

Embrace Change



Own Your Life

Divorce Procedure Self-help Handbook

Edit and Publish by Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres (HKFWC)



FOREWORD

Getting a divorce is never easy. It could be emotional. You may experience stress on your mind and body. Whether a divorce is your wish, initiated by your spouse, or a joint decision, a divorce will bring a lot of changes to your current life.

To face the end of an important relationship in life, you may have complicated feelings such as hurt, angry or resentful. To adjust and adapt to a new life may scare you. You may feel overwhelmed when undergoing the divorce proceedings. Please understand that these reactions and feelings are normal.

It is inevitable to be disappointed by the unexpected ups and downs in life. It could be that our partner fails to meet our expectations, or we fail to meet our very own expectations. But life is impermanence. The change in a marriage can be served as a reminder and an opportunity for the two to rethink the needs of the family, of each other and themselves. We can look at our current life with a different perspective, reform and reorganize our desired way of life.

We understand that there are unknowns and unpredictables when life changes, which may frighten you. This is normal and understandable. No matter what your decisions are, please remember that you can respect yourself, accept your decisions and feelings, cherish and love who you are. What has passed is past. We can always focus on the present and our present self, and cherish what we have now.

We also understand that you may find the legal process is long and that the documents are complicated. We hope that this booklet will help you understand the divorce legal process, provide related service information and clear legal steps that help you protect your legal rights. By acquiring more information, you can also handle the divorce legal procedure on your own. Remember that you are not alone on this path. If you need any assistance, please feel free to talk to us. You can contact our hotline at **2386 6255** to talk to our counselors.

Jurisdiction in divorce in Hong Kong

One of the following conditions must be satisfied before an application or petition for divorce can be dealt with by a Hong Kong Court: -

1. either of the parties to the marriage was domiciled in Hong Kong on the date of the petition or application;
2. either of the parties to the marriage was habitually resident in Hong Kong throughout a period of three years immediately preceding the date of the petition or application;
3. either of the parties to the marriage had a “substantial connection” with Hong Kong on the date of the petition or application.

In general, no petition for divorce could be presented to a Hong Kong Court before the expiration of the period of one year from the date of the marriage.

Proof of ground for petition

In law, the Court shall hold the marriage to have broken down irretrievably if the applicant for divorce (i.e. the petitioner) satisfies the Court of one of the following facts: -

1. you and your spouse have lived apart for a continuous period of at least one year before filing the petition and that your spouse consent to a divorce;
2. your spouse has committed adultery and you find it intolerable to live with the respondent (the spouse who is alleged to have been committed adultery shall be made the first respondent, the other person with whom adultery is alleged shall be made the second respondent.);
3. your spouse has behaved in such a way that you cannot be reasonably expected to live with your spouse;
4. you and your spouse have lived apart for a continuous period of at least two years immediately before filing the petition for divorce (in such a case your spouse's consent to a divorce is not required);
5. your spouse has deserted you for a continuous period of at least one year immediately before filing the petition for divorce.

If there are children of the family who are under the age of 18, you must include in your petition your proposal as to their custody and access. If you wish to apply for ancillary relief such as maintenance, transfer of property, division of matrimonial assets, etc., you should also pray so in your petition.

Flowchart for divorce legal procedure

1a

Presenting a petition for divorce to the Court

File a divorce petition (or Joint Application) to the Family Court Registry by hand or via a lawyer.

>>P.5

1b

Receiving a divorce petition

If your spouse is the “petitioner”, you are known as the “respondent”. You need to consider whether to defend against the date of separation proposed by your spouse or the listed accusations against you for unreasonable conduct, you should specify the above in the acknowledgement of service (**Form 4**) and return it to the Family Court Registry before the deadline.

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2

Fixing a court hearing date

After the petition has been served on the respondent, you should next apply to the Registrar for directions to set down the case for trial, using an application form obtainable from the Family Court Registry.

