

Robert Povall

Call 2019



Clerks' Details

 Mark Shannon
 0151 305 3365

 Kate Batty
 0151 305 3366

 Wendy Shannon
 0151 305 3367

Appointments

- Level 1 Prosecutor for the CPS

Memberships

- The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple
- The Northern Circuit
- The Family Law Bar Association
- The Criminal Bar Association
- FreeBar
- Queer Lawyers of Tomorrow
- Young Legal Aid Lawyers

Family CV

Overview

Robert specialises in family law, representing local authorities, parents, grandparents and children through their guardians (including under FPR 16.4) as well as parties in domestic abuse proceedings. He is a confident and thorough advocate whose cross-examination has been described as 'incisive' by the judiciary.

Practice areas:

- Child Arrangements (Residence and Contact)
- Prohibited Steps and Specific Issue Orders
- Non-Molestation and Occupation Orders
- Care & Supervision
- Special Guardianship
- Interim Separation
- Placement and Adoption
- Deprivation of Liberty
- Applications to Discharge or Vary
- Parental Responsibility and Declarations of Parentage
- Part 25 Applications
- Appeals
- Enforcement & Committal for Contempt

Robert has developed an expertise in cases featuring complex issues such as non-accidental injury, domestic and sexual abuse, substance misuse, psychology, parental alienation and jurisdiction.

Diligent and down-to-earth, Robert is respected for his ability to identify the key issues at an early stage. When representing parents and other vulnerable individuals, he employs a frank but empathetic approach to manage expectations and advance the best case possible on their behalf.

Notable Cases

2020:

- Shadowed in Re C [2020] EWCA Civ 257 at the Court of Appeal.
- Successfully represented an applicant in complex domestic abuse proceedings with historical allegations and voluminous digital evidence. Findings made that the respondent's 'relentless' harassment would continue without an order and that his conduct during proceedings constituted an extension to his controlling behaviour.
- Defended a client with over 140 breaches proven against him in an application by a local authority for a total exclusion clause. Detailed written submissions prepared on client's Article 8 rights which persuaded the court against making the order.

2021:

- Represented a mother at an interim hearing where the care plan had changed last minute, causing great distress to her and the child. The court described Robert's submissions as 'compelling.'
- Successfully applied to dispense with notice of proceedings upon a father incarcerated for attempted murder and kidnap. Robust submissions made that the mother and children's Article 6 rights should supersede those of the father.
- Successfully opposed interim separation of a new-born from his mother even though his four older siblings had been removed seven months prior under the same threshold.
- Cross-examined an independent social worker on behalf of a father and undermined the fairness of her assessment. Resultantly, the matter was adjourned part-heard for the instruction of a fresh expert.
- Represented a social worker who faced allegations of professional misconduct in private law proceedings. No findings made.
- Successfully represented a mother in an interim separation contest. The guardian supported the local authority. The court did not sanction removal and described Robert's submissions as thorough and well-prepared.
- Whilst representing a mother, Robert advanced a case on behalf of a child's grandparents who acted in person. The local authority sought a placement order and the grandparents had received a negative independent social worker assessment. After a contested final hearing, the court was persuaded to adjourn for further assessment of the grandparents.

Cases

- Successfully represented an applicant in complex domestic violence proceedings with historical allegations and voluminous digital evidence. Findings made that the respondent's 'relentless' harassment would continue without an order and that his conduct during proceedings constituted an extension to his controlling behaviour. (2020)
- Defended a client with over 140 breaches proven against him in an application by a local authority for a total exclusion clause. Detailed written submissions prepared on the client's Article 8 rights which persuaded the court against making the order. (2020)
- Represented a mother at an interim hearing where the care plan had changed last minute, causing great distress to her and the child. HHJ Sharpe described Robert's advocacy as 'compelling.' (2021)
- Successfully applied to dispense with notice of proceedings upon a father incarcerated for attempted murder and kidnap. Robust submissions made that the mother and children's Article 6 rights should supersede those of the father (2021).
- Successfully opposed interim separation of a new-born from his mother even though his four older siblings had been removed seven months prior under the same threshold. (2021)
- Cross-examined an independent social worker on behalf of a father and undermined the fairness of her assessment. Resultantly, the matter was adjourned part-heard for the instruction of a fresh expert. (2021)

Recommendations

"Robert was well presented, polite, confident and courteous at all times. The client was very happy ... for his assistance ... Robert was quick to point me to a particular case ... which saved me some considerable time ... Robert is a credit to your Chambers."

Solicitor Testimonial

Education

Qualifications:

- **BA French and Italian: First Class** (The University of Leeds, 2011–2015)
Distinction in Spoken French
Distinction in Spoken Italian
93% with Distinction during year abroad at Università degli Studi di Napoli “L’Orientale”
- **GDL: Distinction** (The University of Law, 2017–2018)
- **LLM in Bar Practice: Distinction** (The University of Law, 2018–2019)
BPTC Component: Very Competent
- **Hilbre High School Humanities College, Wirral**

Scholarships & Awards:

- Pupillage Grant (2019), Middle Temple
- Winner of the University of Law Family Law Moot (2019)
- The Godfrey Heilpern Memorial Scholarship (2018), Middle Temple
- Michael Sherrard ‘Access to the Bar’ Award (2018), Middle Temple

Beyond the Bar

Robert is committed to the conservation of British wildlife. He enjoys hiking and birdwatching. He and his partner are also the proud owners of three ‘wild’ axolotls.

Robert speaks fluent French and Italian and is currently learning Spanish.