



Supreme Court of Nova Scotia (Family Division)

Updates from the Family Division

November 5, 2024

Thank you to all of you who have reached out to me after I became Associate Chief Justice of the Family Division. I have appreciated the opportunity to discuss issues of mutual concern with members of the Bar.

One issue that has come up many times is taking advantage of opportunities for the Bench and Bar to connect. I agree. Thus, I intend to provide the Bar with periodic updates on matters of interest happening in the Family Division. Kindly accept this as the first of those updates.

Full Complement of Judges in the Family Division

With the appointment of Justice Jillian Barrington last Friday, the Family Division now has a full complement of judges. This is the first time this has occurred for many years. We are very excited about serving the public with a full team.

Change to Northern Zone Judicial Complement

For the last several years, the Family Division has had the support of Judge Daley in the Northern Zone. This has now come to an end. Thus, a plan to ensure that litigants will continue to be well-served in the areas where Judge Daley presided is being worked on. I thank Judge Daley for his support in helping us serve the public.

Emergency Protection Orders

Effective September 3, 2024, the Family Division took over the handling of reviews of Emergency Protection Orders from the General Division. Currently, all initial reviews of EPOs are occurring out of the Devonshire Courthouse. If a hearing is required, it is generally being scheduled in the court district where the applicant resides. This process will likely be reviewed in the new year.

Bench/Bar Interaction

I believe in the benefits of regular positive interaction between the Bench and the Bar. Meetings have been held with representatives of the Canadian Bar Association – NS Family Law Section and the Supreme Court (Family Division) Liaison Committees. At my request, they have given me a list of educational topics they would like judges to consider presenting on for young lawyers and family lawyers generally. It is a comprehensive list with target dates for presentations to the end of 2026. We have also discussed opportunities for social events between the Bench and Bar at Courthouses with a possible educational component.

The Family Division Judges are excited about the opportunity to present on topics of interest to the Bar. Justices Chiasson and Sheppard have already presented at the CBA-NS Family Law Section Dinners held in September and October.

Summer Emergencies

Back on May 27, 2024, a Notice was sent out to the Bar about filing summer emergency applications in a timely manner to ensure court time was available to deal with same. I am pleased to advise that summer emergencies were generally down at most sites. I thank the Bar for their cooperation. Similarly, given that the holiday season is rapidly approaching, I would ask that, where possible, any holiday emergency applications be filed no later than by November 25, 2024.

Associate Chief Justice R. Lester Jesudason
Supreme Court of Nova Scotia (Family Division)