



Do you need help with your family law case?

Supreme Court family duty counsel are lawyers paid by the Legal Services Society to help people with low incomes with their family law problems. The family duty counsel service is available in 11 BC Supreme Courts.

If you qualify financially for this service, family duty counsel can help you with family matters in Supreme Court by:

- giving you advice about your legal rights, obligations, and court procedures;
- reviewing and helping you prepare court documents;
- helping you negotiate and settle issues on a temporary or final basis;
- helping you prepare or review consent orders or family agreements that can be filed in court;
- attending court with you to request an adjournment, an unopposed order, or a consent order; and
- referring you to other resources.

If you do not qualify financially, family duty counsel can still provide you with general information about the law, request an adjournment in court, and advise you about other resources.

Supreme Court family duty counsel cannot:

- go to court for a contested trial or a hearing where the issues are not simple, as determined by the lawyer;
- help you with complex property disputes;
- help you if you already have a lawyer acting for you;
- prepare your court documents;

- help you with any legal problems that are not related to family law; or
- serve or accept service of any court documents.

It is best to speak to a family duty counsel lawyer before your court date, if possible. In Vancouver, call to make an appointment. In other locations, drop in during duty counsel hours on one of the family duty counsel days at your local Supreme Court. (See the LSS website at www.legalaid.bc.ca and click Legal aid — Legal advice — family law matters — How to find Supreme Court duty counsel.) Or call your local legal aid office or the courthouse for days and times. (See www.legalaid.bc.ca and click Legal aid — Legal aid offices, or check the business listings of the white pages under “Legal Aid”). Bring copies of all your court documents with you.

At the courthouse, you can identify family duty counsel lawyers by their name tags. The lawyers will first help people with matters in court that day, but may be available to give drop-in advice.

Please note that you will be asked for information about your legal problem, the name(s) of other people or agencies who are or will be part of your case, and information about your finances.

See the Family Law in BC website at www.familylaw.lss.bc.ca to find legal information and self-help resources. LSS has public access computers that you can use at most legal aid offices and at community partner locations throughout the province. For a list, see www.legalaid.bc.ca and click Legal aid — Legal aid offices, or call your nearest legal aid office (check the business listings of the white pages under “Legal Aid”).