

The Belize Family Court

1) What is the Family Court

The Belize Family Court was established under the Family Court Act and has been operational since April 1, 1989. It aims to provide a professional, family-centred service that respects the dignity and confidentiality of all individuals involved. The court focuses on holistic approaches to family and juvenile matters, promoting reconciliation, protection, and rehabilitation.

2) Legal Authority

The Belize Family Court operates under the guidance of the Family Court Act, Chapter 93 of the Laws of Belize Revised Edition 2020. Established on April 1, 1989, the Belize Family Court has been in operation for 36 years.

3) Mission Statement

To serve the public by offering a complete, professional, family-centred service in a caring, committed, and confidential manner based upon the principles of dignity and respect for all.

4) Objective

To ensure that children, men, and women are provided with comprehensive support services while interfacing with the Family Court.

5) Functions of the Court:

In the fulfilment of its mission, the Family Court provides services to families and children, as well as children who come in contact with the law as Defendants in criminal proceedings. In particular, the Court's functions include:

- i) Conducting mediation proceedings.
- ii) Provision of social services, including counselling and parent empowerment training.
- iii) Provision of public education and dissemination of information on parenting, family crisis issues, and services of the Court.
- iv) Provision of court services for civil, hybrid, and criminal proceedings under the laws establishing the legal jurisdiction of the Court as it relates to the Juveniles who come in contact with the law and breach of protection orders.
- v) Provision of enforcement services for the Orders made by the Court
- vi) Provision of administrative services to collect and disburse moneys collected by the Court pursuant to maintenance proceedings.

- vii) Provision of service of summons, warrants and other Court-directed services.
- viii) Collaboration with Courts in other jurisdictions to facilitate registration of Court orders concerning children within the Court's jurisdiction.
- ix) Collaboration with other agencies to facilitate the provision of services to clients.

6) Jurisdiction of the Court:

The Family Court is a Magistrate Court established under the Family Court Act, Chapter 93 and has jurisdiction to hear matters affecting children and families arising under the following laws:

- i) The Families and Children Act, Chapter 173
- ii) The Domestic Violence Act, Chapter 19 of 2007
- iii) The Married Persons (Protection) Act, Chapter 175
- iv) The International Child Abduction Act, Chapter 177
- v) The Juvenile Offenders Act, Chapter 119
- vi) The Probation of Offenders Act, Chapter 120
- vii) The Penal Reform (Alternative Sentences) Act, Chapter 102.01

7) Applications made at the Family Court:

- Protection order
- Occupation order
- Variation/Revocation of the (protection/occupation order)

Application for unmarried people

- Child maintenance
- Variation increase/decrease/revocation/revival in maintenance order
- Recovery of arrears
- Attachment of salary
- Remittance of arrears
- Misapplying maintenance money
- Continuance of payment (child maintenance)
- Legal custody
- Relinquishment of custody
- Variation of custody
- Production of a child
- Access/visitation
- Variation/revocation of access order
- Legal guardianship
- Parental responsibility
- Declaration of parentage
- Revocation of declaration of parentage

Applications for married people

- Child/spouse maintenance
- Variation in maintenance order
- Recovery of arrears
- Continuance of payment (child maintenance)

- Legal custody
- Variation of custody
- Legal separation
- Revocation of maintenance/legal separation
- Access/visitation
- Contempt of access order

Other applications that can be made

- Variation of custody against Human Services
- Declaration of wrongful removal

8) SCOPE OF SERVICES:

The general procedures stated below shall apply to the civil and hybrid jurisdiction of the Court in the following proceedings:

Civil Matters

- i) Custody
- ii) Maintenance
- iii) Legal Custody
- iv) Guardianship
- v) Paternity
- vi) Domestic Violence
- vii) Legal Separation
- viii) Care Order Proceedings

Hybrid Matters

- ix) Proceedings Under the Married Women's Property Act
- x) Hague Convention on International Abduction Proceedings

Criminal Matters

- i) Juvenile Court Proceedings
- ii) Contempt of Court/Breach of Order Proceedings
- iii) Other Criminal Court Proceedings

9) How are the applications made?

