

# Family Law Resources in Ontario

April 2007



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

<b>Information on Family Courts in Ontario</b> .....	<b>page 1</b>
<b>Family Law Services at Ontario Courts</b> .....	<b>page 1</b>
<b>Finding a Lawyer</b> .....	<b>page 2</b>
<b>Legal and Family Resources</b> .....	<b>page 3</b>
<b>Family Violence Resources</b> .....	<b>page 5</b>
<b>Resources for Children, Youth, and Parents</b> .....	<b>page 6</b>
<b>Other Resources</b> .....	<b>page 7</b>
<b>Other Web Sites with Helpful Information on Family Law Topics</b> .....	<b>page 7</b>

## Information on Family Courts in Ontario

Some communities have a special family court called the Family Court of the Superior Court of Justice (Family Court). It is sometimes called the unified Family Court. All types of family law matters can be dealt with in this Family Court. If you do not have a unified Family Court in your area, you can take family law matters to the Ontario Court of Justice or to the Superior Court of Justice, depending on what family law issues you are dealing with.

### **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](http://www.ontariocourts.on.ca)

### **Court Locations**

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

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

**Web site** ..... [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/courts/cadaddr.asp](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/courts/cadaddr.asp)

### **Court Fee Waiver Form**

You can apply to have certain court fees waived if you cannot pay them because of financial circumstances. The fee waiver applies to most fees in family law cases that are not appeals. See the following web site for more information and Fee Waiver Request forms.

**Web site** ..... [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/courts/feewaiver/guide-forms.asp](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/courts/feewaiver/guide-forms.asp)

### **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/index.jsp](http://www.ontariocourtforms.on.ca/english/forms/family/index.jsp)

## Family Law Services at Ontario Courts

### **Duty Counsel**

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. To find out more about duty counsel services, contact your local Legal Aid Ontario office. See the contact information for “Legal Aid Ontario Offices” on page 2.

### **Family Law Information Centres**

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 also available at FLICs at certain hours. For information on FLIC services in your area, visit the web site below or contact your local court. For information on finding the court in your area, see the listing for “Court Locations” above.

**Web site** ..... [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/infoctr.asp](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/infoctr.asp)

### **Family Mediation Services**

Family mediation services are available at all unified Family Court locations. For more information contact your local Family Law Information Centre (see page 1) or visit the following web site.

**Web site** ..... [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/mediation.asp](http://www.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 1). 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**

### **Preparing for Court**

This interactive bilingual web site is designed for youth preparing for court in Ontario.

**Web site** ..... [www.courtprep.ca](http://www.courtprep.ca)

## **Finding a Lawyer**

### **Legal Aid Ontario Offices**

Legal aid certificates are available to help low-income people pay for a lawyer's services. Certificates are available for a variety of legal problems, including some issues relating to family law, immigration and refugee hearings, and criminal law. People can apply for a certificate at one of Legal Aid Ontario's 51 offices across Ontario. For the Legal Aid Ontario office in your community, check under "Legal Aid" in your phone book, visit the Legal Aid Ontario web site, or call their central numbers below.

**Toll-free** ..... **1-800-668-8258 (bilingual)**

**Toll-free TTY** ..... **1-866-641-8867**

**Toronto** ..... **416-979-1446 (bilingual)**

**Toronto TTY** ..... **416-598-8867**

**Web site** ..... [www.legalaid.on.ca](http://www.legalaid.on.ca)

### **Family Law Offices**

Lawyers are available to handle family law cases for people who have a legal aid certificate.

**Ottawa toll-free** ..... **1-800-348-0006 (bilingual)**

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

**Toronto toll-free** ..... **1-800-331-9618**

### **Community Legal Clinics**

Community legal clinics provide legal services to low-income people in areas such as housing, employment insurance, income support, immigration, human rights, and workers' compensation. Some clinics also provide assistance with wills, powers of attorney, and education law. To find the community legal clinic nearest you, visit the Legal Aid Ontario web site or call Legal Aid Ontario at the central number listed above.

### **Lawyer Referral Service**

Helps people find a private lawyer in Ontario. A \$6.00 charge is added to your phone bill when you use this service unless you are in a crisis situation. The first half-hour consultation with the lawyer is free.

