



# Family Law in Alberta

## ACCESSING JUSTICE SERIES

Legal Information for Frontline Service Providers

This guide was developed for frontline service providers in Alberta who work with vulnerable individuals. It provides general legal information on Alberta law only. This guide does not provide legal advice. Last updated January 2016.

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The Legal Resource Centre of Alberta, operating as the Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to help people understand the law as it affects their everyday lives. We develop plain language booklets, presentations and other learning materials to help people recognize and respond to their legal rights and responsibilities. We have a variety of programs, and provide legal information and referral on many legal topics. For more information, please go to [www.cplea.ca](http://www.cplea.ca).

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# Family Law in Alberta

## 1. Families and the Law

### *Divorce Act*

- The *Divorce Act* is federal legislation and only applies to people who are married.
- It covers divorce, custody of and access to children, child support, and spousal support.
- The Court of Queen's Bench hears all applications made under the *Act*.

### *Family Law Act*

- The *Family Law Act* is provincial legislation, applying to Albertans who are married or unmarried.
- it covers guardianship, parenting, contact, child support, and partner support.
- The Provincial Court of Alberta can hear most applications made under the *Act*, but certain applications have to be made in Court of Queen's Bench.

### *Matrimonial Property Act*

- The *Matrimonial Property Act* is provincial legislation, applying to Albertans who are married.
- It covers division of property and exclusive possession of the matrimonial home and goods.
- The Court of Queen's Bench hears all applications relating to this *Act*.



For more information about property division in Alberta, check out our **Families and the Law: Property Division** booklet by visiting <http://www.cplea.ca/publications>.

### *Protection Against Family Violence Act*

- The *Protection Against Family Violence Act* is provincial legislation intended to protect victims of family violence by issuing protection orders (emergency protection orders and Queen's Bench protection orders).

## Family Law in Canada

Law	Married	Unmarried
<p><b>The Divorce Act</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divorce</li> <li>• Custody and access of children</li> <li>• Child Support</li> <li>• Spousal Support</li> </ul>	✓	✗
<p><b>The Matrimonial Property Act</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Division of property</li> <li>• Exclusive possessions of the matrimonial home and goods</li> </ul>	✓	✗
<p><b>The Family Law Act</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guardianship</li> <li>• Parentage</li> <li>• Contact</li> <li>• Child Support</li> <li>• Partner and spousal support</li> <li>• Other matters</li> </ul>	✓	✓

## 2. Understanding the Family Court System in Alberta

### Court Jargon in Plain Language

**Application:** a request to a judge to make a decision and issue a court order.

**Interim application:** an application where the court order is temporary until a full court application is made or hearing is held.

**Applicant:** the person who is making the court application. If an applicant is married, he or she can usually decide between making an application under the *Divorce Act* or under the *Family Law Act*. It is recommended clients seek legal advice if they are unsure of which type of application to make. There are benefits and disadvantages to each.

**Respondent:** is the other person involved in the application—the person who responds to an application.

**Affidavit:** a written statement of facts that is sworn or affirmed before a commissioner for oaths and is used as evidence in court. The person swearing or affirming the affidavit could face criminal charges if information included in the affidavit is not true.

**Service:** when one person officially gives documents to another person. Service lets the other person know what is going to be told to the judge and what the other side is asking the judge to do.

**Ex parte:** in some exceptional cases, an applicant can make an application without serving the other party. This is often done for safety reasons. For example, to get an emergency protection order.

For terms related to **child custody and parenting**, see [Section 3](#) and for terms related to **financial support**, see [Section 4](#).

## Which Law to Use?

The person making the court application gets to decide which law to use. For example, if a client is married, he or she can decide between using the *Divorce Act* or the *Family Law Act*. All matters under the *Divorce Act* have to be heard in Court of Queen’s Bench, whereas most matters under the *Family Law Act* can be heard in either the Provincial Court of Alberta or Court of Queen’s Bench.