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3

Divorce Main Suit

If the other party does not dispute the fact relied on for divorce, the petitioner applies for Decree Nisi (a tentative court order for divorce) by filing Form 21.

If the other party disputes the fact relied on for divorce, the petitioner applies to fix a date for trial, the Court will dismiss the petition if insufficient evidence for a divorce is found.

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5

Decree Absolute

Six weeks after the court has granted a decree nisi, and that the court is satisfied with the arrangements for children, you can apply for your decree to be made absolute.

(Decree Absolute – The final Court Order dissolving a marriage as of the day the certificate is issued)

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4a

Children (if any)

Issues that need to be dealt with by the court: (1) Custody: Joint custody or sole custody. (2) Care and Control: the child to live with which parent. (3) Access: visiting the child.

Before a final court order on the custody, care and control and access, either party may apply for an interim order on the three issues.

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4b

Ancillary relief (Maintenance and distribution of family assets)

The ancillary relief proceedings commence when one party gives to the other a formal notice of intention to seek money or property orders from the court.

Before a final court order on the issues of maintenance for the party and the children (if any), either party may apply for an interim maintenance order for the party and/or children.

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Family Mediation

Family Mediation is a voluntary problem-solving process designed to help separating/divorcing couples reach their own mutually acceptable agreements regarding on-going arrangements for their children and/ or the resolution of financial matters. It is a process in which a trained, impartial third person (the mediator) can assist both parties to communicate and negotiate issues without spending lots of cost and expense to contest matters in court. Before the commencement of the legal process or at any time during the legal process, either of the parties may conduct mediation to resolve disputes at any time.

Presenting a petition for divorce

Unilateral application: Presenting a petition for divorce

To start divorce proceedings, you need to fill in:

Form 2: Petition (the form that you need to fill in depends on your particular circumstances or grounds for divorce)

Form 2B: Statement as to the arrangements for children (if applicable)

If you file a divorce petition, you are known as the "petitioner" and your spouse is known as the "respondent".

After filing your petition, you must arrange for a sealed copy of the petition to be served on every other party to the proceedings, either by hand or by post. Note that you must not serve the petition on the respondent yourself. Instead you must use the services of a third person, or send the petition by post.

In the case of a Joint Application (which means you and your spouse have agreed to apply together for a divorce), you need to fill in:

Form 2C: Joint application

Form 2D: Statement as to the arrangements for children (if applicable)

If it is a joint application, the two parties will be the "first applicant" and "second applicant" respectively, and that both parties should file the application to the Family Court Registry.



- All forms you need are available from the Family Court Registry (https://www.judiciary.hk/zh/court_services_facilities/fcf.html)

- Forms may be completed in English or Chinese.

- When you have filled them in, take them to the Family Court Registry for filing, together with your original marriage certificate or a certified true copy. You will be given a case number, which must be marked on any subsequently filed documents.

- In addition to the above-mentioned relevant documents, the court should also be informed whether the couple is willing to accept family mediation services.

Receiving a petition for divorce

First to understand on what ground the other party is relying on for a divorce. If you intend to dispute/ defend the date of separation set by your spouse or the unreasonable behaviour alleged against you by your spouse, you have to state so in the Acknowledgement of Service (**Form 4**) and send it back to the Family Court Registry within 8 days of receipt of the divorce documents, whereas your Answer to the divorce petition has to be sent back to the Family Court Registry within 29 days of receipt of the divorce documents, with a copy thereof be sent to the petitioner (your spouse).

- a) If the ground for a divorce petition is based on your unreasonable behaviour, then you should consider whether you want to dispute/defend, meaning that you argue that there is no unreasonable behaviour on your part. If the petitioner is represented by a lawyer, you may have to pay for the legal fees of petitioner's main divorce suit.
- b) If you and the other party have lived apart for a continuous period of at least one year, then you can apply to the Court for a divorce petition to be based on one year separation with consent.
- c) The Department of Legal Aid does not usually accept applications involving disputes in main suit (i.e. defend the divorce petition or dispute any facts therein etc.)
- d) You also have to consider whether you want the custody, care and control of your child(ren); If so, you should try your best to live with your child(ren) during the divorce proceedings.

