



SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE

Local Notice for Family and Child Protection Matters before the Ottawa Family Court (Updated on November 2, 2026)

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This notice supplements the Consolidated *Provincial Practice Direction for Family Proceedings at the Superior Court of Justice*, amended and effective February 6, 2025, issued by the Chief Justice of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice (“*Provincial Practice Direction*”) as well as the *Consolidated Practice Direction for the East Region* issued by the Regional Senior Judge of the East Region (“*Regional Practice Direction*”).

It is meant to provide supplementary information related to local practices and procedures that are specific to the Ottawa Unified Family Court.

This Local Notice replaces all local practice directions issued by the Ottawa Family Court before November 2, 2026.

PART 2: DIRECTIVES RELEVANT TO BOTH FAMILY AND CHILD PROTECTION MATTERS

1. Where to file court documents or request the scheduling of an event in a Family or Child Protection matter

There are three main points of entry for filing court documents or requesting the scheduling of a family or child protection event:

- The Family Court Counter (via the Ministry’s Justice Services Online platform (the “JSO Portal”), by email or in person);
- The Trial Coordination Office (by email); and
- The Child Protection Court Counter (via the Ministry’s Justice Services Online platform (the “JSO Portal”), by email or in person).

Each of the above entry points is responsible for processing specific requests and document filings. Your request or filing must be sent to the correct entry point in the manner identified below to ensure proper processing.

It is crucial that litigants and counsel do not overload the entry point email accounts and that they use them responsibly for the identified purposes. Counsel and litigants are reminded of the limited reasons they may communicate with the Trial Coordination Office or the Judiciary, as set out in rule 1(12.2) of the Family Law Rules and in the Provincial Practice Direction (Part II C., “Communicating with Court, Staff and Trial Coordinators”).

a. The Family Court Counter

Any court filing or request to schedule an event in a family matter that is NOT specifically within the responsibility of the Trial Coordination Office, or the Child Protection Court Counter (as described below) must be made to the Family Court Counter.

Counsel and parties should file their documents and any necessary filing fees electronically using the Ministry's Justice Services Online platform, including the [Family Case Documents Online portal](#) ("JSO Portal"). Certain types of documents may be filed by email at Ottawafamilycourt@ontario.ca. The table below indicates where each type of document or request should be filed:

JSO Portal	Email account only Ottawafamilycourt@ontario.ca
The following documents must be sent to the Family Court Counter through the JSO Portal: ✓ The filing of any pleadings (Application, Answer, Reply, Motion to Change, Response to Motion to Change) in any family matter; ✓ Requests for a hearing in writing, documents in support of a 14B motion for a consent order, an uncontested divorce and an uncontested trial in a family matter; ✓ Case conference briefs, settlement conference briefs and trial management conference briefs (including briefs filed for a court appearance before your Case Management Judge); ✓ Materials for short or long motions;	The following documents and requests to schedule the following family events may be sent to the Family Court Counter by email at Ottawafamilycourt@ontario.ca: ✓ Procedural motions (scheduled for Tuesdays); ✓ Any court filing or request for the scheduling of an event in a family matter that is NOT specifically within the responsibility of the Trial Coordination Office or the Child Protection Court Counter (as described below). This includes, but is not limited to: ○ Requests to schedule a long motion (requiring more than 60 minutes); ○ Requests for copies of court documents, information, or court dates. ✓ Requests for leave to bring an urgent motion (must be filed

✓ Confirmation forms for motions or conferences; ✓ Draft orders to be signed by the Registrar or the Judge who made the order and related documents. ✓ Requests for fee waivers. ✓ Requests for leave to bring an urgent motion (must be filed through the JSO Portal and emailed to the Family Court Counter)	through the JSO Portal and emailed to the Family Court Counter).
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Unless specified otherwise in this Notice, documents filed through the Family Court Counter's email account should be filed at least four business days before any scheduled court appearance to ensure that they are available to the presiding judicial officer at the hearing.

When invited to make cost submissions by the presiding judicial officer, such cost submissions should be sent to the Superior Court of Justice's assistants' generic email account (SCJ.Assistants@ontario.ca).

b. The Trial Coordination Office

The following documents and requests for scheduling of the following family events must be sent to the Trial Coordination Office by email at:

OttawaSCJ.TC.Office@ontario.ca:

- Requests for a settlement conference in a family matter;
- Where a specific judicial officer is seized with a matter or event, requests to schedule that matter before the judicial officer who is seized;
- Requests to change the presumptive mode of attendance.

c. The Child Protection Court Counter

All documents concerning a child protection matter must be filed by email at OttawaCYFSA@ontario.ca. While it is possible to file documents in a child protection matter through the JSO Portal, documents filed in this manner should be submitted at least seven business days before the scheduled court appearance and must use the proper

file extension to ensure that they are available to the presiding judicial officer at the hearing.

