

PREFACE

Welcome to *The Family Law Book*, your online looseleaf family law service in one volume!

If you are a lawyer in general practice, a sole practitioner, a family law specialist or a barrister, I am able to identify with you and your needs in the practice of law.

The Book first came into being in 1997 as a study book for my family law specialist accreditation exam. In a Lever Arch file, it contained a summary of the cases and legislation set out in the Law Society's guidelines as required knowledge.

Kept up to date with a summary of key new cases as they came through, the Book came into its own as a quick guide to family law, a "workbook". Its regular disappearance from my room, under the arm of other family lawyers – who even gave it a name – was the first indication of demand for such a work.

The Family Law Book as it is now, however, with its coverage of both family law *and* routine procedures and precedents, was really launched 18 months ago when in a survey of the needs of lawyers in general practice – 100 litigation law firms – 91% of them said "bring it on".

A quiz from my business manager ("What would be the ideal product?") then led to our own website (for links to court forms and brochures and our own advanced precedents) being combined with our looseleaf service in preference to the option of "either or both" that was offered to our survey group.

This will put instant drafts of court papers and agreements on your desk to work through with your clients at your leisure, in a fraction of your usual preparation time. Both this and all the procedural guidance throughout the Book will also be a valuable training guide for the development of paralegal and other staff.

Our looseleaf service via its updates will summarise all key new cases and legislation. Our website www.thefamilylawbook.com.au will include a lively news page for members and a legal help line.

Many have contributed to putting this together, including those referred to inside our title page and throughout the Book.

I especially acknowledge Craig Nicol, a bright young family lawyer, for his co-authorship, particularly his streamlining of court procedures; my co-director and business manager Lucky Kalaf, who made self-publishing possible; and my daughter Lucy for her brilliant design of the Book, our website and corporate brand.

My thanks also to Stephen Bourke for his precedent superannuation orders (with notes), social scientist Dr Bruce Smyth (children), the Child Support Agency for use of extracts from its website, and the librarians and webmasters of the Family Court and FMC.

And to Anna Faulkner, my virtual assistant (as she calls herself, due to her working from home in Tassie) for all her work over the past year and a half in typing the manuscript and its many drafts with such accuracy and patience.

And then there is you. May your practice flourish by your subscription to *The Family Law Book*.

Robert Glade-Wright
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Melbourne
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