



Information About Family Docket Court

(June 21, 2020)

Family Docket Court is a place you go before you can proceed with the scheduling of any formal applications in a family matter. It is a place where the Court considers your matter and directs you to a process that best serves the needs of your family and your children. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Family Docket Court is occurring by video conferencing. It is currently available in Edmonton and Calgary.

Before coming to Family Docket Court, you are encouraged to try other ways to resolve your disputes, such as mediation. Generally, it is in the best interests of children, for their parents to participate in a form of dispute resolution, especially on parenting matters, before contested court proceedings are scheduled. This is because damage is caused to children who are exposed to ongoing conflict between their parents. Therefore, if you have not already participated in a dispute resolution process before you attend Family Docket Court, and where it is appropriate do to so, the Court may order you to participate in a dispute resolution process before scheduling the matter for a more formal court process. For more information on family dispute resolution processes, go to <https://albertacourts.ca/qb/resources/announcements/family-law-dispute-resolution-processes-rule-4.16-amendments-and-family-docket-court>

To attend Family Docket Court, you must complete a Notice to Attend Family Docket Court form, select 2 date options, and submit it to the Clerk with a copy by email to the other party. It is not necessary for you to have started an action or filed an application before filing your Notice to Attend Family Docket Court. The calendar on the Court's website at <https://www.albertacourts.ca/qb/areas-of-law/family/family-docket-court> shows you which dates are full and which dates are available. It is best if you let the other party know what you are planning to do and confirm that the other party is available on the 2 dates that you have chosen. If you choose a date when the other party is not available, you must attend Family Docket Court and request an adjournment, as this cannot be done through the Clerk's office. The Notice to Attend Family Docket Court can be found here: <https://www.albertacourts.ca/qb/areas-of-law/family/family-law-forms>

After you receive your filed Notice to Attend Family Docket Court form back from the Clerk, it will have a filed stamp on it and a date will be chosen from the 2 you have requested. You must serve this filed document on the other side.

If you receive a Notice to Attend Family Docket Court form from the other party, it is not necessary for you to file your own Notice to Attend Family Docket form. If you have some concerns that you would also like to have the court address, bring them to the Court's attention in Family Docket Court.

On the date that you attend Family Docket Court, you must check in 15 minutes before Court starts. If you are having trouble with your video conferencing connection, there is a Webex moderator in the courtroom who will assist you. It is recommended that you also take the time to review the Remote Hearings Protocols and Troubleshooting on the Court's website at <https://www.albertacourts.ca/qb/court-operations-schedules/remote-hearings-protocol-troubleshooting>

At your Family Docket Court appearance, the Judge will complete an Endorsement and that Endorsement is an Order of the Court. It will be filed and emailed to you at the email address you provided. It will show you any orders that were made, including any dates scheduled for your matter. Every effort is made to get your Endorsement to you as soon as possible after your appearance in Family Docket Court.

An urgent application for a protection order where no notice is being given to the other side, does not have to come to Family Docket Court before being heard. These applications are made to a Provincial Court Judge or to a Justice of the Peace and are then reviewed in a process that is separate from Family Docket Court. If you have questions or require information about safety supports for domestic violence, please call the RCAS Contact Centre at: 1-855-738-4747 or go to: <https://www.alberta.ca/rcas-contact-centre.aspx>

As an alternative to Family Docket Court, you may wish to consider other processes to apply for the Court Order you are seeking:

It is possible for you to bring some simple applications before the Court without having to first proceed to Family Docket Court. This is a desk application process called Simple Desk Applications. Details about the process and any required forms can be found here: https://www.albertacourts.ca/docs/default-source/qb/npp/npp-family-law-simple-desk-2020-04.pdf?sfvrsn=cb8d9f80_10

In addition, Consent Orders are encouraged and can always be submitted to the Court by a desk application process.