If you have any child(ren) under the age of 18

You also have to consider whether you want the custody, care and control of your child(ren); If so, you should try your best to live with your child(ren) during the divorce proceedings.

Fixing a court hearing date

After your petition has been served on the respondent you should next apply to the Registrar for directions to set down the case for trial (i.e. to fix a date for a court hearing). The Registrar must be satisfied that the petition has been served on the respondent. This can be proved either by: -

- a) showing that the respondent has completed and returned a **Form 4** (Acknowledgment of Service) to the Registrar; or
- b) having the person who served the documents on the respondent file an affirmation confirming that the petition has been delivered to the respondent.

Joint Applications will be set down provided that the relevant documents are in order.

If you and your spouse apply for a divorce together, or either party apply for a unilateral divorce and the other party does not object to the divorce, and that all arrangements, including alimony, asset and property, child custody/access etc., can all reach to an mutual agreement by both parties, a special procedure can be applied after filing the relevant consent and returning all the required documents in order, that is, both parties can complete the divorce procedures without going to court to attend the hearing.

If there is no consensus on the right to custody of child(ren), the Family Court will issue the "Notice of Child Appointment" when issuing the divorce case number. The first hearing of the child appointment will generally be conducted after 3 months. Within 28 days of the hearing date, submit a "Form on Children's Matters" (**Form J**) detailing children's matters to the court for filing and exchange copies with the other party.

If there is no consensus on the ancillary relief (alimony/asset allocation), the Family Court will issue the "Notice of First Appointment hearings " when issuing the litigation number of the divorce case. The first hearing of the first meeting will generally be held after 3 months, both parties must submit all the "Statement of Economic Conditions" (**Form E**) detailing the property and income status to the court filing within 28 days of the first meeting date, also exchange copies with the other party.

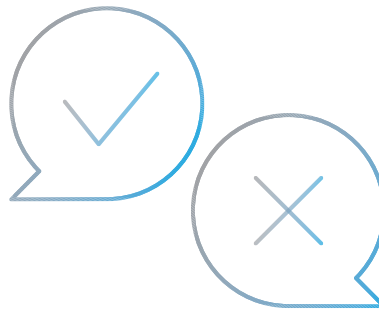
Divorce Main Suit

Special Procedure List

Joint applications or you have petitioned for divorce but the respondent does not file an answer, the petition will be set down in the Special Procedure List. There is no need for either party to attend the hearing. The court will grant a decree nisi dissolving the marriage.

Defended List

Where the petition for divorce is made and the respondent has filed an answer, the cause will be set down in the Defended List. In such cases, the court will either grant a decree nisi dissolving the marriage or will dismiss the petition if insufficient evidence is found. In the event of court granting the decree of divorce, if there are children of the family whose question of custody and access need to be dealt with by the court, or if there are applications for ancillary relief by either party, or if there are applications for ancillary relief by either party, the court will adjourn these matters to the Family Court Chamber, both parties will be required to attend the hearings.



Matters Affecting Children

The court will order custody (custodial rights), care and control, and child visitation arrangements for child(ren) under the age of 18.

If both parents dispute over the child custody, the judge would ask both parties to file their own children's form (**Form J**) and order a Social Investigation Report to be done by the Social Welfare Department. The Social Welfare Officer would then interview both parties and arrange for home visits so as to understand the parties' living conditions and their relationship with the child(ren).

The child(ren)'s welfare is the Court's paramount consideration, and the following factors would be taken into account: -

- a) The child(ren)'s wishes;
- b) The parents' behaviour as to whether they are suitable to take care of the child(ren);
- c) The physical and mental health of the parents and child;
- d) The parents' caring capability, such as financial resources and living conditions;
- e) Any negative impacts on the child(ren) caused by the change of environment;
- f) Age of child(ren);
- g) The benefit of keeping the siblings together with one parent;
- h) Status quo preferred;

There are different types of custody: "Sole custody" or "Joint custody". Sole custody is granted to one parent only. Joint custody is granted the custody of the child(ren) to both parents.

