



CaseLines for Domestic Family Matters in the Ontario Court of Justice

November 12, 2021

1. INTRODUCTION TO CASELINES

- a) What is CaseLines?
- b) Implementation Schedule
- c) Filing and Uploading Your Documents
- d) Uploading Documents into the Correct Bundle
- e) Naming Protocols
- f) Other Important Information

2. DOMESTIC FAMILY EVENTS INCLUDED IN CASELINES

3. DOMESTIC FAMILY EVENTS EXCLUDED IN CASELINES

4. NON-DOMESTIC FAMILY EVENTS EXCLUDED IN CASELINES

5. CASELINES PROCESS

6. CASELINES RESOURCES

1. INTRODUCTION TO CASELINES:

What is CaseLines?

CaseLines is an user-friendly, cloud-based document sharing and e-hearing platform for both in-person and virtual court appearances developed by Thomson Reuters. Parties will be able to upload, store, review, search, mark-up, share and present court documents virtually.

The benefits of CaseLines include:

- It is easy to use and minimal training is needed;
- Materials of nearly any format can be uploaded and easily organized;
- Any device will work with CaseLines (computer, tablet, smart phone); and
- Users can make private notes and highlight documents

Currently, there is no fee to use CaseLines.

Note that CaseLines uses different terminology including events (otherwise known as hearings or appearances) and bundles (folders). This Notice uses the CaseLines terms.

Implementation Schedule:

CaseLines will begin to be used when scheduling new domestic (*Family Law Act (FLA)*, *Children's Law Reform Act (CLRA)*) case conferences and motions with notice.

CaseLines will be rolled out incrementally across the province. The implementation will start with the Ontario Court of Justice's 47 Sheppard Avenue and 311 Jarvis Street's family courts, beginning on December 13, 2021. After the Toronto family courts begin to use CaseLines, subject to any further Notice, other regions will be added as follows:

- **Central West Region – February 2022**
- **West Region – March 2022**
- **Northeast and Northwest Regions - April 2022**

In addition, CaseLines will be expanded to include other types of domestic family cases, including other conferences and trials, at a later date.

You will know if your case conference or motion will be using CaseLines if you receive an email from CaseLines inviting you to register and upload your filed court documents.

Filing and Uploading Your Documents:

CaseLines does not replace the filing of your documents with the court office.

Therefore, **you must continue to file your documents either through the [Justice Services Online Portal](#), by email or in-person with the court office AND upload your documents into CaseLines. This is mandatory.** If you do not file your documents with the court and upload them into CaseLines, the court will not have the documents that you will be relying on in court. This may result in your case not proceeding.

Parties are required to upload court documents that have been filed with the Court to CaseLines **at least 5 days** in advance of the hearing, or at the same time as any filing deadlines that are less than 5 days, unless directed otherwise by the Court.

Family law documents must be filed with the court in accordance with the Family Law Rules and any local Notices to the Profession.

Uploading Documents into the Correct Bundle:

Parties or their counsel must ensure that all documents have been uploaded into CaseLines according to whether the party is the Applicant, Respondent or another party (e.g. a third party including any agency such as the Office of the Children’s Lawyer, Family Responsibility Office or Ontario Works). Parties must also upload Affidavits of Service so they can be accessed at upcoming events.

Parties/counsel must ensure that all pleadings have been uploaded into the *Pleadings* sub-bundle in CaseLines. Pleadings include documents such as:

- Form 8: Application (general)
- Form 10: Answer
- Form 15: Motion to Change
- Form 15B: Response to Motion to Change

Any additional documents in support of a claim for a parenting order as per the Family Law Rules and applicable legislation must also be uploaded into the *Pleadings* sub-bundle.

Naming Protocol:

Parties / counsel are responsible for properly naming the document in accordance with the naming protocol, before filing the document with the court or uploading the document to CaseLines.

The document naming protocol is as follows:

1. Document type, including the form number (For example, Application, Form 8),
2. Type of party submitting the document (For example, Applicant, Respondent or Third Party)
3. Name of the party submitting the document, including initials if the name is not unique to the case (For example: P. Smith and B. Smith – initials must be used if the parties share a last name; Smith and Thomas – initials are not required if the parties do not share a last name), and
4. Date on which the document was created or signed, in the format DD-MMM-YYYY (For example: 12-JAN-2021).

Below are sample document names:

Application Form 8 – Applicant – P. Smith – 12-JAN-2021

Notice of Motion Form 14 – Respondent – J. Brown – 21-DEC-2021

Affidavit General Form 14A – OCL – 01-JUL-2021

Document names shall not include firm-specific naming conventions or court file numbers.

