



## Child protection services

### Child protection information services

**Family law website:** Self-help guides, informational videos, and fact sheets on a variety of family law topics including child protection and removal issues. The site also includes direct links to court forms, legal information publications, and other helpful organizations. See [familylaw.lss.bc.ca](http://familylaw.lss.bc.ca).

**Publications:** LSS staff produce legal information and self-help materials in a number of languages to help clients identify, avoid, and resolve common legal problems. Topics include child protection and removal issues. A complete list is available at [legalaid.bc.ca/publications](http://legalaid.bc.ca/publications).

**Legal Information Outreach Workers:** LIOWs help low-income people find legal information and understand court forms. They also provide referrals to other resources and give presentations at Aboriginal, women's, immigration, social service, and other community agencies.

There is no financial eligibility test for legal information services.

### Child protection advice services

**Duty counsel:** Family duty counsel services are available in most Provincial Courts and a number of Supreme Courts across BC. They provide legal advice and assistance to unrepresented clients with family law and child protection problems, and can speak for clients in court on simple matters and uncontested matters. There is a [financial eligibility test](#) for most family duty counsel services.

### Representation by a lawyer

LSS provides legal representation to [financially eligible](#) clients who have a legal problem under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* in these circumstances:

- The client's children have been, or are at risk of being, removed from the client's home by the Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- The client is facing legal proceedings initiated by the director of the Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- There are custody or access issues relating to a child in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Lawyers who receive referrals to represent clients in CFCSA matters may:

- negotiate on a client's behalf;
- appear as counsel at court hearings, conferences and trials; or
- participate in mediations.



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## Legal aid facts

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### Independent legal advice/representation for children

Under an agreement with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, LSS has created a province-wide roster of lawyers who can provide independent legal advice to children over 12 when their consent is required for a court-ordered plan of care.

The CFCSA requires independent representation for children who are made a “party to the proceedings.” The child’s social worker arranges for appointment of counsel through the Ministry of Attorney General.