

Top 10 things to consider after separating from your partner

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After separation from your marriage or de-facto relationship, there are a number of priorities you need to consider to protect your interests as you move through the family law process. In this blog, we look at what we consider to be the top 10.

Whilst your mental well-being is a priority, it is important to also consider your financial well-being and the well-being of any children of the relationship.

Separation is an inherently stressful and emotional time. It can be difficult to think coherently and rationally. The below list is aimed at safeguarding your future and providing you with an initial roadmap to follow, upon separation.

Top 10 tips when separating from your former partner

If you don't already have one, **open your own bank account** and advise your employer to deposit your pay into your new bank account. An online application for a bank account is usually the fastest way to do this but remember, you will need ID such as a passport, driver's license or Medicare card.

If you hold joint bank accounts, credit cards or loans with your former partner, **contact the financial institutions** these are held with and request that these accounts are frozen. This will prevent both you and your former partner from making any withdrawals or incurring any further debt until an agreement can be reached as to how to divide the funds held in these accounts or apportion any debt. Of course, before freezing any accounts, it is important to consider whether you will have access to sufficient funds to support yourself and your children whilst you are navigating a property settlement. If you do not have access to independent funds, it may be wise not to freeze joint bank accounts and credit cards. This is something we can discuss with you, giving consideration to your individual financial circumstances.

Update your passwords to your online banking, email, social media accounts and any other online platforms you use.

If you are moving out of a shared rental property, **advise your landlord** and ensure the residential tenancy agreement is updated accordingly.

If you are moving out of a shared property, **ensure utility accounts are updated** such as water bills, electricity bills, gas bills and internet accounts.

If you have a life insurance policy (either through your superannuation or in a private fund), you may need to **consider updating your beneficiaries.**

You may need to **consider updating your binding death nomination** for your superannuation entitlements. This should be considered even if your superannuation entitlements are held in a Self-managed Superannuation Fund.

If you have a Will, you may need to **consider updating your Will** and if you don't already have one, we strongly recommend you consider making a Will.

If you have an Enduring Power of Attorney or Enduring Power of Guardianship, you may consider revoking them.

Contact a solicitor practicing in family law to find out where you stand and to assist you in reaching an amicable financial resolution.

At Meillon & Bright we specialise in family law. In fact, it's our primary practice so we consider ourselves very good at it.

We work for you and with you to assist you with reaching an amicable and expeditious resolution to all your family law needs, following the breakdown of your relationship, including:

Assessing any Binding Financial Agreement you have in place or in the absence of one, working with you through your property settlement;

Arrangements for the care of any children of the relationship, including who they will live with and spend time arrangements;

Assistance to work through any issues around domestic violence;

Finalising your divorce;

- Negotiating spousal maintenance; and

Assisting you with reviewing your previous Will or drafting a Will for you.

The information contained in this article is of general nature and should not be construed as legal advice. If you require further information, advice or assistance for your specific circumstances, please contact us.