



## **FAMILY LAW**

### **Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) – An Option for You?**

The family law system in Australia strongly encourages separated couples to try to resolve their differences before taking the dispute to Court.

Family Dispute Resolution or FDR is the term used for services, generally mediation, that people can use to help them reach an agreement about family law issues such as property, finances and children.

FDR-trained practitioners help people to work through their disputes, consider options and work out whether an agreement can be reached on all, or even some, of the issues. Attendance at a FDR mediation session is a compulsory step before parents can apply to the Family Court for a parenting order about their children, unless:

- the parents are applying for consent orders;
- the parent is responding to an application lodged by the other party;
- the matter is urgent;
- there has been, or there is a risk of, family violence or child abuse;
- a party is unable to participate effectively (eg due to living in a remote area);  
or
- a person has seriously contravened a Court Order made in the last 12 months.

A party can only make an application to the Family Court for parenting orders once they have a certificate from an accredited FDR practitioner, but subject to the above exceptions.

Anything said during FDR mediation is confidential (and cannot be used in Court), except in certain circumstances, such as to prevent a threat to someone's life or health for example.

This information constitutes general information only. If you require detailed advice on Family Dispute Resolution, or any other family law issue, please contact Natalie Dimmock at Murfett Legal Pty Ltd on (08) 9388 3100 or [natalie@murfett.com.au](mailto:natalie@murfett.com.au).