

Family Law Conferences

IMPORTANT: The legal information contained in this sheet is intended to provide summary information on family law conferences. **It is not intended to serve as legal advice or to replace the guidance of a lawyer.**

FIRST CONFERENCE

CASE CONFERENCE

During the **case conference**, the parties can discuss the case with a judge, determine the issues in dispute, possibly settle them to avoid a motion or a trial, and organize the next step in the legal proceedings.

Before the Conference, if no date has already been set, ask the **court clerk** to schedule a conference. The court clerk will give you a date, sign form **17: Conference Notice** and give you a copy which must be served (given) on your partner. See the [guide to serving documents](#) for more information.

Next, fill out **form 17A: Case Conference Brief** which includes information about the family unit, your financial situation (if there are issues of support and property), the issues in dispute, your proposed settlement. If there are any procedural issues, you can also include them in your brief.

Additional forms may be required. You must also provide **up-to-date financial statements** if more than **60 days old**, either with the **form 13: Financial Statement (Support Claims)**, the **form 13.1: Financial Statement (Property and Support Claims)** if your circumstances have changed, or the **form 14A Affidavit (General)** if there have been few changes, and complete **form 13A: Certificate of Financial Disclosure** to list the supporting documents.

Before your conference, **serve** your documents and **form 17: Conference Notice** on your partner at least **6 days** before your conference date, file your forms (online or in court), add **form 6B: Affidavit of Service** to your ongoing record, and file your brief in the court file for the judge to read, knowing that the discussions at the conference remain confidential.

Representation: You can **represent yourself** in court or **hire a lawyer**.

Parties: You are the **applicant** The **respondent** is the person you bring to court, the ex-partner.

Forms: Court forms can be found [here](#).

Forms : **Continuing Record forms** can be found [here](#).

Court Address: The court's contact information is available [here](#).

Get help filling out forms if you do not have a lawyer

- Visit a [Family Law Information Centre \(FLIC\)](#).
- Use the [Family Law Guided Pathways](#).
- Visit the [Steps to Justice](#).

Your documents must be served on your partner by **special service**, which means that you cannot serve them yourself. Service must be made by another adult who is **at least 18 years old**, such as a friend, family member, or process server. All the **methods of serving documents** are described [here](#).

The person who served the documents must then complete **form 6B: Affidavit of Service** signed before a [commissioner for taking affidavits](#). Then, file it in the Continuous record at the courthouse.

After service, your partner must give you at least **4 days** before the case conference his or her **form 17A: Conference Brief** and an **updated financial information** and you must, if possible, attempt to contact him or her to discuss the sharing of financial information, procedural issues, and dispute resolution, in writing, in person, or with the help of a lawyer.

You and your partner must confirm your attendance by filing **form 17F: Confirmation of Conference**, giving one copy to the other person, at least **three days** before the scheduled date and filing it with the court no later than **2 p.m.**, at least **3 days** before your conference date.

The **Conference** is a **hearing** where the parties (and their counsel if represented) are present with the judge. At the hearing, the judge may suggest that the parties take part in **mediation** or try to resolve certain issues. The parties will have the opportunity to discuss the issues in dispute and determine whether any can be resolved whether there is a lack of disclosure by the parties, and next steps.

If the parties are able to resolve certain issues in dispute, the judge may make a consent order. Under [Rule 17](#) of the *Family law rules* the judge may also make an order for the disclosure of documents ([Rule 19](#)), and/or further proceedings, for example, scheduling a Conference or a Motion. Please note that it is possible to have more than one Case Conference in the same case.

SECOND CONFERENCE

SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE

During the **settlement conference**, the parties will once again have the opportunity to settle the issues in dispute and to move closer to reach an agreement. Note that the **case conference** and the **settlement conference** may be combined.

Before the Conference, fill out **form 17: Conference Notice** and **form 17A: Case Conference Brief** which includes information about the family unit, your financial situation (if there are issues of support and property), the issues in dispute, your proposed settlement. If there are any procedural issues, you can also include them in your brief.

Also include, an **Offer to Settle, form 13B: Net Family Property Statement** and **form 13C: Comparative Net Family Property Statement**.

Additional forms may be required. You must also provide **up-to-date financial statements** that are more than **60 days old**, either with **form 13: Financial Statement (Support Claims)**, **form 13.1: Financial Statement (Property and Support Claims)** if your circumstances have changed, or **form 14A Affidavit (General)** if there have been few changes, and complete **form 13A: Certificate of Financial Disclosure** to list the supporting documents.

Before your conference, **serve** your documents and **form 17: Conference Notice** on your partner at least **6 days** before your conference date, file your forms (online or in court), add **form 6B: Affidavit of Service** to your ongoing record, and file your brief in the court file for the judge to read, knowing that the discussions at the conference remain confidential.