In Alberta, Provincial Court is the lowest level of court with the most locations. It tends to be less expensive and easier for self-represented individuals. Court of Queen’s Bench has fewer locations and more often people are represented by lawyers.

It is important for a client to think carefully about which law to make an application under. It is recommended clients seek legal advice if they are unsure of which law to use and what type of application to make. There are benefits and disadvantages to each law.



Clients thinking about representing themselves in court should read our publication, **Families and the Law: Representing Yourself in Family Court**. It can be viewed or downloaded for free by visiting <http://www.cplea.ca/publications>.

## Differences between the Court of Queen’s Bench and Provincial Court

Provincial Court	Court of Queen’s Bench
More locations across the province (72 locations)	Fewer locations (13 locations)
More people represent themselves without a lawyer	More lawyers than in Provincial Court
A judge has the ability to allow you to talk about your evidence in court.	It is not very common for you to be able to talk about your evidence. Instead, your evidence must be written.

### You’ve Been Served

Clients who are served with a court application only have a certain period of time to respond to it. As such, it is important for them to seek legal advice about their options as soon as possible. If a client does not respond to an application or seek an extension of time to respond to an application, the court could make a decision without any input from the client.

For a list of service providers who can help clients respond to a court application, see [Section 6](#).

## 3. Child Custody and Parenting

### Differences between the *Divorce Act* and *Family Law Act*

The vocabulary used regarding child custody and parenting differs depending on the legislation.

#### *Divorce Act*

The *Divorce Act* is federal legislation that applies to married couples only. Applications can be made for **custody** and **access** under the *Act*. All applications for custody and access are heard in the Court of Queen’s Bench.

## What is Custody?

There are two parts to custody:

- The ability of a parent to make daily and major decisions for the child.
- The living arrangements and parenting schedule (for example, “where will the child live?”).

### **Joint Custody**

- A joint custody arrangement is the most common in Alberta.
- Joint custody occurs when both parents are capable of making decisions in the best interests of the child.
- Parents have to be able to work together and communicate.
- Having joint custody does not decide the residential schedule. The child could live with one parent 90% of the time, but the parents have joint custody. Where the child lives is simply one decision that the parents make, like “where will the child go to school?”

### **Sole Custody**

- This is a rare arrangement in Alberta.
- One parent has full custody.
- The child resides with one parent and this parent makes all of the daily and major decisions.
- The parent without custody usually still has some access to the child.

## What is Access?

- Access means the right to have time with the child. It usually refers to the time that a child spends with the parent who does not have primary residency. If a child lives with one parent 90% of the time, that parent has primary residency.
- The parent with access has the right to question and be given information regarding the well-being of the child, for example, to get information from teachers, doctors, or coaches.
- A parent with access does not usually have a say in major decisions about the child.

## Family Law Act

The *Family Law Act* is available to both married and unmarried couples with children. Applications can be made for **guardianship, parenting time**, and **contact** under the *Act*. Most applications can be heard in Provincial Court.

### What is Guardianship?

- A guardian is the person responsible for the care, maintenance, and well-being of a child.
- Both parents will generally be guardians of a child.
- Parents who are guardians have joint decision-making power, unless limited by agreement or court order. This means that both guardians can make decisions affecting their children (for example, education and health care).
- There is no limitation on the number of people who can be guardians. Further, guardians do not have to be parents of the child.

### What is Parenting Time?

- Similar to custody, parenting refers to the ability of a guardian to make daily and major decisions for the child as well as how much time the child will spend with each guardian.
- Guardians can enter into a parenting agreement if they are able to reach agreement about parenting time.
- If guardians cannot agree on parenting time, a judge can issue a parenting order. This is a good idea in situations where there is a power imbalance between guardians or a history of family violence.

### What is Contact?

- Contact refers to time spent between a child and a person who is not a guardian. A person who has contact does not have any power to make major decisions for the child.
- An application for contact may be made by someone who is not a guardian, but wants to spend time with the child. However, this person must first ask permission or “leave” of the court to make an application. There is an exception for grandparents if the parents are separated or if one parent has passed away. In these situations, no leave is required, but an application for contact must still be made.

