

Family Matters

THE NEWSLETTER OF BERRY FAMILY LAW: SUMMER2020



Meet Jessica Black

Jessica's reflections on working at Berry Family Law:

I chose to work in family law because it involves helping people with issues that are most important to them. I help my clients work through their separation to reach agreements that best suit their family.

It is very rewarding to see the transformation in my clients from when I first meet with them to the completion of their legal matter.

Jessica is passionate about family law and offers her clients an empathetic and caring approach. She is committed to achieving the best possible outcome for her clients and has a particular focus on ensuring that the best interests of the children have been met.

Jessica understands the complexities of family breakdown, having worked in post separation services since 2006. Her aim is to provide clear advice and empower her clients with the knowledge to make well informed decisions through what is often the most difficult period in their lives. She is able to offer her clients alternative and creative options to resolve matters without the need to go to Court.

Jessica obtained a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Chinese (Mandarin) and Sociology, from Latrobe University. After completing a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice at Leo Cussen Centre for Law she was admitted to practice in February 2012. She has worked exclusively in family law since then and has been a volunteer at the Women's Legal Service Victoria since May 2013.



Berry Family Law

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Separation mistakes that can cost you money

Separation costs money, the costs of mediation, lawyers and other experts. There are also mistakes that cost people lots of money and which should be avoided.

Posting on social media

This one is the quickest ways to annoy your ex-partner. What could have been an amicable settlement may end up being more like a war-zone.

Don't post things like 'here's my ex...what a loser!' or images of your new lover and how you have 'finally found true love'. This may feel good, but the feeling won't last when you are served with a Family Court application.

Negotiating with an ex-partner

Trying to negotiate directly with an ex you don't trust is a sure way of costing you time and money. If you don't trust your ex because they have betrayed you or lied to you and you feel that they don't care about yours or the children's needs, then trying to reach agreement is a classic mistake.

Not getting a divorce lawyer

If you believe that using a family lawyer costs money – think about what it will cost if you agree to something without proper advice. Obtaining advice could save you thousands of dollars. Don't be fooled into thinking you know the law. Your friend who had a property settlement might try to offer advice. The facts of their case were different. Their settlement arose from their facts, not yours.

Involving the Children

Children are not the means for getting what you want. They should never be involved in personal and intimate matters between you and your ex-partner. If your communication is non-existent get professional support to help you find ways to deal with this situation.

Putting your head in the sand

We know that for many people the heartbreak of separation is overwhelming. You may be struck with grief and emotional distress. It may feel easier to put your head in the sand. In the short-term this may be what you need, but do whatever you must to get into action mode. It's so much better for you than procrastinating and avoiding the inevitable. In cases of long delay, you may lose your right to a property settlement or spouse maintenance.

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