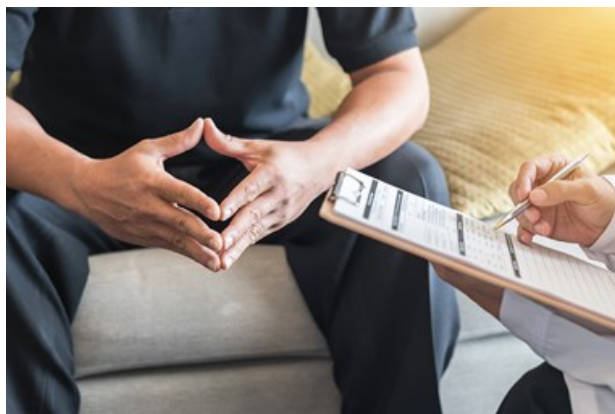




Resources and support services after separation

Author: [Katie Norris](#)

Email: info@emerafamilylaw.com.au

Date: Sunday April 28, 2024

We know firsthand the toll that separation and the family law process can take on your mental, physical, and financial health. Whether you're negotiating the complexities of a [property settlement](#) or [parenting arrangements](#), alongside working closely with your family lawyer, it can be helpful to engage in health and well-being support and other professional services assistance. This article provides an overview of some resources and services that you (or someone you know) may wish to engage with following separation.

If you are in immediate danger or at risk of family violence or harm, please contact Emergency Services on [000](#).

Health and well-being support resources after separation

Separation can be hard, especially if you are navigating the family law pathway. Both before and during the family court process, the following support services and resources may be able to assist.

Your personal support network

It is important to prioritise your health and well-being at all stages post-separation and during the family law process. Where possible, make sure to speak with your friends and family and allow them to provide you with emotional and practical support where needed. A word of caution – every separation is different so try not to rely on friends for family law advice. This should only be provided by a qualified family lawyer.

Your general practitioner

We recommend reaching out to your GP if you are suffering from poor physical and/or mental health following a relationship breakdown. Your GP can deal with any immediate issues and make the appropriate referrals/arrangements where ongoing treatment is required. If you are struggling with your mental health, a referral to a psychologist can be arranged.

A counsellor/psychologist

A counsellor or psychologist will provide you with a safe space to express your feelings without judgement. They can also provide you with the tools/mechanisms needed to deal with the challenges and changes that stem from the breakdown of a relationship and any resulting health issues.

Mental health hotlines

There are a number of mental health hotlines that you can contact depending on your specific requirements and demographic, some of which are outlined below:

• [Beyond Blue online](#) or by phone: [03 9810 6100](#)

• [Lifeline online](#) or by phone: [13 11 14](#)

• [Rainbow Door online](#) or by phone: [1800 729 367](#) (for members of the LGBTIQ+ community)

• [Gay and Lesbian Switchboard online](#) or by phone: [1800 184 527](#) (for members of the LGBTIQ+ community)

• [Mensline online](#) or by phone: [1300 78 99 78](#) (specifically for men)

• [SANE online](#) or by phone: [1800 187 263](#) (for people affected by complex mental health issues)

Family violence support services

These hotlines are for people who are experiencing or are afraid of [family violence](#).

• [Safesteps \(VIC\) online](#) or by phone: [1800 015 188](#)

• [1800Respect online](#) or by phone: [1800 737 732](#)

Financial support after separation from your partner

Accountants or financial advisors

A family law lawyer cannot provide you with specific financial or tax advice as this is outside the scope of their expertise.

To ensure that you are fully aware of your financial position and any repercussions your separation may have on your finances, we recommend seeking financial/accounting advice alongside legal advice. We particularly recommend this course of action if you and/or your ex-partner are self-employed and/or have an interest in a business, partnership, company, trust, self-managed superannuation fund etc.

Your accountant may also be able to assist you to gather your financial documents required to fulfill your [duty of disclosure](#) as they are likely to have access to any financial documentation that you are required to provide.

Services Australia/Child Support

Depending on your situation, you may need to update Services Australia on your current relationship status. This is particularly important for matters involving children. Where living arrangements have changed, you may be entitled to subsidies, government assistance and/or child support.

Family law legal fees

The family law process can be expensive. If you are unable to fund your legal fees, [Legal Aid](#) may be available to you (you will need to meet the eligibility criteria), or you may be able to obtain legal advice/assistance from a local Community Legal Centre.

If you require financial assistance in meeting your legal fees, please notify our lawyers and they will be able to provide you with further information about your options and services available.

[FREE ADVICE FROM A FAMILY LAWYER: 03 9006 8907](#)

Dispute resolution services in family law

Dispute resolution is a type of mediation in family law aimed at settling your disputes without court intervention. It is a more cost-effective, faster and less stressful option.

Dispute resolution services such as Relationships Australia and Better Places Australia provide government subsidised dispute resolution services (mediation) A mediator will assist you and your former partner to reach an agreement in respect of parenting arrangements and/or assist you to reach a property settlement agreement. Private mediation options are also available and often recommended if that is a financially viable option.

Reaching an agreement in mediation will hopefully help you and your former partner maintain an amicable relationship and keep legal costs down. These services also provide resources and courses to educate, encourage and advocate for respectful post-separation relationships.

It is, however, important that you reach out to a family lawyer:

- prior to any mediation to ensure that you have a clear understanding of your entitlements; and
- following mediation to formalise any agreement reached.

Mediation is not always appropriate (for example, in circumstances where there is family violence), so we recommend that you get legal advice as a first step.

You can learn more detail about mediation in family law in our earlier blog, [“How does mediation work?”](#)

Other useful services and resources after separation

The [Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia website](#) is a useful resource. The website provides a list of several family law support services, including:

- The Family Relationships Advice Line: [1800 050 321](#)
- [Family Relationships Online](#)
- [Family Advocacy and Support Services online](#) or by phone: [1800 737 732](#)

[iRefer VIC](#) is a family law service information and referral database created by the [Victorian Pathways Network](#) to assist people in connecting with service providers that best support them and their family law needs. There is even an app!

Get help from a family lawyer

If you have any specific support requests or questions, please feel free to raise these concerns during your initial free consultation or otherwise throughout the course of your matter. Emera Family Law will be able to provide you with advice relevant to your individual circumstances.

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.