## Parenting Agreements and Parenting Orders

### What is a Parenting Agreement?

A parenting agreement or plan is a written contract about where the children will live and how the guardians will care for and make decisions for the children. Parenting plans should always be focused on what is in the best interests of the children, rather than what is in the best interests of the guardians. A parenting agreement needs to reflect all of the circumstances of the children and guardians, taking into account what will work from a realistic, practical viewpoint.

Parents can make their own parenting agreement if they are able to work together. It often saves time, money, and stress if an agreement can be worked out without involvement from the court. However, it is recommended each parent seek independent legal advice before signing a parenting agreement.

Parenting agreements can be filed as consent orders with the court. If an agreement is filed with the court, it gives the court the power to enforce the agreement if there is a problem in the future. However, any future changes to the agreement must also be filed with the court.



**Caution:** In situations involving family violence or other forms of abuse, or where there is an imbalance of power between partners, it is recommended that clients seek a parenting order from the court.

### What is a Parenting Order?

If guardians cannot agree on a parenting plan, a judge can issue a parenting order. While going to court can be expensive and stressful, there are some reasons it may be in a guardian's best interests to go to court:

- If there is a history of family violence or abuse
- If one guardian is concerned about the child's safety with the other guardian
- If one guardian feels intimidated by the other
- If one guardian is preventing the other from seeing the child



It is recommended that all parents who have separated take the Parenting After Separation course. It is available online or in-person and includes information on how to develop a parenting plan. Any client bringing a custody application in Court of Queen's Bench must complete the course. For more information, visit: <http://pas.albertacourts.ab.ca>.

## What if a Guardian Does Not Follow the Agreement or Order?

If one parent or guardian is preventing the other from spending time with the children, a judge can issue an order to enforce the parenting agreement or parenting order.

A judge can order:

- the guardian be given extra time with the children
- financial penalties for denying parenting time
- in exceptional circumstances, a prison term



If guardians created a parenting agreement outside of court, it must be filed with the court for a judge to issue an enforcement order. The parenting agreement would need to be filed as a consent order with the court. There is a cost involved with filing a consent order, but fees may be waived in certain circumstances. Clients can contact their local courthouse for more information.

## Can a Parenting Agreement or Order be Changed?

If a parenting agreement was filed with the court as a consent order, changes can be made by filing another consent order outlining the agreed upon changes.

Changes to a parenting order may require approval from a judge depending on the original order issued.

If guardians cannot agree on the changes, a court application to vary the parenting order or agreement can be made. A judge will then consider whether circumstances have changed since the original order and if the requested changes are in the best interests of the children.

## Can a Parenting Agreement or Order be Changed Informally?

It is not a good idea for parents to change a parenting agreement or order without filing the changes with the court. If there are problems in the future and changes were not filed with the court, a judge will not consider any informal changes that were made. The judge will enforce the most recent parenting agreement or order the court has on file.



For more information, check out our **Families and the Law: Child Custody and Parenting** publication. Available to view or download for free by visiting <http://www.cplea.ca/publications>.

## Moving with Children

Before any steps are taken, the parent who wishes to move should talk with the other parent and anyone who has access or contact with the children. If possible and in the best interests of the children, parents should try to work out a new custody or parenting agreement to avoid a court hearing. A mediator may be able to help parents come to a new agreement. If a new agreement is reached, it should be filed with the court.

If an agreement cannot be reached, the parent wishing to move should seek legal advice to determine the best course of action.

### Does the other parent need to be given notice of the move?

Yes. Parents should check their parenting agreement or order to see what requirements are included regarding moving with the children. In any case, notice must be given *before* the move.

### What happens if a parent moves with the children without giving notice?

If one parent chooses to move with the children without telling the other parent, she or he might be accused of abducting the children and face criminal charges. The other parent could also apply for an order for the children to be returned and there could be long-term custody consequences.

