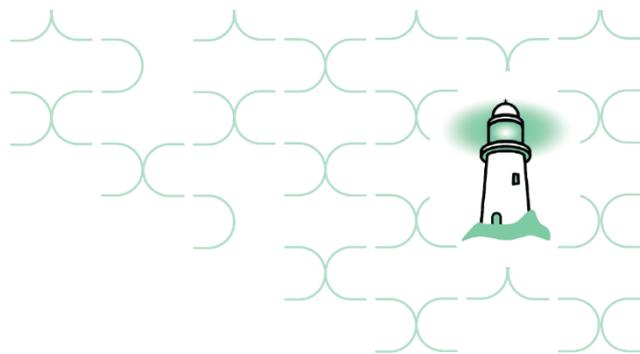




FEDERAL CIRCUIT  
AND FAMILY COURT  
OF AUSTRALIA



23 November 2022

## Update to the Profession #4: Lighthouse model and Evatt List expansion to commence next week

*New court reform focuses on the safety of children and their families by identifying and addressing issues of family violence and other risks*

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) (the Courts) are delighted to provide this last update with the commencement of the expansion of the Lighthouse model and the Evatt List from this Monday 28 November 2022. You can also find out more from the [previous updates](#).

**The final webinar before commencement will be held tomorrow, [Thursday 24 November 2022](#) 11.30am ACST/ 12pm AEST/ 12.30pm ACDT/ 1pm AEDT.**

If you have not already attended a webinar, I strongly encourage you to attend this final webinar as it contains essential, detailed information about the Lighthouse model to support you and your clients.

The expansion of Lighthouse will mean that risk screening, triage and differentiated case management, including the Evatt List will be:

- available in 15 family law registries, increasing from 3 during the pilot period; and
- offered to any party filing parenting only, and parenting and financial orders.

### **Lighthouse model expansion – Identifying risk at the point of filing**

The family law case management pathway will include additional steps for Initiating Applications filed on or after 28 November 2022, and corresponding Responses, to identify and triage risk as follows:

1. **Risk Screening:** Parties filing an eligible Initiating Application or Response, will be asked to complete the Family DOORS Triage risk screen via a confidential and secure online platform. This has been developed specifically for the Courts and can be completed safely and conveniently from any device; computer, mobile phone or tablet. Assistance to facilitate the risk screening process can also be provided by the Lighthouse Team.
2. **Triage:** A dedicated, specialised team will assess and direct cases into the most appropriate case management pathway based on the level of risk. The team is made up of highly skilled Judicial Registrars, Triage Counsellors (acting in the role of Family Counsellor), and support staff with detailed knowledge in family violence and family safety risks. The team will triage

matters and identify parties who may require additional support and safety measures. This may include online referrals or interviews with those most at risk.

3. **Case Management:** Those matters with the highest levels of risk will be referred to be placed on the Evatt List, the specialist court list developed and designed to assist those families that have been identified as being at high risk of family violence and other safety concerns. The Evatt List focuses on early information gathering and intervention from the very commencement of proceedings. The team, including Judges, Senior Judicial Registrars and Judicial Registrars, has specialised training and is experienced in working with families where high risk safety issues have been identified. Lower risk cases will be considered for a range of case management pathways, including dispute resolution, in accordance with the level of risk and the [Central Practice Direction – Family Law Case Management](#).

At the earliest stage of a matter coming before the Court, parties will be encouraged to undertake the screen. It is imperative that practitioners discuss the importance of risk screening with their clients when providing advice and the benefits that flow from completing a risk screen. Lawyers and parties are also reminded that screening responses, triage interviews and referrals are confidential and inadmissible in court under Part IIA *Family Law Act 1975*.

For more information on the Lighthouse model, visit the Courts' website:  
[www.fcfcoa.gov.au/lighthouse](http://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/lighthouse).

### **What to expect upon commencement**

From next Monday, 28 November 2022 in Adelaide, Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra, Dandenong, Darwin, Hobart, Launceston, Melbourne, Newcastle, Parramatta, Rockhampton, Sydney, Townsville and Wollongong, in both parenting and parenting/financial cases, parties will observe two changes when commencing or responding to proceedings:

1. When filing via the Commonwealth Courts Portal parties will be asked to provide their preferred email and mobile number to enable the Court to invite parties to screen; and
2. Within two business days parties will receive an email with the personalised link and log into and complete the Family DOORS Triage risk screen.

On 28 November 2022, the [Central Practice Direction – Family Law Case Management](#) and [Family Law Practice Direction – Parenting Proceedings](#) will also be updated to include information on the risk screening process.

Further information on risk screening see, [Update to the profession 2: Lighthouse Model Expansion - Risk Screening](#).

Matters are eligible to be placed on the Evatt List in accordance with [Family Law Practice Direction – Evatt List \(FAM-EVATT\)](#). One of the key objectives of the Evatt List is to ensure families who have been identified as being at high-risk are provided with appropriate supports to safeguard against risk while closely managing the matter as it progresses through the Court. Parties will be notified of any orders to place a matter on the Evatt List and are encouraged to become familiar with the [Evatt List guides](#). Matters cannot be placed into the Evatt List by way of referral by a Judicial Officer or another Judicial Registrar or at the request of a party at some other stage in the proceedings.

The Courts are delighted about the Lighthouse model expansion. It enhances the critical reforms that the Courts have undertaken in the past 18 months following the commencement of the FCFCOA. These reforms have streamlined and simplified procedures, enabling cases to move through the family law system promptly, safely and fairly and with as little detrimental impact on families and children as possible.

The prevalence of family violence is unacceptable. The Lighthouse model and Evatt List will ensure that the Courts can identify, assess and help families affected by family violence and other family safety risks.

### **Key Resources and Information**

Further information can be found on the Courts' website:

- [Practice Directions | Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia \(fcfcoa.gov.au\)](https://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/practice-directions) updated from 28 November 2022
- [Lighthouse | Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia \(fcfcoa.gov.au\)](https://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/lighthouse) including FAQs, fact sheets and detailed information on risk screening
- [Evatt List | Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia \(fcfcoa.gov.au\)](https://www.fcfcoa.gov.au/evatt-list)

The Courts are committed to ensuring that family violence considerations are embedded in all of our practice and procedure and look forward to your support as these changes commence.

I want to thank you in anticipation for supporting this next step in the Courts' commitment to improving outcomes for families in the family law system.

### **The Honourable Justice William Alstergren AO**

Chief Justice – Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1)

Chief Judge – Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2)