



FEDERAL CIRCUIT AND FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA

Court Child Experts FAQs

What are Court Child Experts?

Court Child Experts are qualified psychologists or social workers who have specialist knowledge in child and family issues after separation and divorce.

Court Child Experts are employees of the Court and work in an area of the Court called the Court Children's Service.

Court Child Experts hold a statutory appointment as a family consultant and an authorisation as a family counsellor. These appointments and authorisations are issued by the Court's Chief Executive Officer.

Under their family consultant appointment, Court Child Experts conduct assessments and prepare reports that have been ordered by the Court (see the fact sheet [Family Consultant FAQs](#)).

Under their family counsellor authorisation, Court Child Experts undertake other duties including:

- providing advice about children in court ordered dispute resolution conferences conducted by registrars of the Court, and
- conducting triage interviews as part of the Court's Lighthouse Project.

Do I only have one Court Child Expert allocated to my case?

A Court Child Expert cannot undertake the role of a family consultant and a family counsellor in the same case. If the Court orders that you attend for a report and a dispute resolution conference, then these will be undertaken by two different Court Child Experts. This is important because anything said to Court Child Expert undertaking the role of a family consultant is not confidential and is admissible as evidence, while anything said to a Court Child Expert undertaking the role of a family counsellor is confidential.

What is the difference between a Court Child Expert and a Regulation 7 Family Consultant?

A Court Child Expert is an employee of the Court while a Regulation 7 Family Consultant is a private practitioner who the Court pays on a fee for service basis to complete reports.

A Court Child Expert undertakes a broader range of duties than a Regulation 7 Family Consultant.

The Court Children's Service oversees the work of both Court Child Experts and Regulation 7 Family Consultants.

Both the Court Child Expert and Regulation 7 Family Consultant have been assessed by the Court as having the requisite qualifications and expertise to provide expert evidence in parenting matters before the Court.