Some judges have suggested that moving without notice could be viewed as evidence that the parent is not acting in the best interests of the children.

## Situations Involving Family Violence

### How can children be safely and legally moved out of an abusive situation?

When one partner leaves an abusive relationship and takes the children, she or he must immediately apply to court for an interim (short-term) custody or parenting order. This is a temporary order that lasts until a time specified in the order or until a judge makes a final decision on custody and parenting.

The court can make an interim parenting order on short notice. When making a decision, the judge will look at what is in the best interests of the children. The guardian applying for interim custody should be prepared to show why it is best for the children to be with her or him.

If an interim custody or parenting order is not obtained, there could be serious consequences. The guardian who has left with the children could be charged with kidnapping and/or lose custody of the children.

### How is an interim custody or parenting order obtained?

An interim custody or parenting order is usually requested by a making a court application and submitting an affidavit (written evidence). It is very rare for a judge to hear from witnesses when deciding interim custody. The requesting guardian, through her or his lawyer, must give notice to the other guardian of the application for interim custody or parenting and give the respondent's lawyer a chance to reply to the application.

If the other guardian disagrees with the application for interim custody, then he or she will probably swear an affidavit setting out the facts as he or she sees them. This affidavit will be filed at the courthouse.

If an interim custody or parenting order is issued, it is temporary. This means that a long-term custody and parenting resolution still needs to be found. In a situation where one parent fears for his or her safety and/or the safety of the children, it is in the best interests for a judge to make the decision.



For more information on family violence and the law in Alberta, visit our website **WillowNet: Abuse and the Law in Alberta** - <http://www.willownet.ca>.

## What can be done if one guardian fears for the safety of the children while with the other guardian?

A guardian can make an application for supervised access. This means the other guardian's access to the children will be supervised by another person (this can be someone the guardians know or someone from an agency). A guardian seeking supervised access must present evidence of why supervised access is in the best interests of the children.

## 4. Financial Support

Rules around child, spousal, and partner support are very similar under the *Divorce Act* and *Family Law Act*.

### Child Support Basics

#### What is child support?

Child support payments provide financial support for the benefit of the child. The payments are usually made from one parent or guardian to another. The amount of support is determined by the Federal Child Support Guidelines. Any change from the Guidelines requires a good reason. The same rules apply to both married and unmarried parents.

#### Who can apply?

An individual can apply for child support if he or she:

- is the parent or guardian of the child,
- is the child,
- has care and control of the child, or
- has a judge's permission to make an application.



For help calculating how much child support a client should be receiving, contact the nearest **Family Law Information Centre**. For a complete list of locations, visit <https://albertacourts.ca/resolution-and-court-administration-serv/family-law-information-centre-flic>.

## Who has to pay?

An individual must financially support a child if he or she:

- is the biological parent,
- is the adoptive parent,
- is a stepparent who has acted like a parent, or
- is an adult who has acted like a parent.

All parents have an obligation to financially support their children while they are minors. This obligation exists even if the children don't live with that parent, the parents aren't married (to each other), or the parent has no relationship with the children.

## How much child support has to be paid?

The amount of child support that a parent must pay is set by the Federal Child Support Guidelines under the *Divorce Act* and the Alberta Child Support Guidelines under the *Family Law Act*. These child support guidelines are nearly identical. The guidelines are mandatory, but there are limited exceptions when they will not apply.

In calculating how much child support has to be paid, the guidelines consider:

- the number of children
- the province where the paying parent lives
- the paying parent's before tax annual income

The parenting arrangement (shared or split parenting, sole custody) and any special expenses the children have, such as tutoring or health care costs, are also considered.



For more detailed information about child support and spousal / partner support, read our **Families and the Law: Financial Support** publication. Visit <http://www.cplea.ca/publications>.

## What is undue hardship?

One reason the court may not follow the Child Support Guidelines is if the paying parent can show that he or she would suffer undue financial hardship if ordered to pay the guideline amount. Undue financial hardship can occur when the parent:

- has an unusually high level of family debt incurred from before the separation
- has high expenses in relation to exercising parenting time with the child
- has to support other people

The parent claiming undue hardship would have to present evidence to the court showing one or more of these factors.

