

Notice to the Public

Mandatory Information Program (MIP)

The mandatory Information Program is an information session and does not replace any other court appearances. Your MIP session is in addition to any other steps in your case, including a first appearance date or case conference.

You must complete a two-hour Mandatory Information Program (MIP) in all contested family cases, before you will be permitted to appear before a judge.

If you are the Applicant, refer to the document “Applicant’s Notice” to find out your MIP date.

If you are the Respondent, refer to the document “Respondent’s Notice” to find out your MIP date.

Check the front page of the application in your case for your first court date (if applicable) or the Case Conference Notice for your case conference date.

Who is required to attend the Mandatory Information Program?

All family clients are required to attend a MIP, with the following exceptions:

- Joint divorces
- Cases that only ask for a divorce
- Cases that only request the incorporation of the terms of an agreement or prior court order
- Cases that only ask for costs or that ask only for a divorce and costs

Both applicants and respondents are required to attend separate MIP sessions. If your case settles before you complete the MIP, you do not have to attend a MIP to obtain an order on consent.

How do I know when I have to attend the MIP session?

All MIP sessions are scheduled when the applicant files an application that starts a family law case. The applicant will be given two Notices: one that tells them when to attend the MIP and one that tells the respondent when to attend the MIP. It is important to understand that this means that the applicant will know when the respondent is scheduled to attend the MIP. The Applicant is responsible to serve the Respondent’s Notice on the Respondent.

Why do I have to go to a MIP?

Mandatory information sessions are part of the Ministry’s four pillars of family justice improvement and have been designed to ensure you and the other party are provided with upfront information to help you make informed decisions about the next steps you take to resolve your family law case.

The judiciary has published practice directions requiring parties in certain locations to attend the MIP.

What if I can't attend on the date scheduled?

You may attend the Family Law information Center or you may fax (613-239-1109) a request to reschedule your appointment. You may only attend on a date you have been scheduled or re-scheduled to attend. You may **not** attend the same session the other party is scheduled to attend.

Latecomers will not be admitted.

Please ensure that you have daycare arrangements as this is a two (2) hour session.

Will I have to go to the same MIP as the other party?

No. Applicants and respondents are scheduled to separate MIP sessions. The other party may be scheduled to attend a different MIP session at a different time on the same day as you, but they will not be scheduled to attend your session.

What if I am the respondent and don't want the applicant to know when I am scheduled to go to the MIP?

You may attend the Family Law information Center or you may fax (613-239-1109) a request to reschedule your appointment.

What if the other party shows up to my MIP session?

Tell the MIP presenter. Make sure to show the presenter your Notice, which will set out the date and time you've been scheduled to attend. If you are not comfortable with the other party's presence, the presenter will ask the other party to leave. If the other party refuses to leave, security may be called.

What if I fear for my safety when I'm at or leaving the courthouse?

Security is present on-site at the courthouse during regular business hours. You can tell them if you have any safety concerns.

What if I don't go to the MIP?

A party who does not attend a MIP will not be able to provide the court with a certificate of completion and may not be able to proceed to a case conference before a judge. It is ultimately up to the judge to determine how to proceed if you do not attend a MIP.

What will be covered in Mandatory Information Sessions?

Curriculum will include information about:

- Effects of separation and divorce on parties and children
- Alternatives to litigation
- Court process

Attendees will be provided with a hard copy of the presentation and a community resource list.

How will the judge know I've completed the MIP?

You must bring your MIP Notice to your MIP session. There is space on the second page for the MIP presenter to certify that you have completed the program. It is your responsibility to make sure your certified notice is filed in your continuing record before your next court attendance. You will usually be able to file your notice the next time you are required to file documents. For example, you can file your notice when you file your next case conference brief in advance of your case conference. There is no need to make a separate trip to the court office just to file your notice.

What if I have feedback or comments about the MIP session I attended?

We encourage you to respond with your comments on the Mandatory Information Program. Please visit the Family Justice page of the Ministry of the Attorney General website at www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/.

Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on the link under “Mandatory Information Program Feedback”

If you want more information about mediation or Legal Aid Ontario:

Please attend the Family Law Information Centre in the courthouse.

If you want more information about court procedures and family law:

Go to the Ministry of the Attorney General website www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/family/ and click on Family Justice. You'll find a Guide to Procedure, an online tool to help you fill out court forms, and brochures and links to more information or www.ontariocourtforms.on.ca.