There is no definition (or an exhaustive list) of the term custody. In general, custody means the custodial parent is empowered to make major decisions concerning the child such as education, religion, and major medical treatment. The party who has not been granted the custody remains the right to be consulted and gives opinions on child(ren)'s matters even though he or she has no right to decide. If both parents fail to reach to an agreement on the child(ren)'s matters, the court will make the final decision.

Joint custody is now generally encouraged, (one parent is granted with the care and control, while the other parent is granted with visiting access), as it is considered good for parents to realize that they both have a responsibility towards their child and their parental duties do not cease on the breakdown of the marriage. No matter which parent the child(ren) lives with, a high level of agreement and cooperation between the parents is encouraged and required.

Before a final court order on the custody, care and control and access, either party may apply for an interim order on the three issues.

Ancillary Relief (Maintenance & Financial Matters)

Court established the following for maintenance arrangement: -

Four principles

1. The objective of fairness;
2. Rejection of discrimination;
3. Apply the yardstick of equal division;
4. Avoid 'minute retrospective investigations';

Five steps

1. Identify the parties' assets;
2. Assess the parties' financial needs;
3. Apply the sharing principle if assets exceed needs;
4. Consider whether there are good reasons for departing from equal division (equal sharing should not be applied mechanistically);
5. Decide the outcome.

The ancillary relief proceedings commence when one party gives to the other a formal notice of intention to seek money or property orders from the court.

Alimony can be assigned to a spouse or children. Spousal maintenance is valid for life, but it will be ceased upon remarriage of the recipient of the maintenance. For children, maintenance will end when the child(ren) reaches the age of 18 or complete full-time studies (whichever is the latter).

After receiving the application for ancillary relief, the "Financial Dispute Resolution" process will begin, and the court will set a hearing date for the "First Appointment hearing".

With no less than 14 days before the date of the "First Appointment hearing", both parties can file a questionnaire on the other party's **Form E** together with a concise statement of issues, chronology and other documents.

The Court will consider the following circumstances when judging over ancillary relief: -

- a) The income, earning capacity, property, and other financial resources which each of the parties has or is likely to have in the foreseeable future;
- b) The financial needs, obligations, and responsibilities which either of the parties has or is likely to have in the foreseeable future;
- c) The standard of living enjoyed by the family before the breakdown of the marriage;
- d) The age of each party and the duration of the marriage;
- e) Any physical or mental disability of either of the parties;
- f) The contributions made by each of the parties to the welfare of the family, including any contribution made by looking after the home or caring for the family;
- g) The value to either of the parties of any benefit which that party will lose as a result of the dissolution of the marriage.

Arrangement of Maintenance

- Maintenance can be by way of lump sum payment or monthly payments;
- If agreed by both parties, the relevant legal documents must state: -
 - a) Amount of maintenance (for spouse and child(ren) respectively);
 - b) Payment method (bank transfer, automatic transfer, cheque etc.);
 - c) Bank account details; and
 - d) Payment date (e.g. on or before the day of each and every month).
- If the other party is currently unable to pay maintenance, you shall ask for nominal maintenance in the amount of HK\$1 per annum to retain the right to apply for maintenance in the future.

Before the court makes a final order regarding the maintenance of one party and the children (if any), either party can apply for an interim maintenance order for themselves and/ or their children.

Final order for divorce (Decree Absolute)

Six weeks after the Court has granted a decree nisi, you can apply for your decree to be made absolute (a final order for divorce) by sending a completed "Notice of Application for Decree Nisi to be made Absolute" to the Court, using **Form 5** (for a petition) or **Form 5A** (for a joint application).

