



Court-Ordered Dispute Resolution

For separating couples who have been ordered to attend Dispute Resolution by the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia.

What is Dispute Resolution?

Dispute Resolution, also known as mediation, can help couples who are separating to resolve their family law disputes.

Disputes may include conflicts over parenting and the care of children, child support, financial arrangements and how to divide their property.

Our service is provided with a focus on safety, the best interests of children, and ensuring that both people can participate.

Visit www.rav.org.au/family-dispute-resolution for more information.

About our practitioners

Our highly-experienced Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners (FDRPs) are accredited by the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department and are qualified to work with couples and families going through divorce and separation. FDR is regulated by the *Family Law Act 1975 (Commonwealth)* and the *Family Law (Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners) Regulations 2008*.

What's the process?

1. Individual intake assessment

Before the Dispute Resolution session, both you and the other person involved in the dispute will attend a separate, individual assessment with an FDRP.

This appointment allows the FDRP to understand your situation and to help you understand and prepare for the Dispute Resolution process.

The FDRP will also consider the different options available, to make sure that the process is appropriate to your case.

They may offer referrals to other services that they believe may help you.

Relationships Australia Victoria (RAV) welcomes and respects diversity and we can adapt our service to meet the needs of people from different backgrounds, including LGBTIQ+ people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

We take the safety and wellbeing of our clients very seriously. If you have any concerns about the safety of you or your children, please tell us immediately. If Dispute Resolution is not suitable for you and your circumstances, we will provide appropriate referrals to other services.

2. Dispute Resolution session

Dispute Resolution uses a step-by-step process to help people involved to negotiate and reach an agreement. With the assistance of the practitioner, the people involved:

- identify the issues that need to be resolved
- are supported to communicate with each other clearly and respectfully
- explore and discuss different ideas and options
- negotiate about these options
- try and make agreements about some or all of these issues
- where a child is involved, focus on the child's best interests.

Can my lawyer attend the session?

Unless you are self-represented, it will be assumed that your lawyer will be involved in the Dispute Resolution session. They may also attend the intake assessment if organised in advance with the FDRP.

3. Post-session options

After the Dispute Resolution session, both parties will be given the option to attend further sessions, if this is needed and if both parties agree.

At the conclusion of the process, the RAV practitioner will complete a Certificate of Dispute Resolution to be given to the Court.

This certificate records the outcome of the Dispute Resolution process.

Please note: We are obligated to inform all prospective clients that your choice to participate in the Dispute Resolution process will be recorded on the certificate and considered in any decision about responsibility for payment of a party's legal costs.

How is this service delivered?


Individual assessments and Dispute Resolution sessions are currently provided online via Zoom. Face-to-face sessions may be organised in exceptional circumstances.

How much does it cost?

We are a community-based, not-for profit organisation that receives funding from the Australian Government. While fees are charged for some of our services, we work to ensure that our services are affordable for our clients. We will talk to you about any applicable fees when you call us.

How do I get started?

To get started, one party contacts us to organise an individual intake assessment:

 **1300 364 277**

 **mediation@rav.org.au**

We will then contact the other party, in writing, to organise an individual intake assessment with them.

All Intervention Orders and Court Orders will be requested at this time, and the FDRP may request other Court documents as well.

Once this is organised, we will schedule a tentative time for all parties to attend a Dispute Resolution session.

About us

Relationships Australia Victoria has over 70 years' experience providing family and relationship support services across Melbourne and Victoria.

We are committed to providing safe, inclusive and accessible services for all people.



We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways of Australia and we support Aboriginal people's right to self-determination and culturally safe services.