QUEENSLAND
COLLABORATIVE LAW
THE RESPECTFUL DIVORCE PROCESS

The respectful way to separate for you and your family

- Reduce conflict
- Protect your children
- Maintain control
- Aim to preserve long-term relationships

How is collaborative practice different?

Collaborative practice resolves disputes by crafting solutions that you determine.

The collaborative process differs from conventional practices of mediation or going to court in many ways:

- Your differences are resolved with respect, dignity and privacy
- You and your collaborative team sign an agreement to be respectful, open and honest, and not go to court
- You and your former partner decide what is best for you and your children by working together with your respective collaborative lawyers and other professionals
- You are supported by a team which can include legal, financial and psychological professionals who ensure your agreement is fair for you, your former partner and your children.

Queensland's leading association for collaborative law professionals.

qcl.org.au

What is collaborative law?

Separation can be devastating for everyone involved. How well you handle the separation will impact on how well you and your family cope now and adjust in the future.

Collaborative practice provides a positive, respectful and supportive alternative to resolve your issues.

Unlike litigation, collaborative practice focusses on working together to resolve family law differences without going to court.

The collaborative process offers a way to resolve differences with dignity, respect and privacy.

Whether you are married or in a de facto relationship, the process can be used to resolve issues such as:

- Helping you and your children cope with change
- Spending time with your children
- Dividing your property and other assets
- Short and long-term financial support.

Is my case suitable?

Collaborative practice may be an appropriate option for you if you and your former partner:

- Wish to work together and reach parenting solutions that avoid emotional trauma to your children
- Are committed to reaching an agreement that is durable and long lasting
- Believe it is important to create healthy and more holistic solutions for you and your family
- Understand and embrace the necessity to make full and frank disclosure about financial issues
- Want to reduce the emotional cost and hardship of separation.

How does the process work?

In collaborative practice, you each meet with your respective collaboratively-trained lawyer to discuss the process and identify the issues that are important to you.

If both of you agree to use the collaborative process, you and your lawyers sign a *collaborative contract* (or a *participation agreement*), which requires each of you to:

- Behave in a respectful manner towards each other
- Be open and transparent and exchange complete financial information
- Maintain absolute confidentiality throughout the process enabling you to frankly express your needs and concerns
- Focus on your and your former partner's interests and needs to avoid legal positioning.

Through a series of face-to-face meetings between you and your respective lawyers, your lawyers will offer legal advice and facilitate other professionals (accountants, financial advisers, mediators, psychologists and counsellors) to provide any necessary advice and support to reach a tailored agreement.

What's the next step?

If you think collaborative practice might be right for you, the next step is to find a trained collaborative professional in your area.

- **Go to *'find a collaborative professional'* at qcl.org.au**
- **Make an appointment to see a collaborative professional**
- **Send this brochure electronically to your former partner through the website.**