

Court procedures for financial settlements

- (a) One of the parties issues an application and this is sent by the court to the other party.
- (b) The court sends to both parties, details of when certain steps must take place, including the exchanging of detailed financial statements. At the same time, the Court notifies the parties as to when the first hearing will take place. This is known as the First Directions Appointment.
- (c) At the First Directions Appointment, the judge considers the circumstances of the case and makes further directions to progress the matter. These can include a formal valuation of the matrimonial home, the provision by either party of further information or documentation, and the listing of other court hearings.
- (d) The next court hearing is known as the Financial Dispute Resolution hearing. This is an opportunity for both parties and their advisors to discuss the case openly and frankly with the judge in an attempt to resolve differences and difficulties. If both parties agree, this hearing can take place at the same time as the First Directions Appointment. If agreement is reached, the judge can make an order there and then.
- (e) If it is still not possible to settle the matter, a final hearing must take place. This is very rare and only occurs in around 5% of cases.