



MCKERCHER LLP BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS

MARCH 25, 2020

The global spread of COVID-19 has rapidly and significantly altered how we are all living and working. With the implementation of social distancing measures, including the closure of schools, daycares, and business, many separated or divorced couples will face additional challenges parenting their children and/or paying support. Our family law department is still here to assist clients during this time.

Contacting a lawyer

At McKercher LLP, we are committed to continuing to provide full service to our current and new clients during this time. Although many of us are working remotely from home to limit the spread of COVID-19, we are available by email, phone, and video conferencing. If you are an existing client, you can continue to contact your lawyer as you have done previously. If you are not currently a client of the firm but would like to speak with a lawyer regarding a family law matter, you can send an email to our family law senior legal assistant, Renée Dust, at r.dust@mckercher.ca. Renée will then contact you to ensure McKercher LLP is able to assist you and arrange for a family lawyer to contact you. If you would like to speak with a specific family lawyer at McKercher LLP, please let Renée know and she will put you in contact with that individual.

Resolving Matters

During this time, family law issues can continue to be resolved through negotiation, mediation, and collaborative processes. However, these processes would have to be conducted using alternate means (video or telephone conferencing) instead of in-person meetings.

The courthouse is still open to commence divorce, parenting, support, and division of property proceedings. Additionally, if an agreement can be reached between the parties, or if the matter is uncontested, those applications can also still be submitted to the court for approval.

If the matter is contested, unless it is urgent, it cannot proceed through the court at this time. All applications that were scheduled before the court have been adjourned as follows:

- If the application was scheduled for March, it has been adjourned to June 10th, 2020;
- If the application was scheduled for April, it has been adjourned to June 17th, 2020; and
- If the application was scheduled between May 1st and June 19th, it has been adjourned to June 24th, 2020.



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In addition to the adjournment of applications, the court has adjourned all family law trials and pre-trial settlement conferences that were scheduled between March 19th to May 31st. These matters will be rescheduled once court operations return to normal.

Although no new applications should be commenced at this time, urgent and emergency family matters can still be resolved through the court. The following circumstances have been outlined by the court as constituting an urgent or emergency matter:

1. Applications for urgent relief relative to the safety of a child or parent. This shall include applications for restraining orders, non-contact orders, and exclusive possession of the family home orders.
2. Urgent matters involving the safety or well-being of a child including essential medical decisions or issues relating to the wrongful removal or retention of a child.
3. Applications related to dire circumstances of financial need including the preservation of existing family property.
4. Any other matter the Court deems necessary to hear on an urgent basis with prior permission of the Court. These matters will be strictly limited.

If you believe the issue you are facing falls into the above category, please contact us to discuss and we can advise and assist you in submitting such an application to the court.

The [McKercher LLP Family Law Department](#) is here to assist you during this stressful time. If you have any questions, please contact us.

About the Author:

[Kate](#) is an associate in the Saskatoon office.

About McKercher LLP:

McKercher LLP is one of Saskatchewan's largest, most established law firms, with offices in Saskatoon and Regina. Our deep roots and client-first philosophy have helped our firm to rank in the top 5 in Saskatchewan by Canadian Lawyer magazine (2019/20). Integrity, experience, and capacity provide innovative solutions for our clients' diverse legal issues and complex business transactions.



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