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# C100 Form Guide

The C100 is the official application form for a Child Arrangements Order in family court. This guide explains everything you need to know about completing and submitting the form, including how to apply online, costs, timelines, and what happens after you submit.

**£232**

Court Fee

**MIAM**

Required First

**4-6 Weeks**

First Hearing

**Online**

Can Apply Online

 Download C100 Form Guide (PDF)

## What is a C100 Form?

The C100 form, officially titled "**Application under the Children Act 1989**", is the form you use to apply to family court for orders about children in England and Wales. It is sometimes referred to as a "C100 form family court" application.

You can use the C100 to apply for three types of order:

- ✓ **Child Arrangements Order** - Where children live and who they spend time with
- ✓ **Prohibited Steps Order** - To prevent the other parent from doing something specific (such as taking the child abroad)
- ✓ **Specific Issue Order** - For decisions about schooling, medical treatment, religion, etc.

The form replaced what used to be called "custody" and "access" applications. Courts now focus on "arrangements" - recognising that both parents typically remain involved in their children's lives.

## When Do You Need a C100?

You might need to apply using the C100 form if:

- ✓ You can't agree where children should live
- ✓ The other parent won't let you see your children
- ✓ You want to change an existing arrangement
- ✓ You need to relocate with the children
- ✓ There are disagreements about school or medical decisions
- ✓ You have concerns about a child's safety with the other parent

Court should be a last resort. It's expensive, stressful, and can take months. Mediation is usually faster, cheaper, and gives you more control over the outcome. Before applying, consider direct negotiation, **family mediation** (required before court), solicitor negotiations, or collaborative law.

## C100 Form Online: How to Apply

You have two options for submitting your C100 form application:

## Apply Online (Recommended)

You can apply through the MyHMCTS portal on gov.uk. The online process:

- ✓ Guides you step-by-step through each section
- ✓ Lets you save your progress and return later
- ✓ Validates your answers as you go (reducing errors)
- ✓ Allows online payment of the fee
- ✓ Is generally processed faster than paper applications

## Paper Form (By Post)

Alternatively, you can download the C100 form PDF from gov.uk, print and complete it by hand (use black ink) or fill it digitally, then post or deliver it to your local family court with a cheque or postal order for the fee.

**Tip:** The online process is generally quicker and easier. You'll need a gov.uk account to use it.

## C100 Form Download

If you prefer a paper application, download the C100 form directly from GOV.UK. The form is a PDF you can print and fill in by hand, or fill digitally using a PDF reader then print and sign.

You may also need these supplementary forms:

- ✓ **C100** - Main application form (required)
- ✓ **C1A** - Allegations of harm supplement (if applicable)
- ✓ **FM1** - **MIAM certificate** from your mediator
- ✓ **EX160** - Help with Fees form (if applying for fee remission)

## MIAM Requirement

## Before You Submit a C100

You **must** have attended a **MIAM (Mediation Information Assessment Meeting)** and received a **MIAM certificate**, OR have a valid **exemption**. The court will not process your application without this.

On page 3 of the C100 (the MIAM section), you must indicate one of the following:

- You've attended a MIAM and have a signed certificate (**Form FM1**)
- You have a valid exemption (domestic abuse, urgency, child protection, etc.)
- A mediator has signed to confirm the other party won't attend or mediation isn't suitable

## How to Complete the C100 Form

The C100 form has several sections:

- Section 1: MIAM Information** - Confirm you've attended a MIAM or have an exemption. Attach your FM1 certificate or exemption evidence.
- Section 2: Applicant's Details** - Your full name, date of birth, address, and contact information. You can request your address be kept confidential.
- Section 3: Respondent's Details** - The other parent's name, date of birth, and address if known.
- Section 4: Children's Details** - Full names, dates of birth, gender, who they currently live with, and parental responsibility status.
- Section 5: Orders Applied For** - Specify exactly what you're asking the court to order.
- Section 6: Reasons for Application** - Explain why you're making this application and what you've tried so far.
- Section 7: Harm & Risk (Form C1A)** - Any concerns about domestic abuse, violence, neglect, or other harm to the children.
- Section 8: Other Proceedings** - Any related court cases involving these children or family members.

