

**MAGISTRATES COURT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
CIVIL JURISDICTION**

FACT SHEET 70

**CONFERENCE PROCESS
IN FAMILY VIOLENCE RESTRAINING ORDER PROCEEDINGS**

This fact sheet provides information about the conferencing process

What is a Conference?

A Conference (sometimes referred to as a Shuttle Conference) is a process conducted by a Registrar who assists the parties, located in different rooms, to try to reach an agreement and finalise the Family Violence Restraining Order (FVRO) proceedings.

When will a Conference be listed?

The Registrar may convene a Conference at the request of the Court or on the Registrar's own initiative, where:

1. the Court has made an interim FVRO;
2. the respondent has objected to the interim FVRO becoming final; and
3. the applicant and the respondent consent to having their case listed for a Conference.

You will receive a communication from the Magistrates Court requiring you to attend the Conference at a specific time and date. Please ensure that you attend as specified and you follow all the instructions provided.

Who attends the Conference?

The applicant/protected person (the applicant/protected person can also have their lawyer and support persons).

The respondent (the respondent can also have their lawyer and support persons).

The Registrar.

What happens if I do not attend the Conference?

If you do not attend the Conference, the Registrar may dismiss the application or make an order on behalf of the Court (including a final FVRO).

Role of a registrar at the Conference?

The Registrar will attempt to bring the parties to a settlement, will assist in making and developing practical orders that suit the needs of the parties and will explain the purpose and effect of the order on the parties

The Registrar cannot give legal advice, but can talk with you about legal principles that are applied by the Court in deciding cases.

What will happen at the Conference?

The Registrar will move between the rooms, listen to the parties and will encourage them to provide options for reaching an appropriate outcome. This allows:

- Each party to explain their situation;
- The Registrar to assist the parties to define the issues in dispute;and
- Explore and discuss options for settlement.

The parties are expected to make a genuine effort to settle their dispute at the Conference. With that in mind, you should come to the conference:

- With an open mind;
- Prepared to listen;
- With a future focus;
- Prepared to make reasonable compromises, without compromising safety; and
- In cases involving children, with a consideration of the best interest of your children.

What happens if the parties reach agreement?

The Registrar may make orders at the Conference reflecting the terms of the agreement reached by the parties.

What happens if the parties do not reach agreement?

The Registrar may make orders for parties to attend a further Conference or may list the matter for a Final Order Hearing.

Confidentiality

A Conference is conducted in private 'without prejudice' and is confidential. Matters discussed during the conference, or any admissions made, cannot be used outside of the conference.

This is a guide only. The content is subject to change. If you are unsure about any of the information in this fact sheet, contact your nearest Court Registry or seek legal advice.