2. How to request an event be scheduled or to file court documents in a Family or Child Protection matter

To ensure that your request or documents are correctly processed, the following guidelines shall be adhered to:

- Identify the type of matter, request, or appearance and use only the corresponding entry point specified in paragraph 1 above. Do not send the same request or documents to more than one entry point. The only exception is a request for leave to bring an urgent motion, which must be both filed through the JSO Portal and emailed to the Family Court Counter.
- Send your request in ONE email, as follows:
 - The subject line must concisely describe the purpose of your email and identify the matter for which the request is made, including the court file number and the names of the parties. For example:
 - RE: FC-20-598 – Smith v. MacDonald – request for a case conference
RE: FC-20-CP999 – CAS v. Smith – URGENT MOTION
 - The body of your email should concisely explain the request you are making in only a few lines. For example:
 - Please find enclosed the Applicant’s Case Conference Brief for the conference scheduled for March 21, 2021, at 2 p.m.
 - The Respondent in this matter wishes to schedule a Settlement Conference during the first three weeks of September. The (self-represented) Applicant opposes this request. Please note that the Respondent’s counsel is unavailable on September 4 (p.m.), September 9 (a.m.) and September 14. A bilingual judge is needed.
- Provide organized materials, in PDF format, preferably in one email (multiple emails are strongly discouraged unless they cannot be avoided). More specifically:
 - Documents that contain attachments (such as affidavits which often have several exhibits) must be bookmarked.

- Do not lock or password protect digital documents as court staff need to be able to add the court's seal and signature.
- Draft orders should always be provided as a separate document in PDF and Word format.

3. *Presumptive Modes of Attendance in Family and Child Protection Matters*

The presumptive modes of attendance in the Ottawa Family Court are the same as those set out in the *Regional Practice Direction* (Part 1 A.), with the following clarifications:

Proceeding	In-person	Virtual	In-writing
Family proceedings			
14B Motions for leave to bring an urgent motion			X
First appearance court	X		
All enforcement proceedings by the Family Responsibility Office		X	
Motions that will require more than 30 minutes and which need to be adjourned to a full hearing on a regular motion's list (including contested motions for Warrant of Committal and Refraining Orders)	X		

Proceeding	In-person	Virtual	In writing
Child Protection Matters			
To Be Spoken To lists		X	
Openness Applications		X	

Requests to deviate from the presumptive mode of attendance for a future appearance may be sought from the judge or associate judge presiding over any court hearing in the case. Alternatively, requests to deviate may be sent to the Local Administrative Judge

for Family or Child Protection matters, on notice to the other party, through Trial Coordination (at OttawaSCJ.TC.Office@ontario.ca).

4. Interpretation services

Court proceedings in Ontario are conducted in English or French. The Ministry of the Attorney General provides court interpretation services in any language required in child protection matters and English or French in family matters. The Ministry also provides sign language in all court matters and interpretation services in any language when the court orders it. Interpretation services may be provided consecutively or simultaneously, at the discretion of the presiding judicial officer.

It is the responsibility of litigants to arrange interpretation services at least three weeks before the court hearing. Counsel and litigants may do so by emailing INTER-CITS@ontario.ca.

If your matter is being heard virtually, simultaneous interpretation is available as an option in Ottawa using the simultaneous translation feature in Zoom. All virtual courtrooms are currently capable of offering simultaneous translation, subject to the directions of the presiding judicial officer. For this purpose, please consult the [Ottawa Local Participants' Guide to Simultaneous Interpretation for Virtual Hearings Using Zoom](#).

PART 3: DIRECTIVES SPECIFIC TO FAMILY MATTERS

1. Weekly schedule

The Ottawa Family Court's regular weekly schedule is as follows:

- 14B motions, uncontested divorces and uncontested trials (that do not present complex evidentiary or legal issues) are processed on a regular and ongoing basis in writing;
- First Court Date Clerk Court ("FCDC Court") for all fast-track cases is held on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 9 a.m., in person (maximum of 10 cases per day). If parties consent to an interim, final or procedural order, they may be brought to the attention of a judge at 10 a.m. or 2 p.m. on the same day for signature;
- Procedural motions are heard every Tuesday, usually by an Associate Judge, at 10 a.m.;

- Requests for leave to bring an urgent motion are usually heard by one of the Associate Judges, in writing on Tuesdays and Thursdays, unless the Trial Coordination Office advises otherwise;
- Case conferences are generally (but not exclusively) heard on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.;
- DRO Case Conferences are generally heard on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Motions are generally (but not exclusively) heard on Tuesdays and Thursdays, commencing at 10 a.m.;
- Enforcement matters by the Family Responsibility Office are heard two days per week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, beginning at 9 a.m. (maximum of 4 cases per day);
- Settlement conferences are heard weekly, based on need and judicial availability;
- Family trials are heard during three Trial Sittings each year: January/February, June, and September/October (three weeks each).

