

Family Law Resources in Ontario

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Legal resources, information, and referral services for service providers and families who need information about family law and courts in Ontario.

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Getting help for family law matters

(For family violence referral information and resources see [pages 5 and 6](#).)

Community Legal Clinics

Community legal clinics can provide referrals to family law lawyers. Some legal clinics also offer free summary advice for some family law issues. To find the community legal clinic nearest you, see Legal Aid Ontario's contact information listed below.

At Downtown Legal Services in Toronto, law students supervised by lawyers are available to provide assistance with some family law cases, including child support, spousal support, and custody and access. They can also provide referrals to family law lawyers.

Toronto..... 416-934-4535

Duty Counsel (Legal Aid Ontario)

Duty counsel lawyers are available in courthouses to help low-income people who do not have a lawyer with them in the courtroom. You may have to show that you cannot afford to pay for a lawyer. Duty counsel can provide advice, request adjournments, and assist in settling issues.

Family Law Offices (Legal Aid Ontario)

Lawyers are available to handle family law cases for people who have a legal aid certificate (see Legal Aid Ontario information at the bottom of this page).

Ottawa toll-free..... 1-800-348-0006

Thunder Bay toll-free..... 1-800-393-8140

Toronto toll-free 1-800-331-9618

Lawyer Referral Service

This service can give you the name of a lawyer in your area who will provide you with a free half-hour consultation. There is no charge for this referral service. They can also give you names of lawyers who accept legal aid. Make sure the lawyer you retain has experience with family law.

Toll-free 1-800-268-8326

Toronto area 416-947-3330

For a directory of lawyers who are certified specialists in family law, please visit the Law Society of Upper Canada web site.

Web sitewww1.lsuc.on.ca/specialist/jsp/directory1.jsp

Legal Aid Ontario Offices

Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) helps low-income individuals and disadvantaged communities get legal assistance through a broad range of services, including legal help for low-income people who appear in court without a lawyer, telephone and online assistance, resources, referrals and assistance in retaining a lawyer if applicants meet eligibility requirements. LAO may be able to provide help with family issues such as child custody, access, and support and may also give referrals to family law lawyers who accept legal aid clients.

Toll-free 1-800-668-8258

Toll-free TTY 1-866-641-8867

Toronto..... 416-979-1446 (accepts collect calls)

Toronto TTY 416-598-8867

Web sitewww.legalaid.on.ca

Office of the Children’s Lawyer

This agency provides court-appointed legal representation for children up to 18 years of age in a variety of matters, including child custody and access disputes and child protection proceedings.

Toronto..... 416-314-8000 (accepts collect calls)

Some local community organizations like shelters or settlement agencies hold a weekly or occasional summary advice session with an advice lawyer who can provide information on family law matters. These clinics are not always advertised and can be hard to find. Ask at your local community centre or public library if a legal summary advice session is held in your neighbourhood.

Family law services at Ontario courts

Some communities have a special court called the Family Court of the Superior Court of Justice (Family Court). It is sometimes called the unified Family Court. All family law matters can be dealt with in this Family Court. If there is no unified Family Court in your area, family law matters are dealt with at the Ontario Court of Justice or the Superior Court of Justice, depending on the type of family law issue.

Duty Counsel (Legal Aid Ontario)

Duty counsel lawyers are available in courthouses to help low-income people who do not have a lawyer with them in the courtroom. You may have to show that you cannot afford to pay for a lawyer. Duty counsel can provide advice, request adjournments, and assist in settling issues.

Family Law Information Centres (FLICs)

All Ontario courts that deal with family law matters provide information and referral through Family Law Information Centre (FLIC) services. FLIC services include free information and help on issues related to separation and divorce and other family law matters. They also include information about court procedures, how to get a lawyer, services available in the community for families and children, and alternatives to going to court, such as family mediation. Advice lawyers from Legal Aid Ontario are available at FLICs at certain hours. To find the FLIC in your area, visit the following web site.

Web sitewww.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/infoctr.asp

Family Mediation Services

Family mediation services are available at all unified Family Court locations. There is a fee for this service. For more information contact your local Family Law Information Centre (see above) or visit the following web site.

Web sitewww.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/mediation.asp

Parent Information Sessions

Free parent information sessions are available at all unified Family Court locations in Ontario for parents who are separating or considering separation. For more information contact your local Family Law Information Centre (see [page 2](#)). In Toronto, free information sessions are available to parents who want information about separation, including custody, child support, and court procedures.