Intake begins when you start an application in the Family Court. You meet with an Intake/Welfare Officer, who helps you focus on your situation and consider the most suitable options. The intake

officer helps you determine the best course of action for your situation and outlines the next steps that may be necessary. The intake officer does not take sides in a case; they remain impartial. After the intake process, you then wait in the waiting area to sign for your summons and get a court date. All family court applications are handled by the clerk of court. The cost of the summons is \$2.50 BZD.

10) What is the intake process?

Intake Services

The intake services are to be done by an Intake Officer. Where there is no intake officer, the intake functions may be performed by the Clerk of Court. The intake person is responsible for:

- a. Determine the needs of the potential client and refer as appropriate.
- b. An intake form is filled out for every client who is assessed for services.
- c. Inputting all the intake information into the Court computerised database system.
- d. As a social officer, the intake officer is also responsible for conducting the social inquiry report mandated by law in custody cases.

11) Intake

The intake process is often the first point of access for members of the public seeking the assistance of the Family Court to resolve family breakdown with legal process. The following procedures shall be employed:

- a) The Intake Welfare Officer shall interview the member (s) of the public seeking Family Court intervention, and they assist clients in completing the intake form, which includes the biometric data for each applicant for services.
- b) The Intake Welfare Officer shall open a case file and assign a case number to each application and shall create such electronic records on the Court's computerised database system in order to create a new client record.
- c) The Intake Welfare Officer shall obtain all relevant information from the client needed to determine what services will need to be provided to the client.
- d) The Intake Welfare Officer shall determine, interview, and log the records of all relevant parties.

12) Intake Welfare Officer

Job Tasks:

1. Facilitate the intake process for new applications made at the court
2. Provide information to clients on the services provided by the family court
4. Provide psycho-educational services to clients

5. Investigate, conduct assessments and prepare social inquiry reports as directed by the Court
6. Supervise visitations as ordered by the court
7. Make a referral for services to other agencies
8. Provide assistance to the Magistrate as required to dispose of cases before the court in the best interest of children.

14) Reception/Secretarial Services

The reception service shall be provided by the front desk receptionist in the Family Court and by the secretary or person so appointed in the district courts. The receptionist/secretary is the provider of information to members of the public as to the status of their matter and the procedures for applications in the Court. The receptionist/secretary shall also prepare letters, reports, transcripts and shall direct the public to the different services provided by the Court. Further, the receptionist/secretary shall provide referral and other information to members of the public for services not provided by the Court.

15) Clerk of Court

The primary administrator for the operations of the Family Court shall be the Clerk of Court. The Clerk of Court is responsible for coordinating the operations of the Family Court. In addition, the Clerk of Court is responsible to:

- a) Prepare court books/summons for the Family Court.
- b) Prepare all returns.
- c) populate the Court computerised database system with the client's case information and the orders and directions issued by the Court in its proceedings.
- d) Refer clients seeking Family Court social services to the Intake Welfare Officer.
- e) Facilitate access to Court transcripts and provide clients with copies of the orders made in respect of the Court's proceedings.

The Clerk of Court facilitates the day-to-day administrative functions of the Family Court and implements the directions of the Director and, at the district level, the Magistrate in relation to the Court's administrative functions. The Clerk of Court shall be supervised by the Director or, at the district level, by the Magistrate.

Job Tasks:

1. Preparing the Court Book for civil and hybrid matters filed in the Court.
2. Providing information to the public on Court procedures.

3. Providing legal information to the client on formulating a cause of action and preparing the plaint in civil and hybrid matters.
4. Registering all juvenile and criminal cases filed in the Court.
5. Maintaining accurate records of adjournment dates and directives, and orders issued by the Court.
6. Uploading the information from the Court Book into the Court computerised database system.
7. Preparing summons and warrants.
8. Instructing bailiffs on the services of summons and warrants.
9. Preparation of transcripts and issuing transcripts to clients.
10. Sending out letters on behalf of and upon the instruction of the Magistrate.
11. Providing support to the Magistrate.
12. Supervise the preparation of returns and reports required by the Director.

16) Finance Officer

The Finance Officer is an administrative supervisor for the financial and clerical aspects of the Court's administrative services. The Finance officer is also expected to liaise with the Ministry and to have oversight of the Court to address public service issues or staff needs, under the direction of the Director. The Finance Officer is supervised by the Director.

