

Going to Family Docket Court in Alberta

12 things you should know before going

- 1 Family Docket Court is a mandatory **procedural court** for people with family law issues in Alberta's Court of Queen's Bench in Edmonton and Calgary. The judge assesses what options might help you resolve your issues.
- 2 There are **four exemptions**. In these situations you do not have to go to Family Docket Court:
 - You are applying for a protection order or restraining order, with or without notice to the respondent.
 - Your issue falls under the simple desk application process. A desk application is where you only file documents with the court. A judge reviews the documents on their own and grants an order, without anyone appearing in court.
 - You are applying for an order about an urgent issue without notice to the other party.
 - You get permission from a judge to skip Family Docket Court.
- 3 The applicant starts the process by filing a court form called a **Notice to Attend Family Docket Court**.
- 4 The applicant must **serve** the Notice on the Respondent at least 5 days before the court date.
- 5 The **respondent** does not need to respond to the Notice before court. In court, you can share with the judge if you disagree with anything the applicant included in the Notice or if you have other family issues not checked on the Notice.
- 6 Family Docket Court is currently online only – you will appear in a **virtual courtroom**, not in-person at the courthouse. The instructions for logging on are on the court's website or page 2 of the Notice to Attend Family Docket Court form.

7 If you are appearing remotely in court, you must complete a form called **Undertaking and Agreement of Non-Lawyer** IF

- you either do not have a lawyer, OR
- you will not be in the same room as your lawyer.

Complete the form and email it to the court before your court date.

8 If you do not have a lawyer, you can get help from **duty counsel**. These are lawyers that can provide free advice the day of your court appearance.

9 Family Docket Court is a **busy place** with many other applicants and respondents also dealing with lots of family cases. The judge does not have time to go into a lot of detail about each case. They only want enough information to decide which process you should use first.

10 After hearing from the applicant and respondent, the judge will fill out a court order called an **Endorsement**. It says what process you should use. The court will email the parties a copy within one to two business days of your appearance in Family Docket Court.

11 You may have to **go back** to Family Docket Court if the assigned option does not resolve the issue.

12 For **more information**, visit the Court's website:

- Family Docket Court info page (including the court calendar, forms, email addresses, instructions, FAQs and more): <https://bit.ly/3rgRcqE>
- Simple Desk Applications: <https://bit.ly/2NOSMkX>
- Undertaking and Agreement of Non-Lawyer form: <https://bit.ly/2RbqiUJ>

Find a video and more information about going to court in Alberta at www.cplea.ca/courts