



PATERSON  
& DOWDING  
EST. 1987

FAMILY LAWYERS & MEDIATORS

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ***Do I need a Court Order?***

There are a number of options available to parties in relation to settling arrangements for children. Whilst it is not necessary, we recommend agreements be documented in writing via a Parenting Plan or Court Order. Our recommendation will however depend upon the circumstances of your case.

### ***Do I need to attend mediation?***

Save for in cases involving family violence or in urgent circumstances parties to a parenting dispute are required to participate in mediation with a registered Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner prior to initiating Family Court proceedings concerning children.

### ***How long will it take to resolve my matter?***

In the event you are unable to reach an agreement and it becomes necessary to commence proceedings, the Family Court of Western Australia estimates that matters will take approximately 2 to 2½ years to reach a final hearing.

### ***What can I expect my costs to be?***

Once we have had an opportunity to assess your matter we will provide you with an estimate of the likely range of fees. In the event your matter proceeds to Court we are obliged to provide you with cost notifications at various stages of the process.

### ***Will my children's wishes be taken into account?***

Children's views may be taken into account by the Court, subject to the child's age and maturity and in the absence of any undue influence from either parent or other family members. The weight given to children's views increases with age and maturity.

### ***When should I apply for Child Support?***

There are a number of options available to parties in relation to determining and agreeing Child Support. Please discuss this with your lawyer to consider the best option for you.

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