

## FMSB Regulatory Note - Voice-Only Information and Assessment Meetings and Use of Video Connections



Prior to the news about coronavirus, the FMSB was concerned to hear reports that some mediators are regularly conducting Information and Assessment Meetings (including statutory Mediation Information and Assessment Meetings (MIAMs)) via voice-only connections.

The FMSB would like to remind mediators that the FMC Code of Practice does not allow for Information and Assessment Meetings to be conducted via-voice only connections unless there are specific problems with access to an online video link. To conduct voice-only Information and Assessment Meetings on a usual basis is therefore a breach of the FMC Code of Practice. If there are specific problems with access to an online video link and a voice-only telephone connection is used, then you **must** record in writing what those problems are.

Given the current concerns about coronavirus, the FMSB would also like to remind mediators that the FMC Code of Practice **does** allow for both Information and Assessment Meetings and Mediation to be carried out using an online video connection and that the FMC has published [guidance](#) on this issue. In addition, individual face-to-face time that a mediator spends with their PPC can include via online video connection, such as Skype or Zoom.

The relevant section of the [FMC Code of Practice](#) is set out below for reference.

### **7. CONDUCT OF MEDIATION INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENT MEETINGS**

*All assessments for suitability for Mediation should be conducted by a Mediator at meetings and, where possible, on a face-to-face basis. Assessment and Mediation may include meetings via an online video connection. Statutory Mediation Information and Assessment Meetings may also be conducted via an online video connection. Assessments, including statutory Mediation Information and Assessment Meetings, should not be carried out via voice only connections except where there are specific problems about access to an online video link. The Mediator must record in writing what those specific problems are. Assessment meetings can be conducted jointly or separately, but must include an individual element with each Participant to allow the Mediator to undertake domestic abuse screening. If assessments or Mediation meetings are conducted via online video connection, the Mediator must act appropriately having regard to all the [current practice guidance](#) issued by the FMC.*

**Issued by FMSB**

**17 March 2020**