

SUMMARY ADVICE COUNSEL INFORMATION SHEET

The Summary Advice Lawyer helps parties who need legal advice on *family law matters* but who do not have a lawyer. The Summary Advice Lawyer provides basic legal advice, free of charge, regardless of financial circumstance.

Goals

The goal of the Summary Advice Lawyer is to address unmet legal aid needs by:

- developing an effective and efficient approach to the delivery of free legal services;
- improving access to free legal services.

Purpose

The purpose of the Summary Advice Lawyer is to give people a better understanding of their legal rights and responsibilities. The Summary Advice Lawyer can give basic information about:

- legal terms
- how to start or respond to a court application
- the effects of agreeing or not agreeing to a court order
- court processes
- legal documents
- other aspects of family law

Where

The Summary Advice Lawyer is located at the Supreme Court Family Divisions in Nova Scotia. Please contact the Summary Advice Lawyer in the Court that you may be involved with. **(Please see the location and contact information attached.)**

Common Questions

What is summary advice?

Summary advice is basic information about legal rights, duties and legal positions.

What can the Summary Advice Lawyer do for me?

The Summary Advice Lawyer can give advice on custody, access, child support, spousal support, property division, divorce and most other family law matters and court processes.

The Summary Advice Lawyer does not provide advice in relation to parents involved in child protection matters, or matters involving Mi'kmaq Family Services; however, the Summary Advice Lawyer may provide advice to a non-party to a child protection matter (for example, if you are not directly involved with a child protection proceeding and are applying for custody of or access with the children involved).

The Summary Advice Lawyer may assist you in completing family law forms but will not complete forms for you.

The Summary Advice Lawyer may also help refer you to other legal services.

Will the Summary Advice Lawyer represent me in court?

No. The Summary Advice Lawyer cannot attend court with you. The role of the Summary Advice Lawyer is to inform, not to advocate.

Can anybody use the Summary Advice Lawyer Service?

You cannot use this service if you already have a lawyer.

How do I arrange to see the Summary Advice Lawyer?

You can make an appointment to see the Summary Advice Lawyer by calling the court as indicated below.

When you call to book an appointment with the Summary Advice Lawyer, you may have to leave a message or the following information with the person on the telephone. In your message, **be sure to include the following:**

- your full name (please spell your last name)
- your phone number(s), and whether the Summary Advice Lawyer can leave a message at those numbers
- the name of the other party
- what you need legal advice about (your situation)
- any deadlines, court dates, intake/conciliation appointments that you have scheduled
- confirm that you do not have a lawyer
- a regular appointment will usually be scheduled for some time in the next 2 to 4 weeks - if possible leave dates/times that you are available for appointments

You may also be referred to the Summary Advice Lawyer by court staff. Legal advice will not be given over the phone. **(Exception: Public Health Restrictions)** The Summary Advice Lawyer is not able to meet you on a walk-in basis. Having an appointment will ensure that you are able to speak to the Summary Advice Lawyer.

Is there a cost using the Summary Advice Lawyer Service?

No. There is no cost for using this service.

Summary Advice Contact Information:

The sites and contact numbers for the service are as follows:

- **Amherst** **902-667-2256**
- **Annapolis** **902-742-0500**
- **Antigonish** **902-863-7312**
- **Bridgewater** **902-543-4679**
- **Kentville** **902-679-6075**
- **Pictou** **902-485-7350**
- **Port Hawkesbury** **902-625-2665**
- **Sydney** **902-563-2085**
- **Truro** **902-893-4272**
- **Windsor** **902-679-6075**
- **Yarmouth** **902-742-0500**