

Legal representation can be expensive, particularly if you are involved in contested court proceedings.

To some extent this is unavoidable. Courts have strict requirements with which parties and their lawyers must comply. Compliance with these requirements can be a costly process. The fees that you incur can also be influenced by the manner in which you and your former partner conduct negotiations or litigation. When parties to a family law dispute are bitter or highly emotional they may behave unreasonably and cause costs to escalate because they are not motivated to compromise in the interests of achieving a resolution of their dispute.

It is our aim to provide you with a high standard of legal representation at a reasonable cost. There are ways in which you can assist us to keep your legal costs to a minimum. These include the following:

- Remember that we are your legal representatives. It is not our role to provide you with counselling or other services. Often family law clients are distressed and look to their legal representatives for emotional support. Whilst we aim to be sympathetic and understanding, we are not qualified to provide you with counselling. Should you require assistance of this nature we will endeavour to refer you to an appropriate person.
  - Try to minimise your telephone calls to our office. We will keep you advised in a timely manner of any developments. This does not mean, however, that we will not welcome your calls if you are concerned about any aspect of your case from time to time and wish to contact us.
  - Email can be an effective and efficient way of communicating with us. However, you need to bear in mind that each time we read or respond to your emails you will incur fees.
  - If you are contacting or visiting our office take some time in advance to think about any questions you wish to raise and make a note of those questions.
  - Our support staff are very experienced. They can often deal with your enquiries. Speak to our support staff first. They will refer you to a solicitor should this be necessary.
  - We endeavour to work as a team. Our team members have different levels of experience and expertise and our fee rates vary accordingly. When it is appropriate to do so we may delegate work to another team member who can carry out that work at a lower cost to you. Your acceptance of the delegation of work will assist in minimising your costs. Work will not be delegated to any team member who is not sufficiently qualified or experienced to handle it competently. You are, of course, always welcome to contact and to deal with a senior team member should you wish to do so.
  - If we ask you to obtain information or documents or otherwise assist in the preparation of your case, please do so promptly and as thoroughly as you can. The more that you can do the less we need to do and therefore the less it will cost you. Please contact us, however, if you are unable to do what we have asked as we may be able to clarify what is required or obtain the information or documents by other means. Also try to avoid providing us with too much information or material. It will save you money if we do not have to go through large quantities of material to find what is relevant.
  - Try to maintain a civil relationship with your former partner if this is at all possible. This will significantly enhance the prospects of an early resolution.
  - Accept and act upon our advice. Our team members have a wealth of experience and will always have regard to your best interests when providing you with advice. If you do not understand our advice please ask for clarification.
  - If you are unable to pay our fees as they fall due then you should discuss this with us. We are, in certain circumstances, prepared to enter into arrangements for the deferred payment of our fees. However, it will usually be in your interests to make partial payments or to borrow from others to pay your legal fees in full. It is our practice to require that interest be paid on outstanding accounts.
  - We hope that you will be satisfied with the service that we provide. If you have any concerns about your legal costs please feel free to speak to us. It is our policy not to charge clients for queries concerning our fees.
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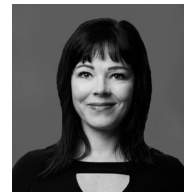
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