If there are children of the marriage, the decree nisi will not be made absolute until the Court declares that it is satisfied with the arrangements made for them. The Registrar will issue a Certificate of Decree Absolute to each party if the registrar is satisfied that the statutory requirements have been complied with.

Q & A

1. What is the definition of Separation? Is it necessary to have a Separation Agreement? What is a Separation but Living Under the Same Roof?

- In general, Separation means spouses live apart, usually when one of them moves out of the marriage residence and no longer lives as a couple.
- Unless the other party disputes on the date of separation, there is no need to submit any documents or evidence to the court to prove that the couple has separated. If one of the parties does not agree with the date of separation or believes that there is no separation between the couple, signing a separation agreement is one of the solutions. Other ways such as keeping record of an email or SMS conversation can also be used to indicate that the other party has moved out, which can be used as proof of separation in the future.
- If one of the party does not make aware of the intention of separation, especially for couple who live apart in different locations for work, and that the couple participates family and friend gatherings like a couple as they used to, the court may not acknowledge and accept such period of separation.
- If there are conditions that do not allow one of the party to move out from the marriage residence, that the couple has to live in the same residence but they are in fact living an individual life separately, such as sleeping in separate rooms, do not share a bed, no sexual activity, take meals and housework separately, etc., given that the other party is made aware of the separation intention of the other, the court can also accept this way of separation living under the same roof.

2. What to do if the marriage certificate is lost?

If the marriage certificate has been lost or your spouse is unwilling to provide it, you should apply for a certified copy of marriage certificate at marriage registries.

3. It is necessary to hire a lawyer for divorce?

Submitting a petition or joint application for divorce puts legal proceedings in motion, so you will find it very helpful and safe to seek legal advice before any submission to the Court is made.

You will particularly need a lawyer in the following circumstances:

- i. your spouse does not agree to a divorce;
- ii. neither of you can agree on the arrangements to be made for the children or on financial matters.

4. What to do if the other party refuses to accept the Court documents?

- The third party who helped you with the service of documents would have to make an affirmation/affidavit to prove that the said documents have been delivered to the other party or the other party has had knowledge of the same, then file such affirmation/affidavit with the Family Court; or
- When you sent the documents by registered post and received the proof of receipt by the other party, file such proof with the Family Court.

5. What to do if the other party has disappeared and is nowhere to be found?

- You can apply to the Court for substituted service (e.g. advertising on newspaper your divorce petition or post the documents to another address at which the other party might receive the same.)
- You can apply to the Court for service of affidavit, a written statement by affirmation shows that you have exhausted all practicable means to locate the other party, e.g. you have enquired both parties' parents, family and friends, any electronic communication means to contact the other party, visited to the other party's work location, and whether you have reported to the Police about the other party as a missing person, etc.

6. Is it a must for me to attend the Court hearings?

- If you are the Petitioner, in the case of a unilateral divorce petition, you must attend the hearings, otherwise the Court would not process your petition for divorce and the proceedings will be paused without any further hearing date being fixed. (For special circumstances, you can write to the Court asking for permission not to attend the hearing)
- If you are the Respondent, in the case of a unilateral divorce petition filed by your spouse, the Court would carry on with the hearing in your absence. Therefore, attending the hearings can protect your rights in a divorce case.

7. Can I only get alimony after the divorce proceeding is over?

- No. Before the final divorce decree order is issued, either party in need

can apply for “interim maintenance”. Such kind of order cannot last beyond the final divorce decree. It will terminate in any event upon the death of either party.

- The “interim maintenance” amount so ordered to be paid is not necessarily any indication of the amount which may be ordered to be paid upon the granting of the decree.

8. Will the maintenance amount be adjusted?

- As periodic maintenance payments can last for a number of years, their level is open to variation if there is a subsequent change in the circumstances of either party such as the loss of employment or inflation. You can apply for a maintenance amount adjustment to the family court. The original order can be varied to reflect the change in circumstances.
- If both parties would agree that maintenance should be increased annually by a certain percentage or in line with an established inflation measuring index. This can avoid making costly regular applications back to the Court.
- Note that a lump sum order and Property Adjustment Order cannot be varied subsequently.