Abbreviations may only be used as follows:

APP for Applicant
RESP for Respondent
O for Other

For institutional litigants:
CAS for Children’s Aid Societies
FRO for Family Responsibility Office
OCL for Office of the Children’s Lawyer

NOTE: If documents are not named according to the above naming protocol, the judge may decide to review only those documents that comply with the protocol and may decide to reschedule your hearing to another day.

NOTE: This notice supersedes the Notice revised on July 30, 2021 regarding the Naming Protocol for Documents. Members of the profession and public are directed to use the naming protocol as set out above.

Other Important Information:

Parties Email Addresses:

Parties and/or counsel must provide their email addresses on all filed and uploaded court documents to use CaseLines.

Publication Bans/Sealing Orders and Other Documents that should not be filed:

Any documents that are subject to a publication ban or sealing order must not be uploaded into CaseLines. A further example of a document that should not be uploaded into CaseLines is an Affidavit in Support of a Lawyer’s Removal from Record.

Judicial Direction:

Court staff, parties and counsel must follow any specific judicial direction if a judicial official has determined that CaseLines should not be used in a particular case or if certain documents should not be uploaded.

Upload Prior Endorsements and Orders:

Parties or their counsel must upload all previous endorsements and orders in the case in the *Endorsements, Orders and Judgments* sub-bundle in CaseLines so they can be accessed by the judiciary at future hearings. This includes previous endorsements and orders that were issued prior to the case's use of CaseLines.

Parties / counsel are responsible for properly naming the Order or Endorsement in accordance with the above naming protocol, before uploading the document to CaseLines.

Release of a Court Order or Endorsement:

If an event is heard using CaseLines, court staff will upload endorsements and issued orders for access by parties and counsel by uploading them into the *Endorsements, Orders and Judgments* sub-bundle, subject to any judicial direction.

2. DOMESTIC FAMILY EVENTS INCLUDED IN CASELINES:

Beginning on December 13, 2021, CaseLines will be used for new *Family Law Act* and *Children's Law Reform Act* case conferences and motions with notice **only**.

3. DOMESTIC FAMILY EVENTS EXCLUDED IN CASELINES:

At this time, CaseLines will not be used for the following domestic (*FLA* or *CLRA*) family events:

- First Appearance Court matters,
- combined conferences,
- settlement conferences,
- trial management conferences,
- motions with notice under *Family Responsibility and Support Arrears Enforcement Act, 1996*,
- urgent, hardship or without notice motions
- procedural, uncomplicated or unopposed matters (i.e. 14B Motion Form)
- contempt motions
- any motion under section 46 of the *CLRA (Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction)*

4. NON-DOMESTIC FAMILY EVENTS EXCLUDED IN CASELINES:

- Domestic family case conferences or motions scheduled to proceed before December 13, 2021.

However, if you have an ongoing family law case currently before the courts, and a case conference or motion on notice is scheduled to proceed after December 13, 2021, CaseLines will be used.

- All *Child, Youth, and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA)* hearings (including adoptions proceedings). CYFSA cases will not be included in CaseLines at this time;
- Focused hearings;
- Trials and uncontested trials;
- Any hearing that may be required under the *Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act* (Provisional or otherwise)
- Any support enforcement hearing commenced by a payor, recipient or the Family Responsibility Office regarding garnishments, writs of seizure and sale, default hearing, warrant for committal and motions to refrain the suspension of a payor's driver's license;
- Any cases that a judge has determined should not use CaseLines.

5. CASELINES PROCESS

- A. Register for CaseLines at <https://ontariocourts.caselines.com/>.
- B. Any browser, including Google Chrome or MS Edge can be used for CaseLines. **Note that the *Internet Explorer* browser does not support CaseLines.**
- C. At the First Appearance Court event, either a judge or a court clerk may schedule a case conference depending on who held the First Appearance Court event.
- D. Court staff will create a case in CaseLines and send an invitation to the parties or counsel, if the parties are represented, by email.
- E. Parties or counsel will file their documents with the court either through the [Justice Services Online](#) portal, email or in-person. See note below regarding filing documents through email. Also, note that page limits stipulated by local court directions must be followed.

IMPORTANT: As previously stated, court documents must continue to be filed with the court before they are uploaded into CaseLines in accordance with the applicable rules and Notices to the Profession.

- F. Court staff will review the documents that have been submitted for filing with the court to ensure that they are in accordance with the Family Law Rules and local court practices.

G. Parties/counsel must upload documents into the appropriate event bundle (e.g. Case Conference or Motion on Notice) only after the documents have been filed with the court office. Your documents are not filed until they have been reviewed and accepted by court staff.

H. The case conference or motion will be held and parties and counsel and the judge may review all of the documents that have been uploaded.

6. CASELINES RESOURCES:

[Resources](#) to assist you to familiarize yourself with CaseLines are available 24/7 and are accessible without having to register with CaseLines.