**Toll-free** ..... **1-900-565-4577 (bilingual)**

### **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 (bilingual)

Toll-free Complaints Line ..... 1-800-268-7568 (bilingual)

Web site ..... [www.lsuc.on.ca/public](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/public)

### **Legal Advice for Victims of Domestic Violence (Legal Aid Ontario)**

Legal Aid Ontario can provide authorization for a two-hour consultation with a family law lawyer through a form called “Advice Lawyer Family Violence Authorization”. Community legal clinics, student legal aid societies, and women’s shelters should have these forms to give to abused women. Contact the women’s shelter in your community or call Legal Aid Ontario for the phone number and location of the legal clinic or student legal aid society nearest you. The contact information for Legal Aid Ontario is listed on page 2.

### **Office of the Children’s Lawyer**

Provides court-appointed legal representation for children up to 18 years of age.

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

## **Legal and Family Resources**

### **Advocacy Centre for the Elderly**

Provides legal advice and information to low-income seniors 60 years of age and older on issues such as elder abuse, home care, nursing homes and homes for the aged, and powers of attorney.

Toronto..... 416-598-2656

Web site ..... [www.advocacycentreelderly.org](http://www.advocacycentreelderly.org)

### **ARCH Disability Law Centre**

Provides legal information to people with disabilities, and some representation in precedent-setting cases involving disability issues. ARCH has an accessible library of materials on disability-related issues that is open to the public.

Toll-free ..... 1-866-482-2724

Toll-free TTY ..... 1-866-482-2728

Toronto..... 416-482-8255

Toronto TTY..... 416-482-1254

Web site ..... [www.archdisabilitylaw.ca](http://www.archdisabilitylaw.ca)

### **Centre for Addiction and Mental Health**

Provides support, treatment, and education for people with mental health and addiction problems and their families. Publications on youth and addiction, and information on drug and alcohol policies in Ontario schools are available through their web site.

Toll-free ..... 1-800-463-6273 (bilingual)

Toronto..... 416-535-8501 (bilingual)

Web site ..... [www.camh.net/index.html](http://www.camh.net/index.html)

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

Provides clear language legal education and information materials for low-income and disadvantaged people in Ontario. CLEO’s materials address issues in many areas of law, including family, domestic violence, social assistance, housing, and immigration and refugee law. Most materials are also available in French. All print publications are free and can be viewed online.

Toronto..... 416-408-4420 (accepts collect calls)

Web site ..... [www.cleo.on.ca](http://www.cleo.on.ca)

**CLEONet** is an online collection of public legal education resources for community workers.

Web site ..... [www.cleonet.ca](http://www.cleonet.ca)

**Department of Justice Canada**

The Department of Justice web site listed below has information on the laws of Canada, public legal education and information, and resources and publications for the general public. You can also call the Family Law Information Line for information on the Federal Child Support Guidelines and the Divorce Act, and to order Department of Justice Canada publications related to family law and family violence.

Toll-free Family Law Information Line ..... 1-888-373-2222 (bilingual)

Web site ..... [www.canada.justice.gc.ca](http://www.canada.justice.gc.ca)

**Family Orders and 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 (bilingual)

**Family Responsibility Office, Ministry of Community and Social Services**

Helps ensure that court-ordered child and spousal support payments are made on a regular basis.

Toll-free ..... 1-888-815-2757 (bilingual)

Toll-free 24-Hour Automated Information Line..... 1-800-267-7263 (bilingual)

Toronto..... 416-243-1909 (bilingual)

Toronto 24-Hour Automated Information Line ..... 416-326-1818 (bilingual)

**Ministry of the Attorney General (Ontario)**

Visit the web site below for guides to 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](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.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 (bilingual)

Toronto..... 416-314-2800

Web site ..... [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/pgt](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/pgt)

**Ontario Association for Family Mediation**

A not-for-profit association promoting family mediation as a dispute resolution process for separating couples and for families in conflict.

Toll-free ..... 1-800-989-3025

Web site ..... [www.oafm.on.ca](http://www.oafm.on.ca)

## Family Violence Resources

### ***Assaulted Women’s Helpline***

This province-wide crisis hotline offers crisis counselling, emotional support, safety planning, and referrals to shelters and legal resources. Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services are available in many languages.

Toll-free ..... 1-866-863-0511  
Toll-free TTY ..... 1-866-863-7868  
Toronto.....416-863-0511  
Web site ..... [www.awhl.org](http://www.awhl.org)

### ***Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic***

Free counselling, and legal and interpreter services for women who are survivors of violence.

