

Overview

The Family Court

The Family Court deals with many family law matters in

the Antigonish, Pictou/New Glasgow,

Truro, Amherst, Kentville,

Bridgewater, and Yarmouth/Digby

Justice Centre areas.

The Court and its services give people

the opportunity to resolve family

conflicts—in or out of the courtroom.

Services at the Family Court

- referrals to mediation services
- parent information sessions—available in Pictou/New Glasgow, Antigonish, Amherst, Kentville, Bridgewater, and Truro
- information about court procedures and processes

Your first contact with the Family Court will likely be by telephone or with the counter staff at the court. They will provide you with the forms which you need to complete for your application and make an appointment for you to see an intake officer. The intake officer helps determine which programs or services will address your situation. The court will require the applicant and respondent to exchange appropriate information to properly address the issues that have been identified.

Do I need a lawyer?

We strongly recommend that you have a lawyer to represent you in your case at the Family Court. If you cannot afford a lawyer, you can apply for and may be able to get help from your local legal aid office. You can also obtain free legal information from the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia (see your telephone directory).

You should get legal advice at each stage of the process.

What family conflicts does the Court deal with?

The Family Court has the authority to deal with the law in these statutes:

- Young Persons' Summary Proceedings Act
- Children and Family Services Act
- Maintenance and Custody Act
- Maintenance Enforcement Act
- Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act
- Reciprocal Enforcement of Custody Orders Act

- Adult Protection Act
- Criminal Code of Canada, Sections 264.1, 265, 810 and 811 which deal with threats and common assaults involving husband and wife or parent and child, and peace bonds
- The Solemnization of Marriage Act relating to the performance of marriage and applications from persons under the age of 16 who desire permission to marry

Family Court judges are also appointed as judges of Youth Court, and deal with offences under the federal Youth Criminal Justice Act.

A considerable amount of family law is also contained in written decisions of judges, known as “case law.”

What family conflicts doesn't the Court deal with?

Family Court does not deal with adoptions, divorces, or disputes concerning family property or estates. These disputes are taken to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia. Applications for changes to orders made under the Divorce Act, called divorce variations, are normally taken to the Supreme Court.

Where can I get more information?

For more information about representing yourself in court visit the Department of Justice website at

<<http://gov.ns.ca/just/srl/>>. For more information about the courts of Nova Scotia go to <<http://courts.ns.ca>>.

Locations

You will find the Family Courts in the following locations:

Amherst

16 Church Street
3rd Floor
Amherst, NS B4H 3A6
Phone: 667-2256
Fax: 667-1108

Antigonish

11 James Street
Antigonish, NS B2G 1R6
Phone: 863-7312
Fax: 863-7479

Bridgewater

141 High Street
Bridgewater, NS B4V 1W2
Phone: 543-4679
Fax: 543-0678

Kentville

136 Exhibition Street
Kentville, NS B4N 4E5
Phone: 679-6075
Fax: 679-6081

Pictou/New Glasgow

69 Water Street
Pictou, NS B0K 1H0
Phone: 485-7025
Fax: 485-8934

Truro

540 Prince Street
Truro, NS B2N 1G1
Phone: 893-5840
Fax: 893-6261

Yarmouth/Digby

164 Main Street
Yarmouth, NS B5A 1C2
Phone: 742-0500
Fax: 742-0678

Some justice centres have satellite courts in other locations in their area. For example, the Truro Justice Centre has a satellite court in Shubenacadie. Kentville Justice Centre has satellite courts in Annapolis Royal and Windsor. Consult your justice centre if you have questions about where to attend the Family Court for appointments with court officers and hearings.