divorce process
step by step guide

The Divorce Petition is issued at Court by the Petitioner (P) – the person making the application. The Court sends a copy of the papers to the Respondent (R) – the other party/recipient. (P) pays the Court a £340 fee to begin the divorce. If there are children there is an additional form to be completed and sent to (R) called A Statement of Arrangements which has been completed by (P). (P) needs to send an original marriage certificate to the court along with the petition.

Call us if you want to discuss what to say on your divorce petition.

If (R) cannot be traced, (P) can ask the Court for permission not to send (R) the divorce papers.

Call us to discuss if you think this is relevant in your case.

(R) is sent a copy of the divorce papers and an 'Acknowledgement of Service' form to complete and confirm that the divorce can proceed.

If you are (R) and disagree with the paperwork you have received please call us to discuss your options.

(R) does not reply.

Call us if this applies and we will help you decide which is the best way forward.

(R) completes the Acknowledgement of Service form and sends it back to the Court. The Court forward a copy to (P) together with a blank Affadvait in Support for (P) to complete. This is the Decree Nisi application paperwork. This paperwork is also part of the online package so can be filled in online and checked by us.

Call us if you are not sure how to complete the Affadavit or you suspect (R) has not completed the Acknowledgement of Service form correctly.

(P) takes the completed Affadavit to a solicitor or to the Court to be sworn (witnessed).

(P) applies for Directions for Trial (Decree Nisi). There is an additional form that the Court will send with the blank Affadavit that must be completed. Both documents are returned to the Court. This paperwork is also part of the online package so can be filled in online and checked by us.

The file is given to a District Judge to consider if the divorce can be granted.

The District Judge refuses Decree Nisi. If so, reasons in writing are given to (P). You may need to amend your original Divorce Petition or alter your Affadavit before re-applying for Decree Nisi.

Call us if this happens and we will advise you what to do next.

Decree Nisi is approved. The Court write to confirm the date when Decree Nisi will be formally granted (pronounced). If there are children and the court approves of the arrangements for the children you will also be sent a certificate confirming this.

Call us if the Court says it has concerns over your child arrangements. A separate hearing may be needed to resolve any concerns.

Decree Nisi is granted

STOP! Do you have an agreement about how you are going to resolve your finances? The agreement must be put in writing and approved by the Court to give both parties maximum protection.

Call us to discuss what needs to be included in your financial agreement (Consent order). Do not apply for Decree Absolute until you have spoken to us about this.

(P) may apply for Decree Absolute (the document that confirms you are no longer married), 6 weeks and 1 day after Decree Nisi has been granted. There is a court fee of £45 and a form to apply for this.

Decree Absolute is granted and sent out by the Court – YOU ARE DIVORCED!