**Online Family Mediation**

The Legal Aid Board is piloting online family mediation in order to deliver its services in the context of the current COVID 19 pandemic and to adhere to social distancing restrictions. Online family mediation is the only means by which the Board can deliver mediation currently.

The following outlines a list of data protection and privacy related considerations that should be made explicitly clear to clients before they avail of online family mediation services.

* Mediation is a confidential and voluntary process in which parties to a dispute, with the assistance of a mediator, attempt to reach a mutually acceptable agreement to resolve the dispute. Because mediation is voluntary, both parties must agree to use the online family mediation process to try to resolve the dispute.
* All communications between the parties and the mediator are protected by confidentiality**.** Because these communications happen with a view to resolving a dispute, they may not be used or referred to elsewhere if matters are not finally resolved in the mediation.
* If you do not wish to partake in online family mediation you may choose to wait on the waiting list until such a time as the Board is able to deliver its traditional form of service delivery in person. Given the need to maintain social distancing and comply with HSE guidelines, face to face consultations and meetings with clients will not be feasible in the short to medium term.
* Any personal data provided by you and transmitted through online family mediation will be personal information that is necessary for the purposes of delivering the Board’s family mediation services and the progression of your case. The information requested will be determined by the mediator as the case progresses.
* The personal information we collect is the same as is required when conducting face to face mediation. Your personal information will be stored in paper files and electronically. Family Mediation case files are retained by the Board for 7 years in paper and electronic format.
* You should be made aware of the Board’s Privacy Notice to be sure *who* your personal data is being shared with, *where* it will be stored or processed, and *what purposes* it will be used for, amongst other information including your rights as a data subject of the Board. The Privacy Notice is available from your mediator.
* The online family mediation service is hosted on the Cisco Telepresence platform which is widely recognised for its stability and interoperability with other systems. The Cisco Telepresence software license used by the Legal Aid Board is owned by the Irish Prison Service. However, they have no access to the meeting rooms used by the Legal Aid Board or the data transmitted in online mediation meetings.
* The Cisco Telepresence system uses end to end encryption using transport layer security (TLS), PIN-protected conferences and Conference locking functions. Further details of the security features of the Cisco Telepresence are available at:

 <https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/products/collateral/conferencing/telepresence-server/datasheet-c78-736947.html>

* Meetings will be by invite only and will include a passcode. All meetings must be accessed by entering the Meeting ID and Passcode for the Video Meeting Room.
* You may be asked to allow access to a microphone and camera. You ***must*** allow access or the Video Conferencing system will not connect. The system may ask for recording approval which again must be allowed **however there is no recording facility on the Video Conferencing system**.
* Recording of sessions on any device is not permitted. This includes recording of sessions on other devices such as mobile phones or tablets etc.
* You should ensure your device is used in a safe location, the lighting in the room is appropriate to ensure your visibility and it is a quiet space where you can participate in the meeting with as little disturbance as possible.
* You should be careful of what is being captured by the camera and microphone and take into consideration and respect the rights and interests of call participantsand those that may feature in the background of the call. For example, keep an eye on what (or who) can be seen from the camera. Log out, mute, or turn off video, as appropriate. When finishing a video call make sure the camera and microphone are turned off.
* If the data protection or privacy information provided to you is inadequate or too much information, or access to your device is being sought, you may contact the Board’s family mediation service or the Board’s Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@legalaidboard.ie