9. What can the wife/husband do if the other party refused or failed to make maintenance payment?

- There should be no delay in pursuing for the outstanding amount as the court might refuse to enforce the Order of payment for those arrears due more than 12 months before proceedings to enforce the payment of them have begun.
- You may consider the following ways to enforce the court order for maintenance against your spouse:

A. Judgment summons

The judge has the power to make a new order for payment of the amount due or to commit your spouse to prison if he or she cannot justify his or her failure to pay. If your spouse fails to attend the hearing, the court will adjourn the case to a further hearing. If he or she still fails to attend on the adjourned hearing, the judge can commit him or her to prison in his or her absence. Any committal to prison can be suspended on terms relating to the payment of the debt.

B.Attachment of income to satisfy order

The Court may order the income to be attached as to the whole or part of the amount payable under the maintenance order.

C.Prohibition order

Apply to the Court on an ex-parte basis (applied unilaterally by one of the parties only) for an order that your spouse be prevented from leaving Hong Kong pending recovery of the debt.

10. How to protect oneself from violence and/or threats by one's spouse?

- Call the Police and perform a medical assessment at hospital: even if you do not intend for him to be prosecuted, an official record with the Police would help your divorce petition or application for an injunction. If the Police finds sufficient evidence, the spouse can be arrested, remanded in custody or even be prosecuted. If you have reported to the police, remember to obtain the report number from the police for record.
- The spouse and/or child(ren) suffering from domestic violence can apply for an injunction under the Domestic and Cohabitation Relationships Violence Ordinance: prohibiting the spouse from harassing, assaulting and/or molesting the applicant, orders can be granted to prohibit the spouse from entering or staying in certain residence or area. The application forms for injunction orders can be obtained either from a solicitor, the Legal Aid Department, or the Family Court Registry.

11. What is the legal protection for children born out of wedlock?

- When a child is born out of wedlock, in which case the mother has all parental rights and authority automatically. However, on application made by the father, the court may grant him the parental rights and authority if the court accept him as a father of the child.
- As soon as the court has accepted him as the biological father, the father shall have the same rights, and shall be under the same obligations in respect of the maintenance and support as if the child had been born legitimate.
- If the parents dispute over the issue of their children, one of them can apply to the Family Court for instructions, the court will make the order based on the child's best interests as the primary consideration.

12. How can Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme recipients deal with default on maintenance payments?

- Alimony is regarded as income under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme (CSSA), unless only a nominal alimony order is issued in a divorce, the maintenance amount will be regarded as an evaluation condition for receiving CSSA.
- If a CSSA recipient is a maintenance payment recipient but he/she fails to obtain the maintenance amount on time from the spouse under the alimony order, he/she can report to the Social Welfare Department and indicate his/her intention to pursue the outstanding amount.
- The maintenance recipient can apply to the Family Court to enforce the court order for payment of outstanding maintenance against the spouse or apply to the Legal Aid Department (LAD) for legal aid to enforce the alimony order.
- You can also seek assistance from the Social Security Field Units, with your consent, the staff will refer you to the Legal Aid Department for legal support for the execution of maintenance orders.

To inquire about the “Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme Treatment of Maintenance Payments”, you can scan the QR code go to information sheet provided by the Social Welfare Department.



Supplementary Information

Legal Aid

Legal aid is a means by which eligible applicants can obtain legal representation by a solicitor and, if necessary, a barrister in proceedings before the courts. The objective of legal aid is to ensure that no one with reasonable grounds for taking or defending a legal action is denied access to justice because of lack of means.

How do I qualify for legal aid?

According to the Legal Aid Ordinance, any applicant, whether or not a Hong Kong resident, who passes both the means test and the merits test is eligible for legal aid.