## When can a child support order be changed?

A child support order or agreement can be changed if there is a significant change in the circumstances of one of the parents. The change must have occurred after the child support order or agreement was made.

Some examples of changes that might be considered significant are:

- one parent is making significantly less or more money
- changes to the amounts that have to be paid for the children's special expenses
- a change in the parenting arrangements (for example, if the children are now living primarily with the other parent)

## Spousal and Partner Support Basics

### What is spousal or partner support?

Spousal or partner support payments are made from one spouse or partner to the other. The partner who makes the payments is called the payor. The payments are intended to compensate for financial choices that were made during the relationship and to help with living expenses.

Different terminology is used for different laws. If the parties were married, then the payments are called **spousal support**. If the parties were not married, then these payments are called **adult interdependent partner support**.

## Who can apply?

A married person can apply for spousal support under the *Divorce Act* or the *Family Law Act*.

A person in an adult interdependent relationship, can apply for partner support under the *Family Law Act*.



In Alberta, the term “common law” is no longer used by provincial laws. Instead, common law relationships are known as adult interdependent relationships.

## What is an adult interdependent relationship?

In Alberta, two people are considered to be in an adult interdependent relationship if they have:

- entered into a written Adult Interdependent Partner Agreement with the other person,
- lived with the other person in a “relationship of interdependence” for at least three consecutive years, or
- lived with the other person in a “relationship of interdependence” for less than three years, but the relationship is of some permanence and there is a child of the relationship (either by birth or adoption).

A “relationship of interdependence” is defined as a relationship outside of marriage in which two people:

- share one another’s lives,
- are emotionally committed to one another, and
- function as an economic and domestic unit.

The relationship does not have to be sexual to meet these criteria; it can be platonic.

## Who is eligible to receive spousal or partner support?

Spousal or partner support is ordered for different reasons:

- To compensate one partner for financial decisions made during the relationship, for example, one partner may have stopped working to raise children.
- To help one partner meet his or her needs after the relationship ends, for example, if one partner cannot pay for reasonable expenses, or if a partner goes back to school to learn

new skills in order to become self-supporting.

- To honour any contracts that the partners made, for example, if there were pre-nuptial or co-habitation agreements.

## How much support has to be paid?

Judges will consider the income of the paying partner and the financial need of the partner receiving the support. Both partners will need to submit income information and budgets to the court.

The Spousal Support Advisory Guidelines are not law, but they are used frequently. They provide suggestions to the court about the amount and length of time partner or spousal support should be paid. The guidelines have two formulas: one that is used if child support is being paid and the other if the partners never had children or the children are now independent.

Partner and spousal support payments are set up in one of the following ways:

- Payments are reviewed or ended on a set date, that is, partner support will continue until a certain date or a specific event occurs.
- There is no end date, that is, support will continue until there is a change in circumstances that results in an application being made to vary the support order.
- Payment amounts are staggered, that is, the support amount decreases over time until no more support is payable.

## When can a support order be changed?

A partner can apply to change a support order if important evidence comes to light that was not presented in court or if significant changes have occurred in the lives of either partner. Some examples of significant changes are:

- if either partner's income is much higher or lower than when the order was made.
- if either partner remarries.
- if either partner develops a health concern or disability and needs more financial support or needs to pay less support than was originally ordered.

If a partner proves that there has been a significant change, then a judge will apply the same criteria as if it were an original support order application.

## When Support Isn't Being Paid

When a child support or spousal (or partner) support order is issued, it can be registered with the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP). If a client is concerned that a support order will not be paid, it is a good idea for the support order to be registered right away with MEP.



The procedure for registering a support order is available on the MEP website at [http://justice.alberta.ca/programs\\_services/mep/Pages/how-to-register.aspx](http://justice.alberta.ca/programs_services/mep/Pages/how-to-register.aspx).

