



Separation Services Guide

Supporting children, young people
and families in their time of need



Australian Government



Family Law
PATHWAYS
NETWORK

umfc
Upper Murray Family Care

Separation Services Guide



Introduction

This guide assists local families who are going through separation or have already separated. It includes information about support services and aims to assist families to navigate through the various pathways available. The material in this guide should not be substituted for actual advice. Families are encouraged to make contact with services best suited to their needs to receive information particular to their circumstances.

Introduction	3
Albury Wodonga Family Law Pathways Network	3
Counselling and support	4
Family Dispute Resolution (Mediation)	5
Parenting after separation	5
Legal advice	6
Going to court	7
Family violence	7
Mental health	8
Children's welfare	9
Counselling and support for children	10
Child support (financial)	10
Housing	11
Financial Counselling and Assistance	11

Albury Wodonga Family Law Pathways Network

The Albury / Wodonga Family Law Pathways Network (the 'Network') is funded by the Australian Government through the Attorney-General's Department. Upper Murray Family Care (UMFC) auspices the Network and employs a project officer in a facilitation role.

The Network is a means for organisations and individuals working within and alongside the family law system to come together and build better outcomes for families intersecting with the system. The primary aim of the Network is to build referral pathways and share information across a broad range of services.

You can email us at awflpn@umfc.com.au and find information and resources at familylawpathways.com.au



Counselling and support

The breakdown of a marriage or relationship can be a very stressful time. You may be deciding whether to leave a relationship or you may have separated.

It may be helpful to talk to someone you trust or seek assistance from a professional counsellor to clarify your thoughts and sort out what you want to do. Counselling can help at any stage of the separation process. If you are concerned about your safety, please seek assistance from a family violence service (see Family Violence section on pages 7-8).

The following services provide counselling and support to families and individuals (for private services, search 'Counselling' in the Yellow Pages or online.



Service	Website	Phone
Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service	awahs.com.au	1800 421 640
Centacare Southwest NSW – Albury	centacareswsw.org.au	1300 619 379
Gateway Health	gatewayhealth.org.au	Wodonga 02 6022 8888 Wangaratta 03 5723 2000 Myrtleford 03 5731 3500
Relationship Matters Wangaratta	relationshipmatters.com.au	1300 543 396
Women's Centre for Health & Wellbeing Albury-Wodonga	womenscentre.org.au	02 6021 5773
Family Relationship Advice Line	familyrelationships.gov.au	1800 050 321
Kids Helpline (24 hours)	kidshelpline.com.au	1800 551 800
Lifeline (24 hours)	lifeline.org.au	131 114
MensLine (24 hours)	mensline.org.au	1300 789 978
Mission Australia	missionaustralia.com.au	02 6081 9100 1800 888 868
Parent Line – NSW	parentline.org.au	1300 130 052
Parentline – VIC	services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/parentline	132 289
Qspace LGBTQIA+ Family Counselling UMFC		1800 542 847
UMFC	umfc.com.au	Wodonga 02 6055 8000 Wangaratta 03 5720 0000
Women's Information and Referral Exchange (WIRE)	wire.org.au	1300 134 130

Family Dispute Resolution (Mediation)

After separation you may need to make decisions in relation to children and property matters. If you are having difficulty discussing issues with your former partner, mediation may help.

Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) or mediation is a process in which a trained and independent mediator assists separated people to discuss issues in relation to children, property and other matters. The mediator helps the parties to explore and negotiate their options in an effort to reach a mutual and lasting agreement. Mediation is often less expensive, time consuming and confrontational than going to Court.

Mediation is an established part of the family law system and it is now mandatory for most separated parents to attempt mediation before seeking court orders in relation to their children (subject to certain exceptions).

Only an accredited FDR practitioner can issue certificates under the Family Law Act. A section 60I Certificate is usually required before going to court. Mediation is offered locally through Family Relationship Services UMFC or through private mediators. Fees may apply.

For private practitioners, search 'Mediators' in the Yellow Pages or on the Australian Government website.

Service	Website	Phone
Family Relationship Centre UMFC	umfc.com.au	02 6057 5399
Family Relationships Online (Australian Government)	familyrelationships.gov.au fdrr.ag.gov.au	1800 050 321
Legal Aid – NSW Legal Aid – VIC	legalaid.nsw.gov.au legalaid.vic.gov.au	02 6020 7200 1300 792 387
Private Mediators (Search 'Mediators' for local providers)	yellowpages.com.au	-

FDR eligibility subject to legal aid guidelines.

