



THE LAW SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Our ref: ADR:DHmj1443463

27 February 2018

Chief Judge William Alstergren
Federal Circuit Court of Australia
Melbourne Registry
GPO Box 9991
Melbourne VIC 3001

Dear Chief Judge,

The Family Law Settlement Service (“FLSS”)

It was a pleasure to meet with you last week. During our meeting, you asked if I could provide additional information regarding the Family Law Settlement Service (FLSS).

The FLSS is a mediation program administered by The Law Society of New South Wales' Alternative Dispute Resolution Department and is suitable for family law matters. The program is designed to avoid the costs, uncertainty and delays of having a dispute determined at a final hearing.

Parties participate in mediation to maintain control of the decision-making process and to make a good faith attempt to resolve their dispute. The mediator will provide a structure for parties to find common ground and discuss the issues in dispute. All agreements are made between the parties – there are no imposed decisions.

Financial or property disputes are generally best referred at the post-conciliation conference stage, however, can be referred at any time practitioners deem appropriate. Parenting matters can also be referred through the FLSS and are allocated to mediators who are also Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners.

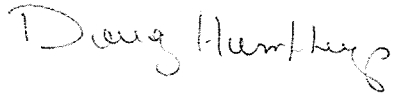
The fee payable is \$990.00 per party - this covers the mediator's fee (\$825.00) and The Law Society of New South Wales' non-refundable administration fee (\$165.00). The fee covers a two-hour preliminary conference and preparation (one hour per party); and three-hour mediation session. If the mediation goes for longer than three hours, then the parties will be charged at an hourly rate as advised by the mediator during the preliminary conference.

The FLSS Panel consists of solicitors and barristers who are also qualified mediators. To be appointed to the Panel they must have demonstrated that they have had a substantial involvement in family law in the three years prior to being appointed. They conduct conflict of interest checks before agreeing to be appointed to a matter, to ensure impartiality. We have panellists located throughout New South Wales.

The Law Society is currently concentrating on promoting awareness of the FLSS amongst the profession and the Courts. It is also increasing its presence at the Family Law Courts over the coming weeks, starting at the Federal Circuit Court at Parramatta, to provide advice to solicitors about the Service.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information about the Service.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Humphreys".

Doug Humphreys OAM
President