

Child Support

In the event of a marital breakdown, often the most difficult decisions arise when dealing with the issue of who will be responsible for the care and well-being of the child(ren) and how each parent will contribute to the cost of raising the child(ren). In Ontario and in Canada there are Provincial and Federal Guidelines that calculate quite clearly how much child support a non custodial parent is required to pay based on income

In calculating child support payments, the federal guidelines aim to ensure that both parents should share the same portion of their income with their child as they would if they had continued to live together. In broad terms, the guidelines ask "what would a parent with this income usually spend on his/her children" and support payments are set accordingly.

Research on family spending shows there is no single fixed cost of raising a child. It has been determined that as the family income increases, families spend more on their children. Because the proportion of family income devoted to children remains the same across all levels of income, the amount of child support payable is calculated based on the number of children the payment is supporting and the income of the parent making the payment. It is expected that the receiving parent is contributing to the costs of raising the children in proportion to his/her income, it is also considered that contributions to the household directly affect the standard of living for the children residing in that household.

Child custody arrangements directly affect the amount of child support payable. The following definitions will help you define your particular situation and enable you to follow the table as it applies to you.

Sole Custody: Is where all children live with one parent at least 60 percent of the time.

Shared Custody: Describes a situation whereby a child lives at least 40 percent of the time with each parent over the course of a year.

Split Custody: May occur when there are two or more children and where each parent has custody of one or more of the children, for example:

One or more children live with one parent at least 60 percent of the time and

One or more children live with the other parent at least 60 percent of the time.

Although the guidelines have been created to simplify the issue of child support payments, in consideration of deciding who will contribute and how much will be contributed to extrarodinary expenses such as orthodontics, extracurricular activities or other unexpected costs, the expert guidance and attention to detail that Rob MacLeod gives to each and every client will ensure nothing has been overlooked in calculating support payments relevant to your situation.