



Legal Aid Facts

Expanded Family LawLINE

Family LawLINE is a proven telephone advice service that provides brief next-step advice to eligible clients with family law issues both before and after they're involved in a court process. The service was expanded to include preparation and review of legal documents, legal coaching for people representing themselves in court, and appointments with the same lawyer.

Expanded Family LawLINE is one of four justice transformation initiatives funded by the Ministry of Justice. The service expansion was piloted for three years ending March 31, 2017. The provincial government has renewed Expanded Family LawLINE funding until March 31, 2020.

Innovative services

Family LawLINE provides the following services:

- Information and advice on court processes, both Provincial and Supreme Court
- Information and advice on options for resolving legal issues out-of-court
- Referrals to other services, including online resources and other public agencies
- Help with preparing documents for court or for other legal issues
- Coaching to help people who are representing themselves in court

Expanded Family LawLINE provides up to six hours of dedicated time with a lawyer for each current legal matter. Clients can make appointments to talk to the same lawyer. If the same lawyer is unavailable, the new lawyer continues with the same client file to ensure consistent service. Previously, people usually spoke with a different lawyer every time they called the Family LawLINE and received only three hours in total.

Expanded Family LawLINE helps people prepare documents for court and other legal processes. This may involve reviewing, editing or in some cases helping to draft a specific legal document. Previously, advice was provided, but lawyers could not review the documents.

The enhanced service also provides coaching and guidance to help people represent themselves more effectively.

Benefits for clients

Expanding the scope of Family LawLINE by providing more hours, continuity of service, help with document preparation and legal coaching better supports clients to resolve their problems out of court.

It helps clients address the range of issues they face on separation and divorce. Assisting self-represented litigants to be better prepared for court hearings will decrease hearing time, freeing up judicial resources.

Expanded advice coupled with effective online resources supports and empowers clients to find affordable, fair, and enduring resolutions to their family law problems, bringing stability to their lives and the lives of their children.