Family and matrimonial dispute is covered by civil legal aid scheme. A person is eligible for Ordinary Legal Aid Scheme if his financial resources do not exceed HK\$420,400. *Please note that the amount might be revised, please refer to the website of the Legal Aid Department for details.

You can scan this QR code to enter the Legal Aid Electronic Portal website to estimate your financial resources. (<https://laesp1.lad.gov.hk/laesp/portal/entry/entryDeclare.jsp?language=zh&country=HK&>)



Fee

Note that the legal aid is not completely free of charge. Aided persons whose financial resources are assessed to be exceeded a designated amount are required to make a contribution on a sliding scale ranging from HK\$1,051 to HK\$105,100.

In cases where property or damages are successfully recovered or preserved for the aided persons in the proceedings, they are required to reimburse the Department the costs incurred on their behalf out of the property or damages recovered or preserved.

*Please note that the amount might be revised, please refer to the website of the Legal Aid Department for details.



As a legally aided person, can I choose my lawyer?

The Director of Legal Aid maintains panels of counsel and solicitors who are willing to undertake legal aid work. You can nominate a lawyer on the Legal Aid Panel to represent you. If your choice is considered not suitable, the Director will discuss the matter with you. Or if you prefer, the Director can select a solicitor or barrister on your behalf.

Specialised Co-parenting Support Centres

Five Specialised Co-parenting Support Centres (SCSCs) are set up across the territories to provide one-stop child-focused co-parenting support services for separated/divorcing/divorced parents (the parents) and/or their children. The SCSCs assist the parents to carry out parental responsibilities under the child-focused principles, strengthen parent-child connection and provide support to children affected by parental separation/divorce and family change to promote their healthy growth and development.

Service Scope

- Provide co-parenting counselling and parenting coordination service (formulate and implement the child(ren) care and contact arrangement), structured parenting groups/programmes/workshops to parents;
- Provide children contact service including supervised contact/supervised exchange between the children and their non-residing parents and/or significant others;
- Provide children with child-focused intensive counselling/groups/programmes; and
- Promote parental responsibility through education/publicity activities.

Targets Service Users

Separated/divorcing/divorced parents and/or their children where the parents have difficulty in cooperating with each other and/or reaching agreement relating to the children's living, care and contact arrangements including different ethnicities, cultures, religions and language; and general public with interest to know the parental responsibility.

Application

1. Direct application;
2. Referrals from professionals including social workers, staff of relevant government departments or non-government organisations, school personnel, or professionals providing services to separated/divorcing/divorced parents and their children, such as mediators or lawyers.

To inquire about the service organization and contact method of the Specialised Co-parenting Support Centres, you can scan the QR code below to go to the services provided by the Social Welfare Department and NGOs for divorced families (https://www.swd.gov.hk/coparenting/html_tc/support.html)



Fee Charging: Free of charge

Relevant services

1 Anti-domestic violence service agency

- a) Social Welfare Department
Tel: 2343 2255
- b) Caritas Family Crisis Support Centre
Tel: 18288 (24-hour hotline)
- c) Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Cease Crisis Centre
Tel: 18281 (24-hour hotline)

2 Anti-domestic violence service agency

For Female

- a) Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres - Women's Helpline
Tel: 2386 6255
- b) Harmony House
Tel: 2522 0434 (24-hour hotline)
- c) Po Leung Kuk Refuge Centres for Women
Tel: 8100 1155 (24-hour hotline)
- d) Christian Family Service Centre - Serene Court
Tel: 2381 3311 (24-hour hotline)

3 Anti-domestic violence service agency

For Male

- a) Harmony House - Man Hotline
Tel: 2295 1386
(Service Hour: 10:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Saturday ; 7:00pm to 10:00pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday (Excluding Public Holidays))
- b) Po Leung Kuk - Family and Intimate Partner Relationship Hotline for Men
Tel: 2890 1830 (24-hour hotline)

4 Divorce Conciliation

- a) The Hong Kong Catholic Marriage Advisory Council - Mediation Service
Tel: 2782 7560
- b) Hong Kong Family Welfare Society - Mediation Service and Divorce Service
Tel: 2561 9229

5 Divorce Support and related formalities

a) The Family Court
Tel: 2840 1218

b) Marriage Registries
Tel: 2867 2787

If you have any further question, please feel free to contact us for the Free Legal Advice Clinic service.

