

Separation can feel overwhelming – do you go to lawyers? Do you go to mediation? What’s the difference? Do we have to go anywhere if we know what we want? What if you can’t afford lawyers? How do we do what’s best for the kids?

Let us help break it down for you.

Regardless of whether you have agreed on how to separate your property and/or spend time with your children, you have three options;

1. Go to family dispute resolution
2. Go to a family lawyer
3. Attempt to make decisions about your property/parenting matters yourselves and complete an application to the Family Court of Australia for consent orders (property and/or parenting) and/or create a parenting plan.

It is wise to read our ‘Family Mediation Booklet for property and parenting’ as it explains the mediation process for parenting and/or property in full detail.

If you’re just not sure whether to start, here are some things to consider about family dispute resolution;

- Family Dispute Resolution allows you and your ex-partner to make decisions about your property and parenting matters;
- Is cost effective;
- Is not a lengthy process;
- Encourages you to seek legal advice and links you in with other Services you may find helpful;
- Provides specialist support from professionals who work with children in separating families,
- Provides you with a written signed mediated property agreement and/or parenting plan that you can ask a lawyer to convert or you can convert yourselves into an application for Family Court Orders;
- You don’t have to see your ex-partner necessarily. There are processes in place to help all parties feel safe but still be able to use the mediation process;
- If you and your ex-partner don’t reach an agreement, you will still have gained information from your Mediator about the family law process and will be more understanding of what information your lawyer requires in order to provide you with advice;
- Is an emotionally supportive process;
- Mediation as a process works in conjunction with Family Lawyers. You should receive legal advice from a family lawyer if you go to mediation and a family lawyer can assist you with your mediated agreements if you reach them in mediation. The two processes compliment each other;
- If you’re not sure whether you convert your agreement into an application for consent order without the assistance of a lawyer, have a look at the application form online and see what you think. Go to [www.familycourt.gov.au](http://www.familycourt.gov.au) to download the application for consent order forms. The same goes for

parenting plans. If you're not sure whether you seek helping making your plan, have a look at our 'Family mediation booked for parenting and property.'

To find out more information and specific details about costs, time frames, etc regarding making applications for Family Court orders, go to [www.familycourt.gov.au](http://www.familycourt.gov.au)

**To make an appointment call us on 6223 56 12**