2. Case Conferences

Case conferences are scheduled on a running list, with three matters being heard at 10 a.m. and two matters being heard at 2 p.m.

Case conferences must be booked via Calendly (see the section titled “Online Scheduling via Calendly” below).

3. DRO Conferences

The directions contained in the *Provincial Practice Direction* in relation to the DRO Program apply before the Ottawa Family Court (Part H. 8.).

DRO Case Conferences are generally held on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10 a.m. Two matters are heard each morning, on a running list.

A Case Centre Bundle will be opened after the Case Conference Brief is filed. DRO Case Conferences are scheduled on Calendly.

DROs will typically hear the following types of cases:

1. First Case Conference (CC) in any Motion to Change (MTC)
 - Usually 2 cases per session.
 - Scheduled after the 1st Court Clerk (FCDC days) using Calendly.
2. Judge Referrals / Self-Bookings
 - Judges may refer a case to the DRO at any point to narrow issues, facilitate settlement discussions, organize disclosure, or assist with any other document/evidence management.
 - Counsel or parties may also self-book into a DRO session.
3. The DROs also hear last-minute settlement conferences during the week immediately preceding each Trial Sitting (10 sessions per week).

The following materials are required for a DRO Case Conference:

1. Case or Settlement Conference Brief
2. Financial Statement, if there are financial issues
3. For matters on an upcoming Trial List, a draft completed TSEF

All materials are to be uploaded to Case Centre. Materials need not be filed with the Court or sent to the Court by email.

An appearance before a DRO constitutes a case conference for the purposes of Rule 14 of the Family Law Rules.

4. Settlement Conferences

A settlement conference may be scheduled only with the consent of both parties (unless leave is obtained from a judge or the Local Administrative Judge), and the opposing party's availability must be canvassed before scheduling the conference. Failure to do so causes delays, leads to adjournments, and may be sanctioned with costs. Parties must therefore confer before requesting a settlement conference.

A request to schedule a settlement conference must be copied to the opposing party/counsel and must indicate the following in the body of the email:

- whether the conference is requested on consent;
- the name of the judge who is seized of the event or case-managing the matter, if any;
- whether a bilingual judge is needed;
- the dates the parties and counsel are available or unavailable to appear for the conference;

- the estimated time for the hearing.

Please note that it is NOT the responsibility of the counter staff or the Trial Coordination Office to canvass available dates with the opposing party/counsel. A party's objections to scheduling a settlement conference will be directed to the Local Administrative Judge.

Leave to adjourn a settlement conference must be obtained from the Local Administrative Judge in writing and on notice to the opposing party. The request for leave to adjourn must explain why an adjournment is sought, why the circumstances giving rise to the request were not foreseeable when the Settlement Conference was scheduled and must be filed with Trial Coordination.

5. Procedural motions and urgent motions

Procedural motions and requests for leave to bring an urgent motion will be addressed on Tuesdays and Thursdays, usually by an Associate Judge, as set out below.

a. Procedural motions

Procedural motions pursuant to subrule 14(10) of the *Family Law Rules* will be heard on Tuesdays at 10 a.m., usually by an Associate Judge. There will be a maximum of ten (10) procedural motions heard each day. Requests for procedural motions are sent to the Family Court Counter (ottawafamilycourt@ontario.ca). The subject line of the email must indicate that the request is for a procedural motion to be heard orally, include the court file number and the names of the parties.

The request for a procedural motion, including the motion materials, must be filed no later than 5 p.m. on Thursday. If the limit of ten (10) motions is reached for any given day, counsel for the party bringing the motion will be notified and an alternative date will be provided.

Consent orders will not be dealt with on procedural motions days. They must be submitted to the court as 14B motions in writing unless they are time sensitive.

The following procedural motions MUST be brought before the Court during Procedural Motions Court on Tuesdays and will no longer be dealt with by the Court by way of 14B motions in writing ("basket motions"):

- Motions for orders related to service of documents (for example, requests for substituted service, dispensing with service or approval of irregular service);
- Motions by lawyers for an order to be removed as counsel of record.

