

PARENTING AFTER SEPARATION

Parenting After Separation (PAS) courses are free online courses available to:

- » Parents
- » Others responsible for making decisions for children
- » Others who provide care to children

There are two courses available:

- » PAS (available in English or Punjabi)
- » PAS for Indigenous Families

The courses help participants learn about issues related to separation and divorce. They are designed to make sure that people have the right information and are focused on their children when making decisions.

You can access the online PAS courses at:
www.gov.bc.ca/ParentingAfterSeparation

Please make sure you complete the online course registration if you need a certificate before going to court.

PAS courses are offered by the Ministry of Attorney General.



HOW DO I CONTACT A FAMILY JUSTICE CENTRE?

Family Justice Centre services are available across the province. Services can be provided virtually or in person. Look online for the contact information of the Family Justice Centre closest to you:
www.gov.bc.ca/FamilyJusticeLocations

1-844-747-3963 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday to speak with staff who can assist.



ONLINE INFORMATION

For more information about Family Justice Centres:
www.gov.bc.ca/FamilyJusticeCentres

ASK WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE

There are Family Justice Counsellors at all Family Justice Centres.

Some Family Justice Centres also have:

- » Staff with special expertise in the Federal Child Support Guidelines
- » Staff from the BC Family Maintenance Agency (BCFMA), which collects and tracks support payments for parents enrolled with BCFMA
- » Lawyers who give legal advice to parents who are financially eligible for the service

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



Services for
Families Experiencing
Separation or Divorce

Family Justice Centres

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WHO ARE FAMILY JUSTICE COUNSELLORS?

Family Justice Counsellors are professionally trained and accredited mediators. They can help you in making important decisions during separation or divorce. For example, you may need to make decisions about:

- » Parental responsibilities
- » Who the child will live with
- » When they will see each parent
- » How much child support will be paid
- » Whether or how to share a companion animal

WHEN DO I TALK TO A FAMILY JUSTICE COUNSELLOR?

You may wish to talk to a Family Justice Counsellor if you want to know more about separation or divorce in British Columbia.

Family Justice Counsellors can help you come to an agreement about parenting arrangements, including:

- » Parental responsibilities and parenting time
- » Contact with a child
- » Child and spousal support
- » Property division in respect of a companion animal

Family Justice Counsellors can also help you obtain or change an existing court order about:

- » Guardianship
- » Parenting arrangements
- » Contact with a child
- » Support matters

Family Justice Counsellors can also help you learn about:

- » The Federal Child Support Guidelines
- » The court process
- » 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 many different services.

They can provide emotional support and referrals to emergency and community services.

They provide mediation services for family-related matters, such as:

- » Parental responsibilities and parenting time
- » Contact with a child
- » Child and spousal support
- » Property division in respect of a companion animal

They provide Children and Youth in Mediation services. This gives children a forum to share their views. It also gives parents an opportunity to hear and consider the information from their children when making decisions.

They can provide court-ordered parenting assessments and reports about:

- » Parenting arrangements
- » Contact with a child
- » Views of the child(ren)

They can provide help and information about obtaining or changing a family-related agreement or court order.

They can provide information about the Federal Child Support Guidelines and how to calculate spousal support.

Family justice counsellors can help parents resolve disagreements without having to go to court. They can help document arrangements through written agreements and consent orders.

Family justice counsellors provide information. They can refer you to legal advice services if you need legal advice.

WHAT IS A FAMILY JUSTICE CENTRE?

Family Justice Centres operate across the province. These centres provide free services to parents and other family members. Family Justice Counsellors work at all centres. They can help you with issues related to separation or divorce.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your meetings with a Family Justice Counsellor are private and confidential.

Information you provide to Family Justice Counsellors cannot be shared with anyone. This is true even in court.

There are a few exceptions where your information can be shared, such as when:

- » There is an allegation of child abuse
- » 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 2.1 of the Family Law Act Regulation.

FAMILY JUSTICE SERVICES FROM A DISTANCE

Family justice services are available anywhere in the province. They are available even if there is no Family Justice Centre located in your community. They are also available for parents who reside in different communities.