- ✓ **Section 9: Declaration & Signature** - Sign to confirm the information is true to the best of your knowledge.

## Example of a Completed C100 Form

While every C100 application is unique, here's guidance on how to approach the key sections. A well-completed form is clear, factual, and focused on the children's needs.

### Section 5 (Orders Applied For) - Example:

"I am applying for a Child Arrangements Order for [child's name] to spend time with me every other weekend from Friday after school to Sunday at 6pm, and one evening per week (Wednesday) after school until 7pm. I also seek shared holiday time, divided equally between both parents."

### Section 6 (Reasons) - Example:

"The respondent and I separated in [month/year]. Since separation, I have been unable to maintain regular contact with [child's name]. I attended a MIAM on [date] and the respondent declined to attend mediation. I believe it is in [child's name]'s best interests to have a meaningful relationship with both parents."

### Tips for completing your C100

Be factual - avoid emotional language or accusations. Focus on the children's needs, not your grievances. Be specific about what arrangements you want. Include what you've already tried (mediation, negotiation). Keep it concise - the judge reads hundreds of these.

## How Much Does a C100 Form Cost?

The court fee for submitting a C100 form is **£232**. This is a one-off payment made when you submit the form.

Item   Cost   Notes   ----- ----- -----	C100 Court Fee   £232   One-off submission fee
With Fee Remission   Free   If you qualify for Help with Fees	MIAM attendance   £90-£150
Required before submitting C100	MIAM with Legal Aid   Free   If eligible for legal aid
Solicitor (optional)   £200-£500+   To help complete the form	

## Fee Remission (Help with Fees)

If you're on a low income or receiving certain benefits, you may not have to pay the court fee. Apply using **Form EX160** at the same time as your C100. You may qualify if you:

- Receive Universal Credit, Income Support, or income-based JSA/ESA
- Have a gross monthly income below £1,085 (single) or £1,245 (couple)
- Have savings under £3,000 (or £16,000 if over State Pension age)

## What Happens After You Submit a C100 Form?

Once the court receives your C100 form, the following process begins:

### 1 Court Checks Your Application

The court reviews your form, checks the fee has been paid, and confirms you have a MIAM certificate or exemption.

### 2 Cafcass Safeguarding Checks

Cafcass carries out background checks with police and local authority databases for both parents. This produces a safeguarding letter.

### 3 Papers Served on Respondent

The other parent receives a copy of your application along with a blank Form C7 to complete and return within 14 days.

### 4 First Hearing (FHDRA)

Usually listed 4-6 weeks after application. Both parents attend. A Cafcass officer and judge will try to help you reach an agreement.

### 5 Further Hearings (if needed)

If you can't agree, the judge may order a Cafcass section 7 report, witness statements, or a fact-finding hearing.

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## Final Hearing & Order

If agreement still can't be reached, the judge hears evidence and makes a legally binding Child Arrangements Order.

# How Long Does a C100 Form Take?

The timeline for a C100 application varies depending on complexity:

| Stage | Typical Timeline | |-----|-----|-----| | Court processes application | 1-2 days || Cafcass safeguarding checks | 1-2 weeks || First hearing (FHDRA) | 4-6 weeks from application || Total process (if contested) | 6-12 months |

**Good news:** Many cases are resolved at or shortly after the first hearing (FHDRA). If both parents reach an agreement with the help of the judge and Cafcass officer, a consent order can be made on the same day - meaning the process takes just 4-6 weeks total.

## Emergency C100 Applications

In urgent situations where a child is at immediate risk, you can apply for an emergency hearing. This is called a "without notice" (or "ex parte") application.

