



## An Australian Government Initiative



# A New Family Law System

---

## Other services for families

### More early intervention and prevention services

Many new services will be established in the next four years to strengthen families and help to prevent separation. These include:

- up to 40 new pre-marriage and family relationship education services to assist in positive family relationship formation and development
- 45 new men and family relationship services, and
- 35 new family relationship counselling and skills services.

More funding has also been provided for the delivery of specialised family violence services and to Men's Line Australia.

### Expanded Dispute Resolution Services

Expanded dispute resolution services will support the changes to the law requiring parents (with some exceptions) to undertake some form of dispute resolution before they can file a parenting matter in the courts.

Family dispute resolution such as mediation assists people to reach agreements on parenting arrangements, avoiding court action that often escalates and entrenches conflict. Parenting arrangements reached through agreement are more likely to work than court-imposed orders and avoid the emotional and financial impact of litigation in family issues.

While new Family Relationship Centres will provide much of this dispute resolution, services provided by other community-based mediation and similar services will help meet the expected demand.



### **More Contact Orders Program services**

The Contact Orders Program works with high conflict families where contact has broken down between non-resident parents and children. Fifteen new Contact Orders Program services will be established in the next four years, bringing the total number of services to 20 across Australia.

The Contact Orders Program services assist families through group work and individual and family sessions. The Family Relationship Centres and the courts will be able to refer high conflict families to the services to help them resolve disputes over contact with children.

The expansion of the program will mean more separated parents in conflict over contact will have an alternative to taking their disputes to the court. This will lead to better outcomes for families by reducing conflict and helping to re-establish contact between parents and children.



### **More Children's Contact Services**

Handover of children from one parent to another can be flash points in cases involving conflict or violence. Children's contact services provide a neutral venue for safe handovers and, where necessary, supervised contact with non-resident parents or other family members.

Thirty new children's contact services will help separating parents maintain a relationship with their child.

They also enable contact to be re-established and maintained while a family is being helped by other services, such as the Contact Orders Program, to reduce conflict and resolve contact disputes.

This measure will bring the total number of children's contact services funded by the Australian Government to 65 and, importantly, will ensure more families around Australia receive this assistance.



Information about existing services already offered across Australia is available at [www.familylaw.gov.au](http://www.familylaw.gov.au) or by calling **1800 050 321**.

---