Parenting after separation

Separation doesn't end your involvement and duties as a parent. Children need the continuing affection of both parents, requiring co-operation with your former partner, which may not be easy.

Services are available to assist parents to understand the impact of separation on themselves and their children. This support helps to build relationships between parents so that the focus is on the best interests of the children.

Parents can access information about issues of child behaviour and ages and stages of child development. These can be delivered in a group setting or individually. See below for services that provide parenting programs.

The Children's Contact Service UMFC provides a safe, neutral and child friendly environment for changeovers and supervised contact visits. See below for details.

Service	Website	Phone
Centacare Southwest NSW	centacareswsw.org.au	1300 619 379
Children's Contact Service Catholic Care	catholiccarevic.org.au	Wangaratta 0482 185 136
Children's Contact Service UMFC	umfc.com.au	Albury Wodonga 02 6057 5399
Family Relationship Advice Line		1800 050 321
Family Relationship Services (via The Orange Door)		02 6057 5399
Gateway Health	gatewayhealth.org.au	Wodonga 02 6022 8888 Wangaratta 03 5723 2000 Myrtleford 03 5731 3500

Service	Website	Phone
Mission Australia	missionaustralia.com.au	02 6081 9100 1800 888 868
Parenting Orders Program and Post Separation Counselling UMFC	umfc.com.au	02 6057 5399
Parent Line – NSW	parentline.org.au	1300 130 052
Parent Line – VIC	services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/parentline	132 289
UMFC	umfc.com.au	Wodonga 02 6055 8000 Wangaratta 03 5720 0000

Legal advice

All separated parties should consider getting legal advice to help understand their rights, responsibilities and options. Even where court action is unlikely, legal advice can still play an important role in helping parties reach fair and lasting agreements.

Legal advice is provided by community and private lawyers. All parties should be able to obtain some preliminary legal assistance free or at minimal cost, with ongoing representation being dependent upon the nature of the case and the circumstances of the parties.

It is important to get early legal advice. Lawyers can assist you to negotiate your legal issues and to formalise any agreement reached. Advice can involve such matters as where children should live, how much time they spend with parents and others, whether one party is able to move or travel overseas with children, divorce, property settlements, spousal maintenance and child support.

There are legal services that offer free legal advice in person or over the phone. See below for service details.

Service	Website	Phone
Aboriginal Legal Service NSW / ACT	alsnswact.org.au	1800 733 233
Hume Riverina Community Legal Service (HRCLS)	hrcls.org.au	1800 918 377
Law Access NSW	lawaccess.nsw.gov.au	1300 888 529
Legal Aid NSW Riverina Murray – Albury	legalaids.nsw.gov.au	02 6020 7200
Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service	vals.org.au	1800 064 865
Victoria Legal Aid	legalaids.vic.gov.au	1300 792 387
Women's Legal Service NSW	wlsnsw.org.au	1800 801 501

Private lawyers can provide legal advice for payment of their professional time. Family lawyers are listed in the Yellow Pages under 'Solicitors'. The Victorian and NSW Law Societies can refer you to a Family Law practitioner.

Note that the Albury and District Law Society does not provide referrals but includes a list of all members.

Service	Website	Phone
Albury and District Law Society	albury.lawsociety.com.au	See website
Law Institute of Victoria	liv.asn.au/referral	03 9607 9550
The Law Society of NSW	lawsociety.com.au	02 9926 0300

Going to Court

Sometimes people will need to go to court to resolve their legal issues. Going to court should always be a last resort but if it is necessary then obtaining legal advice is very important.

Contact your local community legal centre or private solicitor to arrange an appointment (see legal services listing on previous page).

Courts also have websites that provide useful information. See below for more details.

Service	Website	Phone
Albury Local and District Court - NSW	localcourt.nsw.gov.au	1300 679 272
Albury Registry, Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia	www.fcfa.gov.au	1300 352 000
Wangaratta Magistrates' Court - Vic	mcv.vic.gov.au/court/wangaratta-magistrates-court	03 5721 0900
Wodonga Magistrates' Court - Vic	mcv.vic.gov.au/court/wodonga-magistrates-court	02 6043 7000

Family violence

Family violence includes violent behaviour that is repeated, controlling, threatening and coercive and that occurs between people who have had, or are having, an intimate relationship.

In most cases, the violent behaviour is part of a range of tactics used by men to exercise power and control over women and children and can be both criminal and non-criminal.

Family violence includes physical assaults and a range of tactics including intimidation, direct or indirect threats, sexual assault, emotional and psychological torment, economic control, property damage, social isolation and any other behaviour that causes a person to live in fear.

