

paperweight

Guide. Advocate. Resolve.

“I was in a legal mess. Thankfully, Paperweight was by my side.”

Legal Guidance



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We're here for you.

We're here to help you sort out financial, legal or administrative matters when you're finding it difficult or impossible to cope. Often people come to us at a time of crisis – for example, after a bereavement, during separation or divorce, or when trying to cope with increasing frailty. The burden of dealing with the practicalities of paperwork and bureaucracy can start to feel intolerable – we are here to help anybody in the Jewish community who feels the pressure is just getting too much. Our service is free of charge.

Paperweight offers time, guidance, confidentiality, experience and a good deal of common sense. Our aim is to steer you towards independence and give you the confidence to carry on with your life.

Call our Helpline today on 0330 174 4300 or email info@paperweight.org.uk and we will take you through everything you need to know.



Legal

The legal process can be complicated and intimidating – we'll help you feel that you are not a small cog in a big wheel.

From one moment to another you may find yourself subject to a legal dispute or procedure, about which you have no prior experience. On the family stage – divorce, separation and child custody all hinge on legal representation and a knowledge of the law. Issues such as finance arrears and property matters, which one may have thought irrelevant to the problem at hand, can spill over into legal territory with little provocation.

Paperweight is here to explain processes and guide you through the unfamiliar consequences of a range of personal and domestic legal matters.

Where necessary, we can call on a panel of practising solicitors to provide key direction and legal advice, which may determine the direction of our subsequent guidance and involvement.

These are some of the areas we can help with:

Civil Law

Civil law actions cover areas such as home repossession and Forced Eviction Orders; long standing debts which have reached County Court Judgement (CCJ) and/or bailiff stage; council tax arrears and prosecutions for a wide range of misdemeanours.

Paperweight will help you prepare as robust a response as available information permits and will focus on helping you collate your bundle of paperwork proofs which the Court demands.

Family Law

When the legal process becomes interwoven with your personal and family life through separation, divorce or child custody arrangements for example, the outcome can become a nightmare of Court or Beth Din appearances, paperwork submissions and proofs, together with unsettling meetings where personal lives are unravelled.

Paperweight will explain the process and terminology and will guide you to ensure you are best prepared for every stage. We will endeavour to help you to achieve the best possible outcome.

Family Mediation

Mediation, as well as being the starting point in a Family Law Court Judge's requirement, is a tried and tested technique to minimise the prolonged (and very expensive) haul through the court system which family splits entail.

Mediators are trained in the processes of achieving best outcomes with minimal friction and offer a speedier, less complicated resolution.

Paperweight can direct you to qualified mediators and will sit with you during (some) sessions which is a great confidence booster and will enable you to better understand what compromises are being offered and how that affects your life going forward.

Probate & Wills

Dealing with the affairs of a departed loved one is never easy and the rules and regulations do not make it any easier. They are designed to prevent fraud and generate income for the Exchequer, not to ease a mourning family member's bureaucratic burden!

Paperweight will help you to collate all the diverse documents and facts and figures to supply whoever needs them in order to complete the next phase towards settling the deceased's estate. For further information on pre and post-bereavement, see our brochure entitled "It's Time To Have The Conversation".

Highly complex estates and commercial assets are beyond Paperweight's scope and a Solicitor experienced in this area will be required.

Power of Attorney

Happily, many people are now living to a grand old age. A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) is now an essential tool to enable an appointed and trusted person to represent us in matters of Finance & Property and Health & Welfare. But there is no need to wait until one grows older. A LPA can be completed at any age to give us peace of mind should we become incapacitated and no longer able to make decisions for ourselves.

Completion and submission of the application forms is a moderately long process, but not overwhelmingly difficult. Paperweight will help you and your designated Attorney(s) to complete and submit the application to the Court of Protection.

Dina isn't allowed to see her sister. She now has to persuade a judge to let her.

Dina couldn't believe it. Was she really not going to be able to see her sister?

Dina is 21. Her sister, Caroline, is 15. Caroline has Down's Syndrome and because their mother suffers from ill mental health, Dina had increasingly taken on caring roles for Caroline. Caroline had been moved to foster care because of the issues at home and so Dina was now restricted to seeing her sister on their fortnightly trips out together, which they both treasured.

Then the bombshell. Dina received a letter from the local authority social services saying she could only now see Caroline on a supervised visit and only once a month. Dina was dumbfounded and distraught.

She repeatedly demanded to know why she wasn't allowed to see Caroline. *"I was saying this is going to distress my sister. She has Down's Syndrome. She doesn't have the capacity to understand why I'm not coming. She has a mental age of four years old, even though she's 15."*

Social Services were being completely intransigent and Dina's only recourse was to challenge them in the courts.

But how was she going to be able to take on the local authority and their lawyers and where to begin? (Family law cases such as these are no longer eligible for legal aid.) She was desperate.

Dina says, *"Then I got lucky. A friend told me about Paperweight."*

"They spent time explaining the application form and how to structure a statement. Incredibly, they also found a barrister who most kindly agreed to work pro bono. This was such a huge relief as I could not possibly afford to pay for his advice which ran to tens of thousands of pounds."

Thanks to this backing, Dina was able to be properly represented at the hearing. The result was that her right to access has been acknowledged and the frequency of contact will be built up.

Dina is delighted. She says: *"Without that support from Paperweight, I would have been completely lost. I would have felt totally alone. Paperweight is priceless and has given me back my sister."*