Parent Information Program (Toronto) 416-650-8104

Pro Bono Students Canada (Family Law Project)

Law student volunteers assist people appearing in Family Court who do not have a lawyer in completing court forms for a variety of family law matters, including child support, custody, access, and restraining orders. Law students may be available at Family Courts in Windsor, London, Brampton, Toronto, North York, Kingston, and Ottawa.

Family court information, locations, and forms

Ontario Courts

This online guide provides an overview of all courts in Ontario, including those that deal with family law matters.

Web site www.ontariocourts.on.ca

Court Locations

For information on court locations and the services they provide, contact the Ministry of the Attorney General.

Toll-free 1-800-518-7901

Toronto..... 416-326-2220 (accepts collect calls)

TTY 416-326-4012

Web site www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/courts/court_addresses

Family Law Information Centres (FLICs)

At certain FLIC locations, advice lawyers can assist with court forms. For more information on where to find your local FLIC see [page 2](#).

Forms for Family Court

Court forms for family law matters can be downloaded and printed from the following web site.

Web site www.ontariocourtforms.on.ca/english/forms/family

Legal and family resources

(For family violence referral information and resources see [pages 5 and 6.](#))

CLEO (Community Legal Education Ontario/Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario)

Develops materials and projects to help people understand and exercise their legal rights. Materials are available in a variety of formats and languages, and address issues on many legal topics, including family law and domestic violence. CLEO also hosts CLEONet, an online collection of public legal education resources produced by community agencies and government offices across Ontario. All materials are free and can be ordered or accessed online.

Toronto..... 416-408-4420 (accepts collect calls)
Web site www.cleo.on.ca
CLEONet web site www.cleonet.ca

Department of Justice Canada

Provides information on the laws of Canada as well as family law information for the general public. The Family Law Information Line offers information on the Federal Child Support Guidelines and the Divorce Act, and accepts orders for Department of Justice Canada publications related to family law and family violence.

Toll-free Family Law Information Line 1-888-373-2222
Web site www.justice.gc.ca

Family Law Education for Women (FLEW)

Provides multilingual legal information for women in Ontario on twelve family law topics, in various formats. All materials are free of charge and can be ordered or viewed online.

Web site www.onefamilylaw.ca

Family Law Information Centres (FLICs)

Provide information about family law and going to court. For more information see [page 2](#).

Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Unit, Department of Justice Canada

Provides information on federal monies that have been garnished for spousal or child support payments.

Toll-free Automated Line 1-800-267-7777

Family Responsibility Office, Ministry of Community and Social Services

Helps enforce court-ordered child and spousal support payments.

Toll-free 1-888-815-2757
Toll-free 24-Hour Automated Information Line..... 1-800-267-7263
Toronto..... 416-243-1909
Toronto 24-Hour Automated Information Line 416-326-1818

Justice Ontario

Provides information about Ontario's legal system, including information on family law. Their toll-free number connects callers to legal information in 170 languages.

Toll-free 1-866-252-0104
Web site www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/justice-ont

Law Help Ontario

Provides an online interactive form for people wishing to obtain a Certificate of Divorce. Also available on the site is a Divorce Forms Interview to help people understand which court forms they may need to fill out to obtain a divorce.

Web site www.lawhelpontario.org/library/folder.201162-Public_Forms

Law Society of Upper Canada

Offers information on finding and working with a lawyer and how to file a complaint against a lawyer.

Toll-free 1-800-668-7380

Toll-free Complaints Services 1-800-268-7568

Web site www.lsuc.on.ca/public

Ministry of the Attorney General (Ontario)

Provides information on family law procedures in Ontario courts, including information on making an application for an uncontested divorce. This web site also has information on child protection court cases, child support, supervised access, and other family law topics.

Web site www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca

Supervised Access Centres

Provide a setting for separated families where court-ordered supervised visits with children can take place. Call for the location and telephone number of the supervised access centre in your community.

Toronto 416-212-2029

Toll-free 1-877-661-9977

Web site www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/supcentres.asp

Family violence referral information and resources

Assaulted Women's Helpline

Offers crisis counselling, emotional support, safety planning, and referrals to shelters and legal resources. Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in many languages.

Toll-free 1-866-863-0511

Toll-free TTY 1-866-863-7868

Toronto 416-863-0511

Toronto TTY 416-364-8762

Emergency number for Bell, Rogers, Fido and Telus cell phones #SAFE (#7233)

Web site www.awhl.org

Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic

Provides free counselling, referral, and legal and interpreter services for women in Toronto who are survivors of violence.

Toronto 416-323-9149 (accepts collect calls)

TTY 416-323-1361

Web site www.schliferclinic.com

Criminal Injuries Compensation Board

Administers compensation awards to people who are victims of violent crime in Ontario.

