

## Information about Parenting Coordination Service

For the Australian environment Parenting Coordination is:

“ a child focussed management and dispute resolution process in which a mental health or legal practitioner with FDR or mediation training and experience assists high conflict parents to maintain healthy relationships with their children if reasonably possible by: implementing and/or developing parenting plans; monitoring compliance with court orders; assisting to settle ongoing disputes regarding their children and reducing conflict through education on communication and effective decision making to support families to be child centred and to support appropriate family relationships” .

The purpose of a parenting coordination is to offer a process to the parties, especially those in high conflict, that can be utilised to manage and enable separated families to have access to a professional, in a timely manner, who can assist them in the ongoing management of their interactions and to support better management of conflict and enable better outcomes for the children in these families.

Often PC is ordered when final decisions have been made, however this is not exclusive.

This may involve

- Practical assistance with compliance with Court orders
- psychoeducation on parenting
- child centred support
- assisting with minor negotiations
- interventions supportive of mental health issues
- communication strategies
- management of impasses
- conflict management
- assistance with minor adjustment of orders and agreements where agreed

A PC is a professional with experience as:

A mental health or family law professional or a certified and qualified family dispute resolution practitioner in accordance with the Family Law Act having training and experience in family mediation and extensive practical professional experience with family cases involving high conflict coparenting dynamics.

Knowledge and experience in the following areas is important:

- Child development knowledge
- Conflict dynamics skills and knowledge
- Mental health understanding
- Understanding of Family Law and Family Court and Federal Circuit Court processes
- Family violence understanding
- Complex case management skills



**Clients who may benefit from a Parenting Coordination process are (not exhaustive)**

- High conflict clients
- Parents with mental health issues that affect their capacity to parent
- Children whose parents’ conflict is great and are used as messengers
- Clients whose entrenched hatred or behaviours are detrimental to the children
- Clients who need guidance to parent very young children.
- Clients with co-morbidities
- Clients with differing cultural background that may impede their ability to negotiate and experience barriers in Family law.

**Costs are \$260 per hour**

**Usually:** Any legal documentation or report is useful for a PC to be of assistance to any family

**Process:**

- An intake session with each member of the family and significant others.
- A case plan is created
- Individual work with each client is undertaken depending on the issues
- At least monthly sessions for the family (in whatever combinations) are scheduled
- Usually, families benefit from a 24 month engagement
- If the matter returns to court and a report is necessary, this is an additional cost.

**Family Relief’s Package Option**

Family Relief offers a package that is designed to support families to increase commitment to change. The total amount can be paid up front or in instalments with an initial deposit that will ensure that fees are unlikely to be in arrears. Both parties are responsible for 50% of the total package.

Parenting Coordination Package	A 2 year package including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake Session (risk, psychological distress, conflict review)</li> <li>• 3 months weekly sessions up to an hour with each parent/caregiver (24 sessions total)</li> <li>• 6 months fortnightly sessions with each parent/caregiver (26 sessions total)</li> <li>• 15 monthly sessions with each parent/caregiver (30 sessions total),</li> <li>• 24 monthly child engagement sessions</li> <li>• 12 bi-monthly collaboration sessions</li> <li>• Final Parenting Coordination Report</li> <li>• Total Value \$35860</li> </ul>	\$30000
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Parenting Coordination is a service appointed by Family Court Order and selected by the parents. A recommended example can read as follows:

### **Parenting Coordination**

1. Pursuant to s.13C of the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) the parties will participate in the service of Parenting Coordination for at least 12 months or otherwise as directed by the Parenting Coordinator.
2. Unless the Parenting Coordinator is otherwise agreed, the Applicant shall provide to the Respondent, within seven (7) days of the date of these Orders, the names of three (3) proposed Parenting Coordinators together with their cost estimate/retainer agreement (“the Panel list”).
3. The Respondent shall nominate one (1) of the proposed Parenting Coordinators on the Panel list within seven (7) days of receipt of the Panel list.
4. In the event the Respondent fails to nominate a Parenting Coordinator within seven (7) days of receiving the Panel list, the Applicant shall nominate the Parenting Coordinator.
5. The parties will thereafter do all things reasonably necessary to appoint the nominated Parenting Coordinator.
6. The parties have liberty to provide the Parenting Coordinator with a copy of the current parenting order.
7. The parties are directed to attend and participate in the process of Parenting Coordination, and comply with all reasonable directions of the Parenting Coordinator.
8. The parties shall equally share the costs of the Parenting Coordinator.
9. In the event the Parenting Coordinator is required pursuant to s. 13D of the Family Law Act to report to the Court a failure of either party to comply with this order, the non-defaulting party will do all things reasonably necessary to file an affidavit, with the report annexed, on behalf of the Parenting Coordinator.

### **Family Relief’s Mission**

Family Relief is committed to providing a safe healthy space for parents to navigate conflict, trauma and grief challenges and advocates the benefits of this approach to all stakeholders.

Contact Family Relief can be found through AusLaw Concierge, [www.familyrelief.com.au](http://www.familyrelief.com.au), or emailed directly at [mary@familyrelief.com.au](mailto:mary@familyrelief.com.au).