

Did you know?

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FAMILY LAW TERMS

CHILD SUPPORT:

The money one parent pays to the other parent to help provide for the daily needs of the children is called child support or maintenance. Parents have a legal duty to support their children, even if they don't see them or take care of them. Child support is the legal right of the child.

CONTACT WITH A CHILD:

The time that a non-guardian spends with a child.

COURTS:

Both BC Provincial Court and Supreme Court deal with matters concerning guardianship, child or spousal support, and parenting time. Provincial Court exclusively handles child protection matters. Supreme Court judges can grant divorces, make orders dividing matrimonial property, and orders relating to the occupation of the family home.

CUSTODY:

Involves where the child lives, and who has the responsibility for taking care of and making decisions about the child. The term "custody" is used in divorce proceedings but under the provincial law, the term "guardianship" is used. Parenting arrangements such as determining the child's residence and activities, by default are jointly shared by guardians.

GUARDIANSHIP:

Under the BC Family Law Act, both parents are generally considered guardians if they've lived with the child. Guardianship includes parental responsibilities and parenting time.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

These are the responsibilities that each guardian has for making the day-to-day and bigger decisions about a child's life. These can be shared (or divided) in whatever way works best for the child.

PARENTING TIME:

This is the time that each guardian spends with a child. During parenting time, a guardian makes day-to-day decisions and is responsible for the care of the child. If you separate from your spouse, you can arrange this in whatever way works best for the child.

PARENTING ARRANGEMENTS:

These are the arrangements you make in an agreement or court order for sharing (or dividing) parental responsibilities and parenting time.

PROTECTION ORDER:

A family law protection order (restraining order) or peace bond can be given by the court to a spouse who has been a victim of abuse. It orders the offending spouse to stay away. A restraining or family law protection order can also be used to prevent one spouse from selling assets that are family property.

SEPARATION AGREEMENT:

A written agreement between you and your spouse stating what you have agreed to about the separation issues such as parenting arrangements and child support. If it is filed in court, it is easier to enforce.