

Family Matters

THE NEWSLETTER OF BERRY FAMILY LAW: AUTUMN 2021



Meet Lisa Collier, Accredited Family Law Specialist

Lisa is an Accredited Family Law Specialist and has built a reputation over the many years she has worked in family and relationship law as a trusted advisor and expert in the field. She combines her high level of legal expertise with an understanding and empathetic approach. She is sensitive to the needs of clients at all times.

Family law is a complex area of the law which can be daunting for clients who are unfamiliar with such a difficult area. Lisa will help guide you through the system by giving you the best possible advice in an easy to understand manner. She appreciates the importance of listening to clients and will provide practical, objective and realistic advice at all times.

Lisa practises in all areas of family law including financial, parenting and maintenance matters. She also has a keen interest in assisting clients entering into or during relationships and marriages with wealth and asset protection by way of Financial Agreements.

Lisa has developed a particular expertise and interest in complex property matters and is known for her forensic and tenacious approach. She promotes cost-effective and

negotiated outcomes for all clients but is a forceful advocate, if required, and is an experienced litigator.

Lisa commenced her legal career in 1998 and has practised exclusively in family law since that time. She joined Berry Family Law in 2014, having previously been a director of a specialist family law firm and Special Counsel in family law at a mid-tier Melbourne CBD commercial firm.

Lisa's Reflections:

I became a family lawyer because I wanted a career where I could genuinely help people.

It has been, and continues to be, an absolute privilege to help people through what is often the most difficult and emotionally distressing period of their lives, filled with uncertainty and, often, a feeling of disempowerment.

To see a matter to conclusion and being integral to giving back to clients a sense of certainty and emotional strength is very rewarding.



Berry Family Law

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Separation mistakes that can cost you money

Separation costs money. There are also mistakes that cost people lots of money and which should be avoided.

Posting on social media

This one is the quickest way 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 your or the children's needs, then trying to reach agreement is a classic mistake.

Not getting a divorce lawyer

Using a family lawyer does cost money – but 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. However, their settlement arose from their facts, not yours.

Not getting valuations

You may have an idea what your home or business is worth. But that may be very wrong. Keeping an over-valued asset or giving an under-valued one to your spouse may cost far more than the valuation fee. And better still your family lawyer can normally make you responsible for only half the valuation fee.

Not doing due diligence

It is your family lawyer's role to check documents to make sure the figures stack up. Experience from many cases has taught them where to look and how to find things your spouse may not be telling you about.

Not filing in Court

You can spend months and a lot of money going back and forth in unproductive negotiation. Experience from many cases has taught your family lawyer when it is more cost effective for your case to file in Court. It shows you are serious and can bring your spouse to their senses.

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 it's easier to put your head in the sand 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 spousal maintenance.

Sending that angry SMS

You may get satisfaction by telling your spouse what you think in an SMS. But that feeling may be short-lived. That SMS or email will often end up in an Affidavit put before the Judge. Think about what the Judge may think before you click "send".

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