STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2026 No. 699 (L. 12)

FAMILY PROCEEDINGS

SENIOR COURTS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

FAMILY COURT, ENGLAND AND WALES

The Family Procedure (Amendment) Rules 2026

Made - - - -	*25th June 2026*
Laid before Parliament	*29th June 2026*
Coming into force - -	*20th July 2026*

The Family Procedure Rule Committee makes the following Rules in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 75 and 76(8) of the Courts Act 2003(**a**), having fulfilled the requirements of section 79(1) of that Act.

Citation, extent and commencement

1.—(1) These Rules may be cited as the Family Procedure (Amendment) Rules 2026.

(2) These Rules extend to England and Wales.

(3) These Rules come into force on 20th July 2026.

Amendment of the Family Procedure Rules 2010

2. The Family Procedure Rules 2010(**b**) are amended in accordance with rules 3 to 5 of these Rules.

Insertion of new rule 9.47

3. After rule 9.46 (communication of information: Practice Direction 9B) insert—

> **"Communication of information with the permission of the court**
>
> **9.47.** A practice direction may make provision in relation to the court giving permission to communicate information from proceedings.".

(**a**) 2003 c. 39. Section 75 was amended by paragraphs 308 and 338 of Part 1 of Schedule 4 and Part 2 of Schedule 18 to the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 (c. 4), paragraphs 83 and 91 of Part 2 of Schedule 10 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013 (c. 22). Paragraph 3(1) and (2) of Schedule 4 to the Judicial Review and Courts Act 2022 (c. 35) sets out an amendment to section 75 which is not yet in force.

(**b**) S.I. 2010/2955. Relevant amendments were made by S.I. 2012/3061, 2014/843, 2015/1868 and 2020/135.

Amendment of rule 25.2

4. In rule 25.2 (interpretation)—

(a) after the definition of "expert" insert—

""regulated expert" means an expert who is—

(a) regulated by a UK statutory body;

(b) on a register accredited by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care; or

(c) regulated by an approved regulator under the Legal Services Act 2007(**a**);";

(b) after the definition of "single joint expert" insert—

""technical expert" means an expert who provides evidence on—

(a) digital forensics;

(b) DNA testing;

(c) handwriting analysis; or

(d) toxicology testing.".

Insertion of new rule 25.5A

5. After rule 25.5 (further provisions about the court's power to restrict expert evidence) insert—

"Requirement for experts to be regulated in children proceedings

25.5A.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the court may only give permission under section 13(1), (3) or (5) of the 2014 Act(**b**) if the expert evidence is from a regulated expert.

(2) The requirement set out in paragraph (1) does not apply to expert evidence from an international social worker, a technical expert or an expert instructed in proceedings under Schedule 1 to the 1989 Act(**c**).

(3) The court may give permission under section 13(1), (3) or (5) of the 2014 Act to instruct any expert where there is no regulated expert available.

(4) For the purposes of paragraph (3), no regulated expert is available where—

(a) the issue to which the expert evidence relates may only be resolved with the expertise of an expert who is not a regulated expert; or

(b) the instruction of a regulated expert would cause significant delay in the proceedings which would not be in the best interests of the child.

(5) If permission is given under paragraph (3), the court must give reasons for its decision, including—

(a) the steps taken by the parties to identify a regulated expert, and

(b) the reasons why the expert instructed meets the standards set out in the annex to Practice Direction 25B.".

(**a**) 2007 c. 29.
(**b**) The Children and Families Act 2014 (c. 6).
(**c**) The Children Act 1989 (c. 41).

Saving provision

6. The amendments made by rules 4 and 5 do not apply to proceedings that were issued before 20th July 2026.

Sir Stephen Cobb, President of the Family Division
Lord Justice Baker
Poonam Bhari
District Judge Foss
Mr Justice Keehan
Jennifer Kingsley
Vicki Mulligan
Mr Justice Peel
Helen Sewell
Her Honour Judge Suh

I allow these Rules
Signed by authority of the Lord Chancellor

Levitt
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
Ministry of Justice

25th June 2026

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Rules)

These Rules amend the Family Procedure Rules 2010 (S.I. 2010/2955) ("the FPR").

Rule 3 inserts a new rule 9.47 FPR to enable provision to be made in a practice direction relating to the court permitting communication of information from financial remedy proceedings.

Rules 4 and 5 insert a new rule 25.5A FPR and relevant definitions into rule 25.2 FPR to make provision so that in children proceedings, subject to limited exceptions, an expert providing evidence must be a regulated expert.

Rule 6 makes saving provision so that rules 4 and 5 do not apply to proceedings issued before those rules come into force.

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no, or no significant, impact on the private, voluntary or public sector is foreseen.

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