Toll-free 1-800-372-7463
Web site www.cicb.gov.on.ca

Fem'aide

Offers support, referrals, and information on woman abuse, including sexual assault, to Francophone women in Ontario. This helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Offre, aux Ontariennes francophones, des services de soutien, d'orientation et d'information sur la violence — y compris les agressions sexuelles — commise à l'endroit des femmes. Cette ligne secours est ouverte 7 jours par semaine, 24 heures sur 24.

Toll-free/Sans-frais..... 1-877-336-2433
Toll-free TTY/Sans-frais ATS 1-866-860-7082
Web site/Site web..... www.femaide.ca

Legal Advice for Victims of Domestic Violence

Victims of domestic violence can ask a women's shelter, student legal aid society, or community legal clinic to fill out an authorization form called, "Advice Lawyer – Domestic Violence (Family law) Authorization", for a free two-hour consultation with a family lawyer. You can visit <www.shelternet.ca> online for a list of women's shelters, or contact Legal Aid Ontario at the numbers listed at the bottom of [page 1](#) to find a community legal clinic or student legal aid society.

Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC)

Provides information on violence and violence prevention, and referrals for women and children experiencing violence.

Toll-free 1-877-558-5570
Toronto..... 416-392-3135
Web site www.metrac.org

National Clearinghouse on Family Violence

Provides resources and information on violence in relationships, including publications, videos, and a library reference collection of books, periodicals, and videos. Materials can be ordered online.

Web site www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/familyviolence/bilingual.htm

Victim Support Line, Ministry of the Attorney General

Provides information and referral to victims of crime in Ontario, Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Automated information is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Toll-free 1-888-579-2888
Toronto..... 416-314-2447
Web site www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/ovss/programs.asp

Other resources and referral information

Adoption – Ministry of Children and Youth Services

Offers information on adopting a child or placing a child for adoption.

Toll-free 1-866-821-7770
TTY 1-800-387-5559
Web site www.children.gov.on.ca

Advocacy Centre for the Elderly

Provides legal advice and information to low-income seniors 60 years of age and older on elder abuse and other issues faced by seniors.

Toronto 416-598-2656
Web site www.ancelaw.ca

Change of Name, and Birth, Marriage, and Death Certificates, Ministry of Government Services

Toll-free 1-800-461-2156
Toronto 416-325-8305
Web site www.ontario.ca

Child Protection Mediation

Mediation for families involved with a children's aid society (CAS) is offered in locations throughout Ontario. Ask your CAS worker if this free service is available in your community. In the Greater Toronto Area, you can contact the following organization:

Toronto Mediation Centre 416-603-3773
Web site www.tomediation.ca

The Farm Line

Offers confidential peer counselling and referral for farm families, operating Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Toll-free 1-888-451-2903
Web site www.thefarmline.ca

Justice for Children and Youth

Provides legal information, advice, representation, and referrals for children and young people under the age of 18.

Toll-free 1-866-999-5329
Toronto 416-920-1633 (accepts collect calls)
Web site www.jfcy.org

Kids Help Phone / Jeunesse, J'écoute

Provides crisis counselling and referrals for children and young adults, operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Toll-free 1-800-668-6868
Web site www.kidshelpphone.ca

National Youth in Care Network

Offers a variety of programs and information for youth in and from the child welfare system, mental health institutions, youth detention centres, and justice facilities.

Toll-free 1-800-790-7074 (ext. 4)
Web site www.youthincare.ca

Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee, Ministry of the Attorney General

Helps protect the interests of mentally incapable adults. Provides information on powers of attorney and living wills, and on decision-making about financial and health care issues. Also distributes power of attorney kits.

Toll-free 1-800-366-0335
Toronto..... 416-314-2800
Web site www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/pgt

Ontario Association for Family Mediation

Promotes family mediation as a dispute resolution process for separating couples and for families in conflict. Offers referrals to family mediators. Family mediators charge for their services.

Toll-free 1-800-989-3025
Web site www.oafm.on.ca

Ontario Statutes and Legislation

Web site..... www.e-laws.gov.on.ca

Preparing for Court

Provides information for youth about appearing in court in Ontario.

Web site www.courtprep.ca

Publications Ontario

Offers publications on various family law topics, including information on wills and divorce.

Toll-free 1-800-668-9938
Web site www.publications.serviceontario.ca/ecom

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CLEO has publications on other areas of law as well. Most are free. We revise our publications often to reflect changes in the law. Our Discard List tells you which publications are out of date and should be thrown away. For a copy of our current Order Form or Discard List, please visit our web site at <www.cleo.on.ca>, or call **416-408-4420, extension 33**.