



**ATTORNEY-GENERAL
THE HON PHILIP RUDDOCK MP**

NEWS RELEASE

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NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR FAMILY DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The Government has announced new regulations that will govern the introduction of compulsory dispute resolution in custody cases and the accreditation of family dispute resolution practitioners.

From 1 July, courts will not be able to hear an application for a parenting order in a new case unless the person seeking the order first obtains a certificate from a registered family dispute resolution practitioner. There are some exceptions, such as in cases of family violence or child abuse.

All family dispute resolution practitioners must be included on a new family dispute resolution register in order to issue valid certificates. Accreditation rules are also being introduced to ensure that families receive quality family dispute resolution services.

“The changes reflect the Australian Government’s desire to change the culture of parenting disputes from confrontation to co-operation. We would like to see parents negotiate, not litigate,” said Mr Ruddock.

“Family dispute resolution practitioners and others working in the family law system have an integral role to play in helping families sit down and talk about the arrangements for their children rather than fighting it out in long and costly court battles.”

To help people working in the family law system implement the new requirements, information sessions will be held in all major capital cities and some regional locations across Australia during May 2007.

Further details about the changes and the dates and locations of information sessions are available at www.ag.gov.au/fdrproviders.

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