

Supporting neurodiverse people in family law matters

Understanding neurodiversity in the legal context.

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Neurodiversity refers to the natural differences in how people think, learn and process information. It includes conditions like [autism](#), [ADHD](#), [dyslexia](#), [dyspraxia](#) and other neurological variations. These differences can create challenges when navigating complex legal processes, especially in family law.

Family law matters such as divorce, child arrangement disputes, and domestic issues can be overwhelming for anyone. However, these challenges can be even more significant for neurodiverse people due to communication, emotional regulation, and organisational differences. At RIAA Barker Gillette (UK), our family team understands and adapts to your needs, making the legal process far more accessible and less stressful.

Neurodiversity challenges in family law cases

Neurodivergent people experience the world in unique ways, and certain aspects of the legal system can be particularly difficult for them.

Communication

Some neurodivergent people may struggle with verbal communication or prefer written communication. Legal language can also often be a source of confusion.

Emotional stress and anxiety

Family law cases can be emotionally draining, and neurodivergent people may experience heightened stress or anxiety. Changes to routines, uncertainty and conflict can be particularly distressing. Some may struggle with emotional regulation, making it harder to remain calm in high-pressure situations such as court hearings.

Organising and decision-making

Many neurodivergent people, particularly those with ADHD or executive function challenges, find it hard to manage paperwork, remember deadlines, or keep track of legal procedures. They may also struggle with making quick decisions, especially under pressure.

Vulnerability and manipulation

In cases involving domestic abuse or coercive control, neurodivergent people may be more at risk. They might struggle to recognise manipulative behaviours or feel pressured into agreements that may not be in their best interest.

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How our family lawyers can support neurodiverse clients

Our family lawyers go the extra mile to accommodate the unique needs of clients with neurodiversity to ensure fair and effective representation. We provide:

Tailored communication that works for you

We use plain, simple language and avoid legal jargon where possible. Instead of solely relying on in-person meetings or telephone calls, we consider other means of communication, including emails and written summaries. We also give you extra time to process information and ask questions for clarification.

Creating a comfortable and supportive environment

We are mindful of every individual's needs and sensory sensitivities. Therefore, we offer remote consultations and other solutions if you find face-to-face meetings too overwhelming.

Providing emotional and practical support

We prepare you for what you can expect in court, helping you to manage your expectations and emotions during and after proceedings. We also consult with you on whether you would benefit from a support worker or intermediary to help you communicate effectively during proceedings, ensuring that you understand what is said and that you accurately express yourself.

Recognising and safeguarding vulnerable clients

Our family lawyers remain mindful of the potential for coercion or undue influence, particularly in cases involving domestic abuse. We ensure you understand your rights and options before making any decisions, so no other party puts undue pressure upon you.

Helping you stay organised and informed

We can assist you with the organisational side of your family law matter by sending reminders for deadlines, breaking down complex legal steps into manageable tasks, and providing structured guidance throughout the case.

Making family law more inclusive

The legal system can often be rigid and difficult to navigate. Small adjustments can make a huge difference in supporting neurodiverse people. Our family lawyers are continually educating themselves by learning more about neurodiversity and how it affects people.

At RIAA Barker Gillette (UK), we are committed to providing inclusive and empathetic legal representation. We understand that every client is unique, and we tailor our approach to ensure people with neurodiversity receive the support they need to navigate family law matters with confidence and clarity.

If you're neurodivergent and are facing a family law matter, speak to [Pippa Marshall](#) today.

Note: This article is not legal advice; it provides information of general interest about current legal issues.