

# Improving Justice For Children And Families

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*McGuinty Government Reforms Family Justice For Ontarians*

## **NEWS**

Ontario is strengthening and improving access to justice by making the family courts easier to use, more focused and more affordable.

Improvements to family justice will:

- Provide more information to families up front about the steps they need to take and the impact on children when relationships break down;
- Enhance opportunities to identify issues, ensure early disclosure and provide community referrals to better support families in reaching resolutions;
- Improve access to legal advice as well as less adversarial means of resolving issues such as mediation and collaborative family law; and,
- Streamline and simplify the steps involved for those cases that must go to court.

Family justice partners in two courts in Brampton and Milton will be the first to improve access to family justice and will develop initiatives to help reduce the stress on families and the time necessary to reach decision points in their family courts.

## **QUOTES**

"Our current family process is costly, takes too long and is too combative. We have listened to those involved in the family law system very closely. Today we are moving forward with the changes needed to make family matters easier to resolve and more affordable for Ontario families."

- Chris Bentley, Attorney General

"For many people, involvement with the family justice system comes at a time when they are most vulnerable, and this reform will help them resolve their disputes more quickly and will better protect the interests of women and children."

- John McCamus, Chair, Legal Aid Ontario

## **QUICK FACTS**

Children and families will also benefit from recent legislative changes. As of March 1, 2010, under the new family law reforms:

- Every person applying for custody of or access to a child will complete a sworn statement, setting out the facts and circumstances that relate to the child's best interests.
- Financial information relating to child support payments will be required to be disclosed on an annual basis.
- A parent whose name was left off their child's birth certificate will be able to apply to a court to have their surname added to the child's surname when the court grants a declaration of parentage.

## **LEARN MORE**

Read the [legislation](#).

Find out more about [family law in Ontario](#).



Left to right: Alfred Mamo, Judith Huddart, Joyce Young, Past Chair  
OBA Family Law Section Tom Dart, Attorney General for Ontario the  
Hon. Chris Bentley, Chair OBA Family Law Section Georgina Carson,  
President of the ADR Institute of Ontario Heather Swartz, Parliamentary  
Assistant to the Attorney General David Zimmer.

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