Procedural motions are intended to be short motions, with a duration of no longer than 10 minutes, and dealing with procedural matters only. Materials in support of procedural motions are limited to the following:

- a notice of motion (Form 14) and a brief affidavit, double spaced, in twelve-point font, no more than five pages (plus a copy of any existing court order or the relevant portions of any agreement or other document necessary for the motion), OR a 14B motion form;
- proof of service on the other party (unless the motion is being brought without notice);
- a draft order, in PDF and Word format.

Material submitted in support of a procedural motion which deviates from the above guidelines may not be considered by the presiding judicial officer. The Family Court Counter/presiding judicial officer may return such material to the sender.

b. Requests for leave to bring an urgent motion and urgent motions

Effective January 1, 2027, requests for leave to bring urgent motions will be heard in writing on Tuesdays and Thursdays or at such time as confirmed by the Trial Coordinator's Office. No virtual or in-person attendance is required. The test to determine whether a motion is "urgent" within the meaning of subrule 14(4.2) of the Rules is the test established by the authoritative case law before the pandemic. See *Rosen v. Rosen*, 2005 CanLII 480 (ON SC), *Rooney v. Rooney*, 2004 ONCJ 26, and related cases. The moving party must obtain an "in-writing date" from the Family Court Counter and include it in the Notice of Motion.

Responding materials concerning a request for leave to bring an urgent motion must be served and filed by 2 p.m. the day before the in-writing hearing.

A request for leave to bring an urgent motion is a procedural motion. Therefore, the materials supporting such requests are restricted to those permissible for a procedural motion (see above). A memo of law/argument, of no more than three pages is permitted and is optional. The request for leave to bring an urgent motion and the motion materials filed in support of the request (including a copy of the Application or Motion to Change to be issued if one has not yet been issued and supporting material) must be filed through the JSO Portal and sent in a single email to the Family Court Counter, in accordance with the exception set out above. Proof of service must be included unless leave is sought to proceed without notice. The email subject line must state: **"Request for Determination of Urgency"** and include the court file number and case name.

If the request for an urgent motion concerns financial urgency or hardship, a sworn financial statement must be provided.

Material submitted in support of a request for leave to bring an urgent motion which deviates from the above guidelines may not be expeditiously processed by the Family Court Counter.

If the matter is deemed urgent by the presiding judicial officer and it is determined that the motion should be heard the same day or the following day, counsel and litigants will be provided with the time for the motion immediately. If the matter is deemed urgent but can be heard on another day, the presiding judicial officer will endorse the record accordingly, provide directions for the filing of more fulsome motion materials, and counsel or the party bringing the motion will be directed to e-mail the Trial Coordination Office (at OttawaSCJ.TC.Office@ontario.ca) to schedule a date for the urgent motion to be heard.

6. Motions

Except as specified below, the directions contained in the *Provincial Practice Direction* in relation to motions apply before the Ottawa Family Court (Part D.).

Short motions are those requiring 60 minutes or less, while long motions are those requiring more than 60 minutes.

A requisition, Notice of Motion, and supporting affidavit or affidavits are required to schedule any motion. “Placeholder affidavits” are not permitted at the time of scheduling the motion unless a judge has provided specific directions in relation to service and filing of affidavits.

In addition to being required for long motions, factums are also necessary for Motions to Change and for summary judgment motions, even if scheduled for one hour or less. Factums will be accepted for filing up until 2 p.m. three (3) days before the motion date.

Short motions must be booked using Calendly (see the section titled “Online Scheduling via Calendly” below). Requests to schedule long motions must be directed to the Family Court Counter.

Motions within the jurisdiction of an Associate Judge will be heard at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. For more information regarding the motions jurisdiction of an Associate Judge, please refer to rules 42(5) and 42(8) of the Family Law Rules.

No motion may be brought after a Settlement Conference has been held, without leave of the Court.

7. Trials

The following directions apply with respect to trials before the Ottawa Family Court:

- Matters are usually placed on a Trial List at the first Case Conference.

a. TMC Scheduling Court

- All matters on a Trial List will be required to attend TMC Scheduling Court followed by a Trial Management Conference (TMC).
- The dates for TMC Scheduling Court and TMCs for each Trial Sitting will be posted on the Trial Lists page of the CCLA website – available here - [Trial Lists - County of Carleton Law Association](#)
- TMC Scheduling Courts will be held virtually by Zoom at 9 a.m. If your matter has been placed on a Trial List, you will receive an email from Trial Coordination a few weeks in advance confirming the date of the event and providing you with all relevant information for this hearing, including the Zoom link and the dates set aside for TMCs.
- The purpose of TMC Scheduling Court is to assign a TMC date to each matter on the Trial List, and to address requests for trial adjournments or removal from a Trial List for compelling reasons.