Your documents must be served on your partner by **special service**, which means that you cannot serve them yourself. Service must be made by another adult who is **at least 18 years old**, such as a friend, family member, or process server. All the **methods of serving documents** are described [here](#).

The person who served the documents must then complete **form 6B: Affidavit of Service** signed before a [commissioner for taking affidavits](#). Then, file it in the Continuous record at the courthouse.

After service, your partner must give you at least **4 days** before the case conference his or her **form 17C: Settlement Conference Brief**, an **updated financial information**, an **Offer to settle, form 13B: Net Family Property Statement** and **form 13C: Comparative Net Family Property Statement**.

You must, if possible, attempt to contact him or her to discuss the sharing of financial information, procedural issues, and dispute resolution, in writing, in person, or with the help of a lawyer.

You and your partner must confirm your attendance by filing **form 17F: Confirmation of Conference**, giving one copy to the other person, at least **three days** before the scheduled date and filing it with the court no later than **2 p.m.**, at least **3 days** before your conference date.

The **Conference** is a **hearing** where the parties (and their lawyers, if represented) are present with the judge. During the conference, the judge will try to help the parties resolve the issues in dispute and will generally offer an opinion on the case. The parties will also have to explain the steps they have taken to try to resolve the issues in dispute.

If the parties are able to resolve certain issues in dispute, the judge may issue a **consent order**. It is also possible that **another conference** will be scheduled if the parties believe they are able to resolve the case.

FINAL CONFERENCE

TRIAL MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

In order to prepare for trial, the judge will schedule a trial management conference, which will give the parties a final opportunity to resolve any outstanding issues and prepare for trial.

Before the Conference, complete **form 17: Conference Notice** and **form 17E: Trial Management Conference Brief** with information about the issues, a summary of your opening statement at trial, a list of the witnesses you wish to call, the topics they will discuss, and the time allocated for each.

However, if you are in the Superior Court of Justice (SCJ) or the Family Court Division of the SCJ, fill out the **[Trial Scheduling Endorsement Form](#)**, an **Offer to Settle** and a draft of your **opening statement** that you will present at trial.

Additional forms may be required. You must also provide **up-to-date financial statements** that are more than **60 days old**, either with the **form 13: Financial Statement (Support Claims)** or the **form 13.1: Financial Statement (Property and Support Claims)** if your circumstances have changed, or with the **form 14A Affidavit (General)** if there have been few changes, and complete **form 13A: Certificate of Financial Disclosure** to list the supporting documents.

Before your conference, **serve** your documents on your partner at least **6 days** before your conference date, file your forms (online or in court), add **form 6B – Affidavit of Service** to your ongoing record, and file your brief in the court file for the judge to read, knowing that the discussions at the conference remain confidential.

Your documents must be served on your ex-partner by **special service**, which means that you cannot serve them yourself. Service must be made by another adult who is **at least 18 years old**, such as a friend, family member, or process server. All the **methods of serving documents** are described **[here](#)**.

The person who served the documents must then complete **form 6B: Affidavit of Service** signed before a **[commissioner for taking affidavits](#)**. Then, file it in the Continuous record at the courthouse.

After service, your partner must give you at least **4 days** before the case conference his or her **form 17E: Trial Management Conference Brief**, an **updated financial information**, and if your case before the Superior Court of justice (SCJ) or the Family Court of the SCJ, an **Offer to settle** and a draft of their **opening statement** that will be presented at trial.

You must, if possible, attempt to contact him or her to discuss the sharing of financial information, procedural issues, and dispute resolution, in writing, in person, or with the help of a lawyer.

You and your partner must confirm your attendance by filing **form 17F: Confirmation of Conference**, giving one copy to the other person, at least **3 days** before the scheduled date and filing it with the court no later than **2 p.m.**, at least **3 days** before your conference date.

At the conference, the judge will try to help you settle the case, review the evidence, discuss witnesses, and explain the court process. It will also be necessary to determine the length of the trial and any documents/forms that still need to be served and filed before the trial.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CONFERENCES

Conferences are private and discussions are not shared between judges. Therefore, the **briefs** are not in the court record and are not used as evidence at trial.

Refer to [rule 17 Conferences](#) of the *Family law rules* to determine what documents need to be served, time limits, etc.

Family Court's **forms** can be found [here](#). Use the Steps to justice's [Guided Family Law Pathways](#) for help completing certain forms.

You can represent yourself, but it is recommended that to have a lawyer to review all of your forms before filing them with the Family Court.

The **Legal Information Centre of Ontario** offers free confidential [legal information and referral services](#) in English and French to anyone with a legal problem who is located in Ontario. ~~Le Centre offre des services en français et en anglais.~~ **Book an appointment online** or **call us at 1 (844) 343-7462** (toll-free) for a 30-minute legal information meeting



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