



Parenting After Separation

Parenting After Separation (PAS) is a free course available to parents and others who have a responsibility to make decisions for children or provide care to children.

The course provides helpful information about various issues related to separation and divorce and is designed to support informed and child-focused decisions when families separate. It is available in-person and online.

Information about in-person sessions is available at www.gov.bc.ca/parenting-after-separation and at your local Family Justice Centre (see back panel for contact details regarding these centres).

You can access the online PAS course at: www.familieschange.ca

The PAS program is sponsored by the Ministry of Attorney General.

How Do I Contact a Family Justice Centre?

To contact a Family Justice Centre near you, you can call Enquiry BC between 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, and ask the operator to transfer you.

To Reach Enquiry BC:

In Greater Victoria, call: 250 387-6121

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 660-2421

Elsewhere in BC, call toll free: 1 800 663-7867

You can also call the Family Justice Centre directly. Look in the blue pages of your telephone book under "Provincial Government."

You can find the telephone number of your local Family Justice Centre by going online to Clicklaw: www.clicklaw.bc.ca/helpmap/service/1019

Ask What Services are Available

All Family Justice Centres have family justice counsellors.

Some Family Justice Centres also have:

- ▶ staff with special expertise in the Child Support Guidelines;
- ▶ staff from the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP), which collects and tracks support payments for parents enrolled in FMEP; and
- ▶ lawyers who give legal advice to parents who are financially eligible for the service.

Ask your local Family Justice Centre about the services they can provide.

Online Information

For more information about issues around separation and divorce: www.gov.bc.ca/familyjustice

For teens, children and parents: www.familieschange.ca

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Ministry of
Attorney General

Services for Families Experiencing Separation or Divorce

FAMILY JUSTICE CENTRES





What is a Family Justice Centre?

Family Justice Centres operate across the province. These centres are staffed by family justice counsellors who can assist you with issues related to separation or divorce. They provide services free of charge to parents and other family members.

Who are Family Justice Counsellors?

Family justice counsellors are professionally trained and accredited mediators available to assist you in making important decisions when experiencing separation or divorce. For example, you may need to sort out parental responsibilities, who the child will live with, when they will see each parent and how much child support will be paid.

When Do I Talk to a Family Justice Counsellor?

You may wish to talk to a family justice counsellor if you:

- ▶ would like to know more about separation or divorce in British Columbia;
- ▶ need help in coming to an agreement with the other parent about parenting arrangements, including parental responsibilities and parenting time, contact with a child, spousal and child support;
- ▶ want to obtain or change an existing order regarding guardianship, parenting arrangements, contact with a child or support matters in court; or
- ▶ would like to learn about the Child Support Guidelines, the court process or services that are available to help you and your family adjust to separation and divorce.



How Can a Family Justice Counsellor Help Me?

Family justice counsellors are trained to provide:

- ▶ emotional support and short-term counselling;
- ▶ referrals to emergency and community services;
- ▶ mediation services for family related matters such as guardianship, parental responsibilities, parenting time, contact with a child or child and spousal support;
- ▶ Children in Mediation services, providing a forum for children to share their views and an opportunity for parents to hear and consider the information from their children when making decisions;
- ▶ court-ordered parenting assessments and reports, regarding parenting arrangements, contact with a child, and views of the child(ren);
- ▶ information and assistance about obtaining or changing a family related agreement or court order; and
- ▶ information about the Child Support Guidelines and calculation of spousal support.

Family justice counsellors can help parents resolve disagreements without going to court, and can assist with documenting arrangements through written agreements and consent orders.

Family justice counsellors provide information. If you need legal advice, they can refer you to legal advice services.

Confidentiality

Your meetings with a family justice counsellor are confidential.

Information you provide to family justice counsellors cannot be shared with anyone, even in court.

There are a few exceptions to this, including when there is an allegation of child abuse or when there is an immediate risk of serious harm to a person or property. In these cases, a family justice counsellor must make a report to a social worker or the police. Other exceptions are described in Part 2 of the Family Law Act Regulation.

For more information, talk to your family justice counsellor.

Family Justice Services from a Distance

A full range of services is available throughout the province regardless of whether there is a family justice centre located in your community or parents reside in different communities.

Family justice counsellors can provide all services by telephone as well as web-based videoconferencing.

Services can be tailored to best meet the needs of families.