



## Who can help

### **Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria**

To arrange a family meeting

Telephone: 1800 658 528

Website: [www.disputes.vic.gov.au](http://www.disputes.vic.gov.au)

### **Seniors Rights Victoria**

For information, advocacy or legal advice

Telephone: 1300 368 821

Website: [www.seniorsrights.org.au](http://www.seniorsrights.org.au)

### **Victoria Legal Aid**

Telephone: (03) 9269 0120

1800 677 402 (country callers only)

Website: [www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)

### **Community Legal Centres**

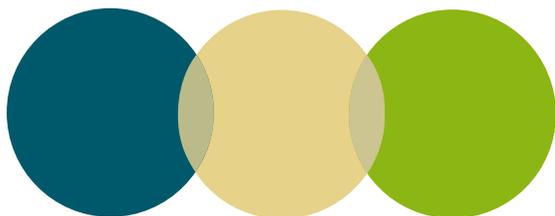
For your nearest centre

Telephone: (03) 9652 1500

Website: [www.fclc.org.au](http://www.fclc.org.au)

### **Interpreters**

DSCV can arrange an interpreter for a telephone call or to come to a meeting.



## About the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (DSCV)

DSCV is a **free**, confidential mediation service offered by the Department of Justice.

Our nationally accredited mediators are experienced in conflict resolution, and are also experienced in running meetings with groups of people to produce outcomes that reduce conflict and work for everyone.

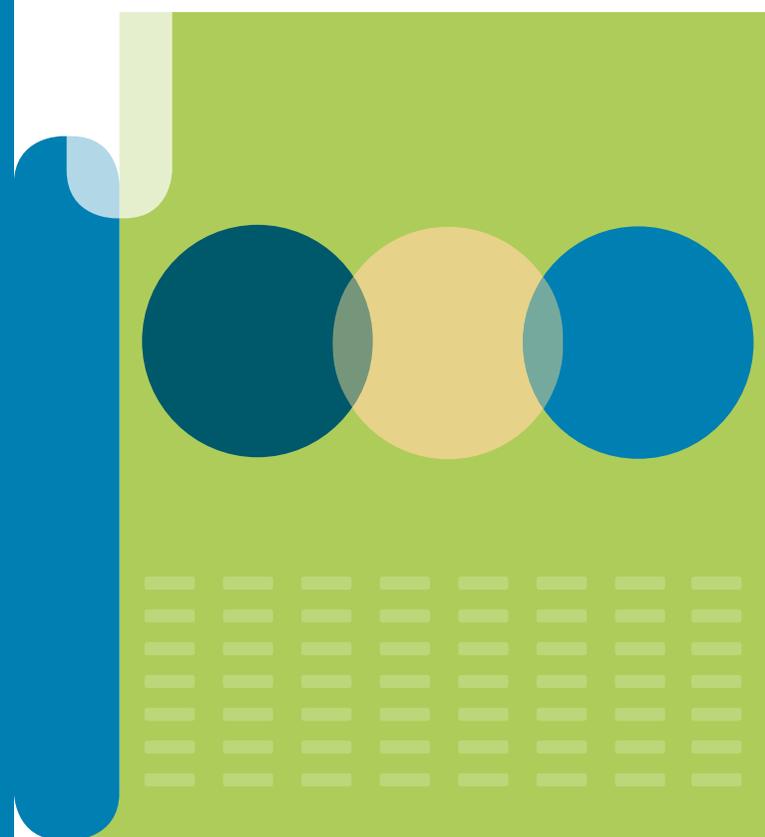
To talk to one of our staff or to arrange a confidential family meeting, call us on 1800 658 528 (throughout Victoria).

For more information about our service, visit our website: [www.disputes.vic.gov.au](http://www.disputes.vic.gov.au)

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## Moving in – Older people and their families



Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria



Department of  
Justice



## Challenges for older people

As people age they may need more help at home. Decisions need to be made about living arrangements and finances. Family members often get involved in these decisions.

## Assets for care arrangements

This is where an older person transfers property or assets or pays a sum of money to a family member in exchange for care. This often involves sale of assets and a complete change of lifestyle, both for the carer and the older person.

## It sounds like a good idea, but . . .

An arrangement like this can seem like the perfect solution. However, things can change in the future. To make it work effectively, careful planning is needed and consideration given to the differing needs, values and perspectives of all concerned.

Family members need to think through the details of the move, its consequences and how long it might last. The earlier that families get together to discuss issues, the better family relationships will remain in the long-term.

## DSCV can help

DSCV can organise and run a family meeting. This is a **free** service for older people and their families.

## What is a family meeting?

A family meeting, facilitated by a trained mediator, is a way for family members to get together to discuss options. It enables older people and their families to have open conversations and together make decisions for the older person's future care and living arrangements.

Sometimes more than one meeting is needed. A second meeting with the same mediator can be arranged.

## What happens in the meeting

An impartial mediator will:

- guide the family members through the discussion,
- make sure everyone's concerns, needs and interests are considered,
- help families explore a range of options.

If the family wants a written agreement, the mediator can help them agree on the details and put it in writing.

## Do we need a written agreement?

Most families have a verbal agreement for these arrangements; however, having a written agreement will help everyone remember what has been discussed and agreed to. (You may need to go to a solicitor if you want this to be legally binding.)

## Bianca's story

Bianca is 83. She and her four children are considering her future living arrangements and care. She currently lives independently, but is becoming frail and unable to cope on her own.

Her daughter Mary suggests that Bianca sell her unit and use part of the money to build an extension on Mary's house so that she can live with Mary.

Bianca thinks she needs to consider her other children before making a decision. Bianca and her children attend a facilitated family meeting to discuss all her options and how it will affect the rest of the family.

It is agreed that Mary will provide care for Bianca in exchange for the money Bianca has invested in her house. They write a Family Agreement with the care and financial arrangements set out in detail.

All the family members are given a copy of the Agreement.

## More Information

Seniors Rights Victoria has a guide called 'Care for your Assets', which is available free by contacting Seniors Rights (see 'Who can help' section). This will help you prepare for a meeting.