



CatholicCare
Diocese of Broken Bay

FAMILY DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Family Dispute Resolution (FDR), often referred to as mediation, is a voluntary process that assists separating families to discuss issues and generate options to reach agreements involving children, families, property and finances.

The Family Law Act requires separating families to make a genuine effort to resolve their parenting issues at FDR before making an application to the court (some exceptions apply). If you are unable to reach an agreement at FDR, and your matter involves children, you will need a S60i Certificate from an FDR practitioner to make an application to the court.

Currently there are no legal requirements to attempt to resolve financial issues through FDR before applying to court, however many people find it useful to undertake FDR as a more positive, less costly alternative to court.

Our practitioners

Our experienced FDR practitioners/mediators are accredited and registered with the Attorney Generals Department. FDR practitioners do not take sides, or make decisions for you. Our practitioners support both parties to focus on the best interests of the children.

We endeavour to provide a gender-balanced, co-mediation model of FDR and can assist you to access any support services you may require.

How quickly can we meet?

Depending on client availability, we try to see clients for their initial assessment within a 2 week time frame.

What to expect

Initially each party meets separately with an FDR practitioner for an assessment. This is an opportunity to speak confidentially to the FDR practitioner. The practitioner then assesses whether FDR is suitable for your situation. Information is given about the process, children's needs and how to prepare for a joint session.

After assessment both parties will be asked to complete an online pre-mediation course which takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. If FDR is considered appropriate, a joint confidential mediation will be scheduled. More than one mediation session may be required.

Common topics

Topics for FDR include (but are not limited to):

- Parenting agreements
- Time children spend with their parents
- Changeovers
- Communication
- Children's education
- Special days eg. Christmas
- School holidays
- Financial contributions
- Spending time with grandparents
- Property/financial division

Post-separation parenting course

CatholicCare offers an optional post-separation parenting course called *Keeping Kids in Mind*. This is an intensive 5 week course for separated parents experiencing medium to high levels of entrenched conflict. It aims to help parents understand the effects of conflict on their children, and find better ways to reduce conflict and emotionally support their children.

Legal advice

Whilst some mediators have legal backgrounds, CatholicCare Diocese of Broken Bay does not provide legal advice. Your practitioner will recommend that you obtain legal advice from an experienced family law professional so you have a clear understanding of your situation and can negotiate in an informed manner.

Fees

All fees are subsidised and reasonable. Concession card holder fees are also available. CatholicCare will not refuse service in cases of genuine financial hardship.

**MORE INFO &
BOOKINGS:**

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