Once registered, if support payments are not being made in full or on time, or if the paying partner has not made payment arrangements, MEP can take steps to enforce the order.

Child support takes priority over partner support. That is, if the paying partner does not have enough money to pay both child support and partner support, then he or she may only have to pay child support.

MEP has many different ways to enforce a court order, including:

- taking funds from an individual's tax return, pay cheque, or bank account
- putting limits on (or denying) licences, including driver's licences, hunting and fishing licences, and federal licences, including passports
- putting a lien on real property (land)
- seizing valuable assets like cars, stereos, or computers
- affecting a credit rating



For clients who have recently lost their jobs and can no longer afford to pay support, it is their responsibility to make an application to change their support orders. If they do not request a change and fail to pay support, they are at risk of the Maintenance Enforcement Program taking action against them.

## 5. Protection Orders

### Emergency Protection Orders

#### What is an emergency protection order?

An emergency protection order is intended to provide the applicant with immediate protection from an abusive family member. It is intended to let a person experiencing family violence stay in his or her own home. However, an emergency protection order is only a piece of paper and there may be situations where it is not safe for the person to return to or stay in his or her home.

#### What can an emergency protection order do?

This order can require that an abusive family member:

- temporarily leave the home
- not contact the applicant or other family members
- not come near the home, workplace, or school of the applicant or other family members

If an emergency protection order is violated, police can arrest the abusive family member.

#### How is an emergency protection order obtained?

In any jurisdiction, police or victims services can assist an individual with getting an emergency protection order.

In Edmonton or Calgary, during court hours, orders can be obtained by going to the courthouse and speaking to family court duty counsel. Duty counsel are lawyers who work at the courthouse and are available to assist people who do not have a lawyer. Outside of court hours in Edmonton or Calgary, the Bail Hearing Office at the courthouse can help people obtain an order.

## What is the emergency protection order review process?

All emergency protection orders must be reviewed within nine working days by a Court of Queen's Bench judge. At the review hearing, the judge can do any of the following:

- cancel the emergency protection order
- order a hearing so that both parties can tell their story
- extend the emergency protection order
- change the terms of an emergency protection order
- grant a Queen's Bench protection order



Legal Aid Alberta will provide legal assistance to either party for the review hearing regardless of income.

## Queen's Bench Protection Orders

### What is a Queen's Bench protection order?

A Queen's Bench protection order can be requested in non-emergency situations. These orders cannot be issued *ex parte*, which means the other party must be given notice of the application. Most often, a Queen's Bench protection order is issued to replace an emergency protection order.

### What can a Queen's Bench protection order do?

It can require that an abusive family member:

- leave the home
- not contact the applicant or other family members
- not go near the home, workplace, or school of the applicant or other family members
- receive counselling
- pay costs or temporarily give some items such as chequebooks, credit cards, keys, or vehicles to the applicant

## 6. Where Clients Can Go for Help

### Legal Advice & Representation

**Legal Aid Alberta** / Phone: 1-866-845-3425 / Website: <http://www.legalaid.ab.ca>

Information, referral and representation in family law matters for individuals who meet financial guidelines

**Family Court Duty Counsel** / Website: <http://www.legalaid.ab.ca/help/Pages/Duty-Counsel-Legal-Assistance-at-Court.aspx>

Available at select courthouses throughout Alberta. Duty counsel are lawyers who work at the courthouse and are available to provide limited legal advice to people who do not have a lawyer. Contact Legal Aid Alberta for more information including services and locations.

**Lawyer Referral Service** / Phone: 1-800-661-1095

Run by the Law Society of Alberta. Callers will receive contact information for three lawyers practicing in the area of law and jurisdiction requested. Lawyers will provide a free half hour consultation. Charges will apply after the initial session.

### Legal Clinics

Where available, local legal clinics can provide family law legal information and limited legal advice to individuals who meet financial guidelines.