Police should be contacted if there has been a recent incident of violence. If a person is in fear of violence then they can contact their nearest family violence service for support.

If a person is in need of legal advice in relation to protective steps, such as intervention orders, they can contact a legal service (see Legal Advice section on page 6). See below for service details.

Service	Website	Phone
Albury Police	police.nsw.gov.au	02 6023 9299 or 000 (emergency)
Centre Against Violence (CAV) – Family Violence and Sexual Assault Services for Women and Children (Vic)	centreatgainstviolence.org.au	03 5722 2203
Domestic Violence Line (NSW) – Crisis Counselling and Referral for Women (24 hours)	facs.nsw.gov.au/domestic-violence/helpline	1800 656 463
Family Violence Law Help	familyviolencelaw.gov.au	2417 Crisis Line 1800 137 732
Gateway Health Mens Behaviour Change Program	gatewayhealth.org.au	Wodonga 02 6022 8888 Wangaratta 03 5723 2000

Family violence - Services (contd.)

Service	Website	Phone
MensLine (24 hours)	mensline.org.au	1300 789 978
Men's Referral Service – Men's Family Violence Counselling and Referral	ntv.org.au	1300 766 491
Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation	mungabareena.org.au	02 6024 7599
Murray River Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVACAS)	legaid.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/community-partnerships/womens-domestic-violence-court-advocacy-program	02 6046 9480 1800 938 227
North East Men's Behaviour Change Program		02 6041 2236
Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre Vic (24 hours)	safesteps.org.au	1800 015 188
Services Australia - Family Violence Counselling and Support	servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/subjects/family-and-domestic-violence	132 850
The Orange Door (Vic)	orangedoor.vic.gov.au	1800 271 157
Wangaratta Police (Family Violence Adviser)	police.nsw.gov.au	03 5723 0888 or 000 (emergency)
Wodonga Police (Family Violence Unit)	police.nsw.gov.au	02 6049 2600 or 000 (emergency)
Women's Centre for Health and Wellbeing Albury-Wodonga	womenscentre.org.au	02 6021 5773
Yes Unlimited – Staying Home Leaving Violence Program and Women's Refuge	yesunlimited.com.au	1800 885 355
1800RESPECT – Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling (24 hours)	1800respect.org.au	1800 737 732

Mental Health

If you are concerned about your mental health or your child's mental health please make an appointment.

To find doctors in your area search "Doctors" in Yellow Pages.

Service	Website	Phone
Albury Wodonga Health (mental health service for all ages)	www.awh.org.au/services-departments/mentalhealth/community-mental-health-services	1300 104 211 (24hr crisis support and triage line)
Beyond Blue (24 hours)	beyondblue.org.au	1300 224 636
Gateway Health	gatewayhealth.org.au	Wodonga: 02 6022 8888 Wangaratta: 03 5723 2000 Myrtleford: 03 5731 3500
Headspace	headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/alburywodonga	1300 332 022
Lifeline (24 hours)	lifeline.org.au	131 114

Mental health - Services (contd.)

Service	Website	Phone
Mental Health Line NSW (24 hours)	health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/Pages/Mental-Health-Line.aspx	1800 011 511
Mind Australia	mindaustralia.org.au	1300 286 463
Mission Australia	www.missionaustralia.com.au	02 6081 9100
Suicide Call Back Service (24 hours)	suicidecallbackservice.org.au	1300 659 467
SuicideLine Vic (24 hours)	sucideline.org.au	1300 651 251
Wangaratta Community Mental Health Service	recovery.awh.org.au/recovery/recovery-ourservices/adult-community-mental-health-services	03 5722 5347 1300 783 347 (24hr crisis line)

Children's welfare

Welfare concerns about children can include physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and other types of issues.

If you have a belief that a child's welfare is in danger, then you can notify the child protection authority in your State. See below for service details.

Service	Website	Phone
The Orange Door (Vic)	orangedoor.vic.gov.au	1800 271 157
Department of Communities and Justice NSW – Child Protection	facs.nsw.gov.au	132 111
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing – Child Protection (Eastern Division)	services.dffn.vic.gov.au/child-protection-contacts	1300 360 391 131 278 (after hours)

Counselling and support for children

There are a range of services that can assist the children of parents who are separating or separated.

These include counselling and other support services. Please see below for more details.

