

PRESS RELEASE

The Launch of a New Era in Family Law

The Australian Collaborative Practice Guidelines for Lawyers were launched by the Law Council of Australia on Sunday evening.

Produced to assist practitioners in the collaborative process, the Practice Standards are intended to govern their relationship with all participants including their professional colleagues, Courts and the general public so that everyone will benefit. It is envisaged that the Guidelines will be reviewed in approximately two years time.

The release of these Guidelines is welcomed by Clarissa Rayward, Director of Brisbane Family Law Centre (BFLC), a firm favouring the “collaborative” approach in which both parties and their solicitors engage in negotiation with a view to resolution, avoiding the Courts in the process and saving all parties as much stress as possible.

This method has been used successfully overseas with studies in the United States and Canada showing settlement rates of over 95%.

The Practice Standards provide practitioners with a description of collaborative practice and set out firm guidelines for them in relation to how the process should work in an ethical and impartial manner, respecting the confidentiality of the participants and assisting everyone to manage the progress of the dispute and conflict resolution to ultimately reach a decision in keeping with the collaborative



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a SPECIALIST FAMILY LAW FIRM focusing on collaborative law, mediation and out of Court dispute resolution

method.

BFLC has found that this method enables couples to successfully resolve their divorce through a collaborative process, benefitting themselves, their children and their family as a whole. The motivation is for everybody to work out a settlement that satisfies all parties. BFLC actively involves other neutral professionals, such as financial advisors and/or counsellors, and in fact has experts in these fields available on-site at their Albion offices.

“The hope is to keep everyone communicating”, points out Ms Rayward, “which is the best outcome for all, especially when children are involved”.

“As the Court system becomes more and more congested this innovative and more financially viable option is going to become more and more popular”, Ms Rayward said. “As collaborative law becomes more common and widely recognised I am positive that couples who are faced with the breakdown of their marriage will find it the more appealing option and maybe their first required point of call”.

A recent client of BFLC who chose this method to successfully resolve a complex property settlement involving many businesses and investments had only good things to say about collaborative law.

It is Ms Rayward’s hope that collaborative law will be embraced by the wider community as the best option in family law so as disputes can be resolved early and with the least amount of emotional and financial stress to those involved.

For further information, contact BFLC on (07) 3862 1955 or refer to our website www.brisbanefamilylawcentre.com.au

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