

FDR Conferences by Telephone

The Legal Services Commission provides an independent and confidential Family Dispute Resolution service. The parties may be legally assisted during the process. This is known as **Family Law Conferencing**.

Family Law Conferences give parties the opportunity to discuss issues regarding children or property following separation with the assistance of a neutral Chairperson. It can help parties resolve issues out of court and reach solutions together.

In some situations these discussions can occur via **telephone**. Telephone conferences can be as effective as being in the same room. Sometimes they may be the preferred alternative to a face-to-face session.

Telephone conferences are particularly useful if there are **safety concerns**, the parties live in different or **remote** locations, or the parties **cannot attend** in person.

Before a telephone conference

Before a telephone conference, confirm with the FDR Unit and your lawyer (if you have one) that you are available to participate in the conference by phone for the duration of the conference (up to 3 hours).

If you have a lawyer, you should talk to them before the conference to provide your instructions and discuss possible outcomes. Your lawyer will tell you if you should go to their office in person on the day of the conference. Do not attend the Legal Services Commission.

If you do not have a lawyer, you should tell the FDR Unit what outcome you would like to see at the conference.

You will receive a Confidentiality Agreement and a FDRP Regulations Form. These must be signed and returned to the FDR Unit before the conference takes place.

What happens at a telephone conference?

Usually, the Chairperson will call each party separately at the scheduled time of the conference and explain the process (through their lawyer, if they are represented).

Once the Chairperson has spoken with each party, they will then convene a telephone conference call with the parties (either individually or through their lawyers). The Chairperson will facilitate the discussion by phone and assist the parties to reach an outcome. The Chairperson will allow each party to speak privately with their lawyer (if they have one) during the conference.

Next steps

If parties cannot reach an agreement at a conference, the Chairperson will discuss next steps and whether a s 60I Certificate of Dispute Resolution should be issued.

If an agreement is reached at the conference and the parties are legally represented, the lawyers will prepare an agreement for each party to sign. If the parties are not legally represented, the Chairperson will prepare the agreement.

Contact

To confirm your participation in a telephone conference or if you have any other queries, contact the FDR Unit by calling **8111 5534** or emailing fdrsecretary@lsc.sa.gov.au.

For legal advice, call the **Legal Helpline** on **1300 366 424**.