6 Marriage Counselling Service

a) The Hong Kong Catholic Marriage Advisory Council - Marriage Counselling Service
Tel: 2810 1104

b) Integrated Family Service Centres of Social Welfare Department
Web: <http://www.swd.gov.hk/>

7 Home Affairs Enquiry Centre

a) Sha Tin
Tel: 2158 5352

b) Central & Western
Tel: 2852 4378

c) Wan Chai
Tel: 2835 1996 / 2835 1997

d) Tsuen Wan
Tel: 3515 5805

e) Eastern
Tel: 2896 6968

f) Wong Tai Sin
Tel: 3143 1167

g) Kwun Tong
Tel: 2342 3431 (office hour)
Tel: 2357 0685
(Wednesday night & non-office hour)

h) Yau Tsim Mong
Tel: 2399 2111 (office hour)
Tel: 2399 2594
(Wednesday night & non-office hour)

i) Island
Tel: 2852 4324 (office hour)
Tel: 2852 4338 (Thursday night & non-office hour)

香港婦女中心協會

Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres

Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres (Women's Centres), founded in 1981, is a non-partisan and non-religious women's organization. We concern about the situation of grassroots women, and promote gender equality in Hong Kong through services, education and advocacy. Through our service centres, we develop volunteer networks, provide appropriate services for women, and develop their potential. Women's Centres enables women to develop their Confidence, Independence and Competence.

Women's Helpline - 2386 6255

The HKFWC's Women's Helpline is Hong Kong's first hotline for women.

Since May 1981, the Helpline has provided emotional support to callers in need. Trained helpline counsellors, many of whom have similarly experienced troubled in their lives, respond to callers' questions on marital issues and refer them to social services.

Calls are answered by women volunteer counsellors from:

Mondays – Thursdays

9:30am – 11:30am

2:00pm – 4:00pm

7:00pm – 9:00pm

And on Fridays

9:30am – 11:30am

2:00pm – 4:00pm

Calls made outside these hours will be transferred to social resources information system of the Helpline

Free Legal Advice Clinic

Supported by members of Free Legal Advice Scheme under The Duty Lawyer Service, the scheme aims to provide professional and free legal advice for women in need, as well as to improve the awareness of crisis

management of women, so that those who lack legal knowledge and resources to hire lawyers can understand their legal rights in divorce. We hope to protect these rights and achieve legal empowerment of women. Fellow counsellors will accompany them and help them sort out and solve their problems, while encouraging them to establish support networks and contribute to the community.

To meet the needs of our service users, we have enhanced our follow-up service. At the end of each consultation service session, we will have a case study period to understand what women need, follow up on certain cases and refer them to relevant services according to their situations.

Make an appointment: 2386 6255

Counselling & Case Works

We help women examine their issues in individual meetings and group activities so they can gain a better understanding of who they are and explore their personal strengths. We also assist women in need with assessing their situations and helping them learn of new resources available to them. These in turn raise their ability to face adversity and contribute to their physical and mental health. We also refer women to other social service agencies should the need arise. We also organised support groups for women experiencing marital problems, women experiencing psychological problems, and carers. The groups provided various means of support – by learning music, exploring one's self, and providing a "filling station for the soul". Women can relieve their distress and establish close bonds, while also advising their peers and sharing community resources. With the group's focus on empowerment and self-reliance, women are able to improve their difficult circumstances.

Make an appointment: 2386 6255

Women's Relief and Support Fund

The Fund provides women with financial assistance to help them address their pressing needs.

If you have any question, please call at **2386 6256** to contact us.

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Jockey Club Lai Kok Centre

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Jockey Club Wah Fu Centre

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