

What to expect at your first appointment with a family lawyer

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Date: Monday November 28, 2022

Separation can be one of the most challenging and stressful times for most people. There are many things to consider after separation such as your living arrangements, dividing property and finances, and arrangements for your children.

It is normal to find separation, or the thought of separating, a daunting process. By taking the first step and making an appointment with one of our family lawyers, we will equip you with the knowledge and confidence you need to make informed and practical decisions for your future.

Preparing for your first appointment with a family lawyer

Prior to your first appointment with a family lawyer, it can be a good starting point to think about your goals and what you hope to achieve. This can be in the short term or long term. This helps us to prioritise what is most important to you from the outset, whether that be your financial security, the time you spend with your children or living arrangements for the children.

Prepare some notes to refer to

We appreciate that separation is personal and that some details might be difficult to share. It is important to know that what you discuss with your lawyer is confidential so the more details you can provide at your first appointment, the better we can understand how we can assist you. Sometimes it can help to write down some brief notes in advance, with basic details, key dates and any information you feel is useful.

Write down questions you want answers to

It is also common to have a lot of questions about what you are facing. Writing these questions down and bringing them along to your appointment can help ensure that your questions will be addressed.

Do not delay making that first appointment with a family lawyer

The most important thing is to not delay having your first appointment with your family lawyer. Seeking legal advice early provides you with the most options.

Where you need to settle property and financial matters with your former partner or spouse, there are strict time limits that apply to start proceedings for a property settlement. It is advisable to obtain legal advice early to find out how the time limits might affect you and to protect your financial future.

What happens during the first appointment with a family lawyer?

Your initial appointment is your opportunity to tell us about your situation and share with us any concerns you may have.

Separation affects everyone differently. We take the time to listen to your concerns and needs and ask you some questions that help us understand the potential legal issues. We will then provide you with legal advice as to your entitlements and obligations, that is tailored to your individual circumstances.

We will give you a clear idea of the range of options and solutions available to you and an estimate of costs. We focus on negotiating settlements out of court and helping you achieve the best possible outcome in a timely and cost-effective manner. Where litigation is necessary, we provide expert representation and guidance at court.

What will it cost?

We provide your first family law appointment free of charge.

We understand that you may be conscious of legal costs and will provide you with sensible and pragmatic advice so that you can achieve a cost-effective resolution.

Before we start working with you, we will send you a cost agreement that sets out how we charge, so that you have a clear understanding of what our costs will be. We adopt an honest and upfront approach to costs and will work with you to ensure that your legal costs are kept to a minimum.

Separation can be daunting, but it doesn’t have to be overwhelming. Contact us to book in your first appointment with one of our experienced family lawyers.

Contacting a family lawyer

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This blog is of a general nature and should not be relied upon as legal advice. If you require further information, advice or assistance for your specific circumstances, please contact us.