### When to make an emergency application

- ✓ A parent is about to take the child out of the country
- ✓ There is an immediate risk of physical harm to the child
- ✓ A child is being hidden or withheld unlawfully
- ✓ There is a risk of serious irreversible harm if the court doesn't act immediately

### How to apply

- ✓ Complete the standard C100 form and tick the "urgency" box
- ✓ Complete Form C1A detailing the risk of harm
- ✓ Write a supporting witness statement explaining the urgency
- ✓ Contact your local family court directly and explain it's urgent

Emergency hearings can be listed within **24-72 hours** if the court agrees there is immediate risk. You are usually exempt from the MIAM requirement in genuine emergencies.

### Important

If a child is in immediate danger right now, call 999. Court applications are not appropriate for situations requiring emergency police intervention.

## C100 Form for Grandparents

Grandparents can apply for a Child Arrangements Order to spend time with their grandchildren, but the process is slightly different.

### Do grandparents need permission to apply?

Unlike parents, grandparents need **permission from the court** (called "leave") before making a C100 application, unless:

- The child has lived with you for at least 3 years
- You have the consent of everyone with parental responsibility
- There is an existing Child Arrangements Order and you want to vary it

### How to apply as a grandparent

- Attend a MIAM (same requirement as parents)
- Submit a **Form C2** asking for permission to apply, explaining your relationship with the child
- If permission is granted, submit your C100 form with the specific orders you're seeking

Courts generally recognise the value of grandparent relationships and will grant leave if there is a genuine connection with the child.

## Responding to a C100 Form

If you've been served with a C100 (meaning the other parent has made an application about you), here's what you need to do:

**1 Complete Form C7 (Acknowledgement)**

You must return this within **14 days** of receiving the papers. It confirms you've received the application and gives your initial response.

**2 Complete Form C1A (if needed)**

If you have concerns about harm or domestic abuse, complete the supplementary form with your response.

**3 Attend the First Hearing (FHDRA)**

You **must** attend on the date specified. Failing to attend may result in the court making orders without hearing your views.

**4 Consider a Cross-Application (optional)**

If you want different arrangements, you can file your own C100 as a "cross-application". This is heard alongside the original.

**Tip:** Being served with a C100 doesn't mean you've done anything wrong. It means the other parent has asked the court to help resolve a disagreement about children. The court will consider both sides equally.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Need to Prepare for Your MIAM First?

Before you can submit a C100, you need a MIAM certificate. Our AI assistant Miam can help you prepare for that meeting - organising your priorities and understanding the process.

Prepare with Miam (Free)

Learn About MIAMs



**AI Preparation Tool:** Miam helps you prepare for your MIAM but cannot provide legal advice or issue certificates. Only FMC-accredited mediators can do that.

## Related Guides

**IMPORTANT: Only FMC-accredited mediators can issue valid MIAM certificates.**

For mediation services: [familymediationcouncil.org.uk/find-local-mediator](http://familymediationcouncil.org.uk/find-local-mediator)

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## What is a MIAM?

What is a MIAM? Learn what a Mediation Information Assessment Meeting is, what MIAM stands for, whether it is compulsory, what happens during the meeting, how to arrange one, costs, and how to...

## MIAM Certificate

Everything you need to know about MIAM certificates (Form FM1). Learn what they are, what they look like, how much they cost, how long they are valid for, how to get one for your C100 court application,...

## MIAM Exemptions: When You Don't Need Mediation

Complete guide to MIAM exemptions in England & Wales. Learn if you qualify for exemption due to domestic abuse, urgency, or other valid reasons. Free guidance.

## Mediation Costs UK: How Much Does Mediation Cost?

Complete guide to mediation costs in the UK. Learn how much MIAM and family mediation cost, who pays, and how to get free mediation through legal aid or the voucher scheme.

## What is Mediation? Definition, Meaning & Complete UK Guide

Understand what mediation means in the UK. Complete guide to mediation definition, how it works, types of mediation, and when to use it. Free expert guidance.