the process can also move at a slower pace, depending on their family's circumstances.

5. Lasting Resolution

Proposed settlements and solutions will be thoroughly evaluated and reality-tested to ensure that the final resolution is practical and works for the couple and their family in the long term.