



Cafcass Pilots Summary: for members of the judiciary

January 2018

Background

At the most recent Cafcass Judicial Liaison Committee, judicial representatives suggested it would be helpful to circulate details about the current number of Cafcass pilots, as many judges and magistrates were unaware of them.

Current Pilots

Private law pilots

- 1. Support with Making Child Arrangements Pilot** this will start in late January 2018, offering a package of out-of-court dispute resolution services to parents who are assessed as suitable, to try and resolve their dispute without the need for either a Safeguarding Letter or a court hearing (FHDRA). The aim will be to reduce the caseload of the court in the context of rising numbers of applications, and to improve outcomes for children and their families by ensuring sustainable agreements. Details are attached.
- 2. Cafcass Early Receipt of C100:** a joint Cafcass and HMCTS pilot to trial a process for Cafcass to receive C100s within 2 days, in order to commence safeguarding checks, which may therefore take place before 'issue'. This process is in line with CAP timeframes and, if successful, will allow enable Cafcass to progress safeguarding checks around a week earlier than in current processes, ensuring sufficient time to report to the FHDRA. The pilot will run in Luton and Swindon from 1st December 2017.
- 3. C100 Scanning Pilot – Joint Cafcass/HMCTS:** a joint Cafcass and HMCTS project to trial the centralised processing of C100s. Business cases are currently being developed for approval in both organisations, for pilots in Bournemouth, Brighton and Coventry Courts with an anticipated start date of March 2018. Applications for these Courts will be sent to a central location, where payment will be processed, the C100 (and attachments) scanned and distributed electronically to Cafcass and HMCTS at the same time. As a result of this Cafcass will receive the C100 8 working days earlier on average with immediate effect. Both HMCTS and Cafcass are also working with their case management suppliers to develop automated case creation – thus reducing the level of data input and associated costs and time required.
- 4. Cafcass Positive Parenting Programme** creates a structured intervention for children and families involved in 16.4 cases, to attempt to reduce conflict and promote more timely case resolution. The national pilot of 50 cases launched in November 2017.
- 5. The Child Impact Analysis framework** aims to ensure the private law Section 7 process remains child-centred, rather than 'adult dispute centred' at all times, by requiring FCAs to apply the skills they have in a different manner. The pilot commenced on 1 July with a new

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court reporting template and runs in three areas: 1) Essex; 2) York and North Yorkshire; and 3) North Wales (Cafcass Cymru).

- 6. Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme:** A project team has been set up within Cafcass and in partnership with Respect to research the need for a commissioned service in private law proceedings which could address abusive behaviours by women within intimate partner relationships. The project team will use case studies and consider the wider research base and emerging literature in order to capture an extensive evidence base with the outcome being reported on early in 2018.

Public law pilots

- 7. The Cafcass Plus model** is local authority-led and initiates the involvement of an FCA in public law pre-proceedings. The aim of the model is to divert cases from court or narrow issues if the case does progress to proceedings. The model is currently being piloted in five teams in A10, A11, A13 and A14.
- 8. The Voice of the Child App Project** is utilising the expertise of Dubit (a children's entertainment research and analytics company) to consider how existing paper-based tools used with children can be digitised and enhanced. Assessments will be based on how Cafcass shares information with children and the volume / frequency throughout a case. The current App under development aims to convert the How It Looks To Me booklet into a digital resource, with a prototype being piloted from 11 December 2017.

For further information, please contact:

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