Service	Website	Phone
Gateway Health	gatewayhealth.org.au	Wodonga: 02 6022 8888 Wangaratta: 03 5723 2000 Myrtleford: 03 5731 3500
Headspace	headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/alburywodonga	1300 332 022
Jigsaw Program UMFC	umfc.com.au	02 6057 5399
Junction Support Services	junction.org.au	Wodonga: 02 6043 7400 Wangaratta: 03 5722 4129

Counselling and support for children - Services (contd.)

Service	Website	Phone
Kids Helpline (24 hours)	kidshelpline.com.au	1800 551 800
Legal Aid NSW Best for Kids	bestforkids.org.au	NA
Mission Australia	www.missionaustralia.com.au	02 6081 9100
UMFC	www.umfc.com.au	02 6055 8000
Yes Unlimited – Adolescent Family Counselling	yesunlimited.com.au	1800 885 355
Youth Law	youthlaw.asn.au	03 9113 9500

Child support (financial)

Every parent is responsible for financially supporting their children whether they live with them or not.

The key components of the child support formula include both parents' income, the costs of raising children and the percentage of time each parent cares for the children.

For information about your specific circumstances please contact Services Australia – Child Support (see below).

If you require advice you should contact the Child Support Legal Aid Service in your State or see 'Legal Advice' section on page 6 for a list of legal services.

Service	Website	Phone
Services Australia - Child Support	servicesaustralia.gov.au/separated-parents	131 272
Victoria Legal and Child Support	legallaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/child-support/get-help	1300 792 387
Legal Aid NSW – Child Support Services	legallaid.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/family-law/childsupport-advice	1800 451 784

Housing

Following separation many people find themselves without a place to stay until they can arrange their own housing.

If you find yourself in need of housing there are organisations that can help. Crisis accommodation is provided for persons and families who are in need of urgent temporary accommodation.

Most of these organisations can also refer you to other services that provide longer term accommodation. See below for service details.

Service	Website	Phone
Beyond Housing	beyondhousing.org.au	Wodonga: 02 6055 9000 Wangaratta: 03 5722 8000
Department of Communities and Justice NSW – Housing	facs.nsw.gov.au/housing	1800 422 322

Housing - Services (contd.)

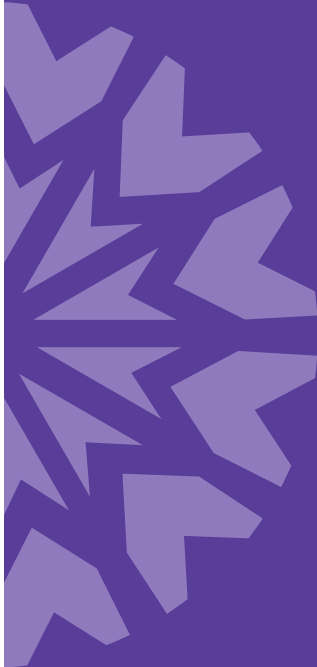
Service	Website	Phone
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Vic – Housing	housing.vic.gov.au	Wodonga: 02 6055 7777 Wangaratta: 03 5722 0555 (after hours)
Mission Australia	www.missionaustralia.com.au	02 6081 9100
St. Vincent de Paul Society	vinnies.org.au/page/Find_Help/NSW/Housing/Quamby_House	02 6021 7860
Yes Unlimited – Crisis Accommodation and Support	yesunlimited.com.au/our-services/accomodationhomelessness/	1800 885 355

Financial Counselling and Assistance

Many people experiencing separation find themselves in financial difficulty.

There are support services that can assist you with financial matters. See below for service details.

Service	Website	Phone
Anglicare NSW Financial Counselling	anglicare.com.au	02 6075 9300
Centrelink - Families	servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/families	136 150
National Debt Helpline	ndh.org.au	1800 007 007
St David's Uniting Care Financial Counselling	unitingvictas.org.au/locations/ovens-murraygoulburn/	02 6021 7099
The Salvation Army Moneycare Albury	salvationarmy.org.au	02 6040 8948
UMFC Financial Counselling	umfc.com.au	Wodonga: 02 6055 8000 Wangaratta: 03 5720 0000
Women's Centre for Health and Wellbeing Albury-Wodonga (No Interest Loans Scheme)	womenscentre.org.au	02 6021 5773
Women's Health Goulburn North East (Wangaratta) (No Interest Loans Scheme)	whealth.com.au	03 5722 3009



For more information.

e: awflpn@umfc.com.au

w: familylawpathways.com.au



UMFC acknowledges the support of the Victorian, NSW, and Australian governments.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians and Elders past and present, who have raised children and taught them about the world around them.

We celebrate diversity and are committed to inclusion for all as a service and a workplace. We are a Child Safe Organisation