#### **Calgary Legal Guidance**

Phone: 403-234-9266

Website: <http://clg.ab.ca>

#### **Student Legal Assistance** (Calgary)

Phone: 403-220-6637

Website: <http://slacalgary.ca>

#### **Central Alberta Community Legal Clinic**

Serving Red Deer and surrounding areas

Phone: 1-877-314-9129

Website: <http://www.communitylegalclinic.net>

#### **Children's Legal & Educational Resource Centre**

Provides free legal services to youth 19 and under across Alberta

Phone: 403-207-9029

Website: <http://youthlaw.ca>

#### **Edmonton Community Legal Centre**

Phone: 780-702-1725

Website: <http://www.eclc.ca>

#### **Student Legal Services** (Edmonton)

Phone: 780-492-8244

Website: <http://www.sledmonton.com>

#### **Grande Prairie Legal Guidance**

Phone: 780-882-0036

Website: <http://www.gplg.ca>

#### **Lethbridge Legal Guidance**

Phone: 403-380-6338

Website: <http://www.lethbridgelegalguidance.ca>

#### **Medicine Hat Legal Help Centre**

Phone: 403-712-1021

## Legal Information

### **Family Justice Services (Alberta Courts)**

Staff work directly with individuals to find solutions for family law issues. Programs are available to qualifying parties at no cost or for a nominal charge. For a list of locations and contact information, visit: <https://albertacourts.ca/resolution-and-court-administration-serv/family-justice-services/locations>

### **Family Law Information Centre (Alberta Courts)**

Staff provide general information about family law and court procedures. Centres provide court forms and can help make sure court forms are properly filled out. Staff can also assist with child support calculations. For a list of locations and contact information, visit: <https://albertacourts.ca/resolution-and-court-administration-serv/family-law-information-centre-flic>

*Note: In Edmonton, the Family Law Information Centre is now part of the Resolution Support Centre*

### **Families and the Law Series** (Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta & Edmonton Community Legal Centre)

Free booklets on Child Custody and Parenting, Financial Support, Property Division, Young Parents, and Representing Yourself ([www.cplea.ca/publications](http://www.cplea.ca/publications)). Edmonton Community Legal Centre and Calgary Legal Guidance also offer Families and the Law workshops at local public libraries.

### **LegalAve.ca (Alberta Legal Information Society)** / Website: <http://legalave.ca>

Comprehensive online collection of family law information and links to other resources.

### **Willownet: Abuse and the Law in Alberta** (Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta) / <http://www.willownet.ca>

Legal information for anyone thinking of leaving an abusive relationship.

### **Canadian Legal FAQs** (Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta) / Website: <http://www.law-faqs.org>

Frequently asked questions and answers about family law issues.

### **Law Central Alberta** (Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta) / Website: <http://www.lawcentralalberta.ca>

Links to reliable legal information sources on family law issues.

### **Department of Justice Canada – Family Law** / Website: <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/fl-df/divorce>

Information from the federal government on family law issues under the *Divorce Act*, including financial support calculations, creating a parenting plan, and how to apply for a divorce.

## Other Resources

### **Parenting After Separation Course** / Website: <http://pas.albertacourts.ab.ca>

### **Maintenance Enforcement Program** / Phone: 310-0000 then 780-422-5555 / Website: [https://justice.alberta.ca/programs\\_services/mep](https://justice.alberta.ca/programs_services/mep)

Information on how to register support orders and enforcement procedures.

### **Alberta Child Support Recalculation Program** / Phone: 310-1000 then 780-401-1111 / Website: [https://justice.alberta.ca/programs\\_services/families/recalculation](https://justice.alberta.ca/programs_services/families/recalculation)

A service offered through the Government of Alberta that annually recalculates court-ordered child support based on current income tax information.

ACCESSING JUSTICE SERIES:

# Family Law in Alberta

Other publications in the Accessing Justice series:

- The Canadian Legal System
- Helping Clients with Legal Issues
- Renting Law in Alberta
- Criminal Law in Alberta

Publications can be viewed and downloaded for free by visiting [www.cplea.ca](http://www.cplea.ca)

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