b. Trial Management Conferences

- While it is still open to parties to schedule a Trial Management Conference at any time prior to the hearing of a trial (this is encouraged when your matter raises complex legal and evidentiary issues), a full week is dedicated 45 to 60 days before any Trial Sitting for the hearing of Trial Management Conferences for matters on that Trial Sitting.
- TMCs will be scheduled as week-long running lists.
- During these weeks, the Court will hear up to nine TMCs per day – five TMCs scheduled to commence at 9 a.m. and four TMCs scheduled to commence at 2 p.m.
- All TMCs will be heard virtually by Zoom.
- Trial needs such as trial length, level of urgency, bilingual judge requirements, interpreter requirements, and requests for last-minute judicial Settlement

Conferences, will be addressed at the TMC, and parties will be able to schedule last-minute Settlement Conferences at that time.

- The documents required for Trial Management Conferences are listed in rule 17(13), paragraph 4 (a Trial Scheduling Endorsement Form, an Offer to Settle all issues and an outline of the party's opening statement). In addition to these documents required by the rule, the parties are required to file a draft copy of the Final Order they will seek at trial.
- Considerable thought should be given to whether any supporting witnesses could effectively testify in chief by way of affidavit, with oral cross-examination during the trial. This is an effective strategy to reduce the time needed for the trial.
- A Statement of Agreed Facts is required on all matters going to trial, on the following topics (at a minimum), where applicable:
 - History of the relationship (including relevant dates, names, and ages of the children)
 - Each party's employment history
 - Each party's income for all relevant years – Even if income is disputed, line 15000 of a party's Income Tax Return should be included in the Statement of Agreed Facts
 - Parenting schedule(s) in place since separation
 - The amount of support paid.
 - Expenses paid for the children by each parent (even if there is disagreement about whether they qualify as section 7 expenses)
 - If equalization is in dispute, a comparative net family property statement identifying values still in dispute
 - Litigation history

8. *Uncontested trials*

Uncontested trials are presumptively heard in writing, as procedural (14B) motions (see section 1. above). However, if an uncontested trial raises complex issues or will require more than 10 minutes of judicial time, they must be scheduled as a regular motion to be heard in person.

9. *Online Scheduling via Calendly*

The following hearings must be booked using [Calendly](#):

- Short motions before a judge
- Short motions before an associate judge

- Case conferences before a judge or associate judge
- Case conferences before a Dispute Resolution Officer
- Last-minute settlement conferences before a Dispute Resolution Officer.

The following process must be followed to book via Calendly:

- Only one party completes the Calendly booking.
- Parties must make reasonable efforts (at least three attempts) to consult each other before selecting a date/time.
- The requesting party must review and comply with all confirmations/undertakings set out in the booking process. Failure to comply may result in the date being vacated by the Family Court Counter.
- A Calendly guide can be found here – [Calendly in the Superior Court of Justice – Ontario Superior Court of Justice](#)

PART 4: DIRECTIVES SPECIFIC TO CHILD PROTECTION MATTERS

The procedures and directives set out above apply to child protection matters as well, unless specified otherwise below.

1. Weekly schedule

Child Protection Court runs from Monday to Thursday each week, with dockets at 10 a.m. and motions and settlement conferences in the afternoon, starting at 2 p.m. Bilingual matters are heard on Wednesdays unless there is an emergency. Adoptions are heard in chambers (unless a request for an in-person hearing is made) and openness applications are heard virtually on Friday afternoons every two weeks. Trials are scheduled as needed, at set dates throughout the year. For matters proceeding virtually, parties and counsel should join the virtual courtroom 15 minutes early so the Registrar can confirm the parties' presence and canvass the list.

2. How to effectively schedule a child protection event

The next child protection event in a case is scheduled in the courtroom, at the end of each event.

Requests for a special appearance before a particular judge who is case managing a child protection case or is seized with a specific event must be sent to the Trial Coordination Office at OttawaSCJ.TC.Office@ontario.ca. The subject line of the email must indicate what the request is for and include the court file number and the names of the parties. A request to schedule a child protection event must be copied to the opposing party/counsel and must indicate the following in the body of the email:

- whether the conference is requested on consent;
- the name of the judge who is seized of the event or case-managing the matter, if any;
- the dates the parties and counsel are available or unavailable to appear for the event;
- the estimated time for the hearing; and
- whether it is a bilingual matter.

Justice Vasu Naik
Local Administrative Judge
Family Matters
Unified Family Court
Ontario Superior Court of Justice

Justice Karen Leef
Local Administrative Judge
Child Protection Matters
Unified Family Court
Ontario Superior Court of Justice