Toronto..... 416-323-9149 (accepts collect calls)  
TTY ..... 416-323-1361  
Web site ..... [www.schliferclinic.com](http://www.schliferclinic.com)

### ***Criminal Injuries Compensation Board***

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

Toll-free ..... 1-800-372-7463 (bilingual)  
Web site ..... [www.cicb.gov.on.ca](http://www.cicb.gov.on.ca)

### ***femaide***

Ligne téléphonique francophone de soutien pour les femmes victimes de violence en Ontario, ouverte 24 heures.

Sans-frais ..... 1-877-336-2433  
Sans-frais ATS (TTY)..... 1-866-860-7082  
Site web ..... [www.oasisfemmes.com](http://www.oasisfemmes.com)

### ***Legal Advice for Victims of Domestic Violence***

Victims of domestic violence can get authorization for a free two-hour appointment with a lawyer as part of Legal Aid Ontario’s services. For more information see “Legal Advice for Victims of Domestic Violence” on page 3.

### ***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](http://www.metrac.org)

### ***Victim Support Line, Ministry of the Attorney General***

Counsellors provide 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 (bilingual)  
Toronto..... 416-314-2447 (bilingual)  
Web site ..... [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/about/vw](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/about/vw)

## Resources for Children, Youth, and Parents

### **Adoption – Ministry of Children and Youth Services**

Toronto..... 416-327-4742 (accepts collect calls)  
Web site ..... [www.children.gov.on.ca](http://www.children.gov.on.ca)

### **Justice for Children and Youth**

Advice, representation, and referrals for children and young people under 18 years of age.

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

### **Kids' Help Phone / Jeunesse, J'écoute**

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

Toll-free ..... 1-800-668-6868 (bilingual)  
Web site ..... [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

### **National Youth in Care Network**

Offers a variety of programs and information for youth in care and in the justice system.

Toll-free ..... 1-800-790-7074 (leave a message in the general mailbox or press extension 5)  
Web site ..... [www.youthincare.ca](http://www.youthincare.ca)

### **Office of Child and Family Service Advocacy, Ministry of Children and Youth Services**

Helps to ensure that children and youth in care know and understand their rights, and that the laws that protect them from abuse or harsh treatment are enforced. Advocates help children and families make complaints about unacceptable treatment.

Toll-free ..... 1-800-263-2841 (bilingual)  
Toronto..... 416-325-5669 (bilingual)  
Web site ..... [www.children.gov.on.ca](http://www.children.gov.on.ca)

### **Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies**

Toll-free ..... 1-800-718-1797  
Toronto..... 416-987-7725  
Web site ..... [www.oacas.org](http://www.oacas.org)

### **Supervised Access Centres**

For separated families who need a setting 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 (accepts collect calls)  
Web site ..... [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/supcentres.asp](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/supcentres.asp)

## Other Resources

### ***Change of Name, and Birth, Marriage, and Death Certificates, Ministry of Consumer and Business Services***

Toll-free ..... 1-800-461-2156 (bilingual)  
Toronto..... 416-325-8305 (bilingual)  
Web site ..... [www.cbs.gov.on.ca](http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca)

### ***Publications Ontario***

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

Toll-free ..... 1-800-668-9938 (bilingual)  
Web site ..... [www.publications.gov.on.ca/english](http://www.publications.gov.on.ca/english)

### ***The Farm Line***

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 (bilingual)  
Web site ..... [www.thefarmline.ca](http://www.thefarmline.ca)

## Other Web Sites with Helpful Information on Family Law Topics

### **Child Protection**

Court Cases ..... [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/about/pubs/child\\_protection.asp](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/about/pubs/child_protection.asp)

Family Violence ..... [www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/fm](http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/fm)

Federal Child Support Guidelines..... [www.justice.gc.ca/childsupport](http://www.justice.gc.ca/childsupport)

International Child Abductions ..... [www.voyage.gc.ca/main/problems/child\\_abductions-en.asp](http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/problems/child_abductions-en.asp)

Life Events ..... [www.serviceontario.ca](http://www.serviceontario.ca)  
(click on *English*, then *Life Events* in the lower right-hand corner)

### **National Clearinghouse**

on Family Violence ..... [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/familyviolence/index.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/familyviolence/index.html)

Ontario Statutes and Legislation ..... [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca)

Parenting After Divorce ..... [www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/pad](http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/pad)

#### **Produced by:**

CLEO (Community Legal Education Ontario/Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario), a community legal clinic funded by Legal Aid Ontario and the Department of Justice Canada.

CLEO gratefully acknowledges the Department of Justice Canada for funding this project.

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](http://www.cleo.on.ca), or call 416-408-4420, extension 33.