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Our Ref: { MERGEFIELD MATTER\_FEE\_EARNER\_ID }/{ MERGEFIELD  
client\_no }/{ MERGEFIELD matter\_no }

Your Ref:

{ SET LETTER{ DATE \@ "d MMMM yyyy" } }{ref LETTER \@ "d MMMM yyyy" \ \\*  
MERGEFORMAT }

{ IF {MERGEFIELD LINKNAME\_SURNAME\_1 } = "{ MERGEFIELD LINKNAME\_SURNAME\_2  
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{ MERGEFIELD CALCULATION\_ADDRESS }

Dear { IF {MERGEFIELD LINKNAME\_SURNAME\_1 } = "{ MERGEFIELD  
LINKNAME\_SURNAME\_2 }" "{ MERGEFIELD LINKNAME\_TITLE\_1} and { MERGEFIELD  
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LINKNAME\_SURNAME\_2}" }" }

**Re: { MERGEFIELD MATTER MATTER DESCRIPTION }**

I write to confirm that the First Hearing Dispute Resolution Appointment will take place on {  
MERGEFIELD PRI\_CH\_ORG\_FW\_CH\_FHDRADATE \@ "d MMMM yyyy" } at COURT.

Please ensure you are available to attend this hearing. You must attend Court at TIME.

At the first hearing, the Court will look at the issues raised by both parties and will determine whether it is necessary to investigate any of the issues further, for example by ordering a further report from CAFCASS, or obtaining medical reports or drug and alcohol testing (where appropriate).

It is possible to conclude matters at the first hearing, usually in cases where there are no allegations of serious harm to either the child or other parent, and the parties wish to set out the arrangements for contact. This is only possible where the parents are able to reach an agreement at Court so a final order can be made.

If it is not possible to reach an agreement, or further investigation is required, then the Court will list a further hearing called a Dispute Resolution Appointment (DRA).

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It is common for the Court to order a further report from CAFCASS (called a Section 8 Report) which will be completed prior to the DRA. It takes around eight to 10 weeks for CAFCASS to complete their report, where they will interview you, the other parent and the child(ren). In the report, they will set out their discussions with each parent and the information they have gained from speaking with the child(ren). They will also make recommendations to the Court regarding the contact that each parent should have. You should be aware that the Court does not have to follow the advice recommended by CAFCASS, however it is unusual for the Court to go against the recommendations.

At the DRA, the parties will be encouraged to reach an agreement so a final order can be made, meaning a Final Hearing where both parents would need to give evidence is not necessary.

If it is not possible to reach an agreement at the DRA, then a Final Hearing will be necessary and you and the other parent (and often CAFCASS) will be cross examined. At the final hearing, the Court will make the final order based on the evidence given by you and the other parent, and CAFCASS' recommendations. Neither parent will have a say in the outcome as it will solely be the Court's decision and the Court will usually follow CAFCASS' recommendations for contact. I will of course provide you with further information regarding the final hearing at a later date, if it is likely that this matter will go to final hearing.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**{ MERGEFIELD CALCULATION\_FEE\_EARNER\_DESCRIPTION }**  
**{ MERGEFIELD PRACTICEINFO\_PRACTICE\_NAME\\*UPPER }**