Job Tasks

1. Oversee and supervise the collection of all moneys and issuance of appropriate receipts for all such moneys collected.
2. Supervise the preparation of deposits and facilitates deposit of all monies paid.
3. Provide second approval to moneys paid from the Smart Stream system.
4. Supervise the cashiers in the districts in relation to Family Court payments collected by them and Family Court payments made by them to clients.
5. Approve expenses in accordance with the Family Court budget.
6. Assist the Director in the preparation of the Annual Budget.
7. Liaise with the Attorney-General's Ministry on behalf of staff in relation to benefits and entitlements, leave, payments and other staff administrative issues.
8. Supervise clerical, secretarial and all cashier and bookkeeping staff.
9. Maintain proper records as required.
10. Provide such reports to the Director as are required.

17) Mediation

The Clerk of Court shall be responsible for referring matters to a mediator assigned by the Family Court. At the first hearing of every application and at every subsequent stage in the proceedings, the Court must consider whether mediation would be appropriate to bring about a non-court resolution of the matter before the Court. Where the Court considers that a matter before the Court (not being an exempted proceeding) is suitable for mediation, the Court may, at any stage of the

proceedings, adjourn the hearing and refer the matter to a mediator for mediation. In considering whether mediation is appropriate for a matter already commenced, the Court shall consider:

- i) Whether mediation proceedings already taken place and the outcome of those proceedings.
- ii) Whether the proceedings are exempted from mediation.
- iii) Whether the parties are willing to agree to a non-court resolution of the matter; and
- iv) Whether the matter before the Court can be resolved by mediation.

18)Cashier Services

The cashier shall be responsible for all monetary collections on behalf of the Court. The cashier shall provide all receipts and documents in the proper format for all monies collected by the Court. Where the Court uses Smart Stream for the collection, recording and disbursement of payments, the Smart Stream procedures shall be used in respect to all payments, and all reports shall be required to be processed in Smart Stream.

The Cashier and Assistant Cashiers shall be supervised by the Finance Officer.

Job Tasks:

1. Collect all monies and issue appropriate receipts for all such monies collected.
2. Prepare deposit slips and facilitate the deposit of all monies paid.
3. Input all monies collected and receipts issued into the Smart Stream system.
4. Record all particulars of money collected.
5. Prepare the cashbook and cash reconciliation reports.
6. Provide daily updates to the Clerk of Court on the status of maintenance payments.
7. Prepare statements for payments made and monies on accounts for clients.
8. Receive information on financial orders made by the Court to be paid into Court from the Clerk of Court and create accounts for payments to be made.
9. Maintain up-to-date ledgers of financial orders and voluntary payment notices for maintenance and other payments made to the Court for clients.

19)Bailiff Services

The bailiff is the primary enforcement officer for the court. The bailiff shall be responsible to effect the service of all summons and warrants issued by the Court. In addition, the bailiff shall execute orders and warrants on behalf of the Court as directed by the Clerk of Court to effect orders and directions of the Magistrate. The bailiff may, from time to time, be required to assist with security and court orderly services to the Court.

Job Tasks:

1. Effect the service of summons and warrants.
2. Effect the service of orders in domestic violence proceedings.
3. Sit in Court to assist the Magistrate as a Court Orderly when required.

4. Provide returns to the Clerk of Court on Court orders and directions issued by the Magistrate in Court Proceedings.
5. Provide updates to the Clerk of Court on the service of summons, warrants, and orders.
6. Should you be served with a summons, please ensure to appear to court on the date of the hearing indicated in your summons.

20) Juvenile Diversion Program

Court-ordered diversion can lead to a non-court resolution of youth justice proceedings that may foster rehabilitation of the youth offender. In every youth justice proceeding before the Court, the Court shall consider whether the youth justice proceedings are suited for Court-ordered diversion and shall issue directions as to the conduct of such diversion proceedings. Diversion orders issued by the Court shall require the youth offender to participate in such rehabilitative programs and counselling as shall be recommended by the CRO. The Court shall explain to the youth offender the effect of the diversion order and the consequences of failure to adhere to the diversion program participation requirements.

21) Court procedures, what to wear, and what not to wear

What Should a Female Wear to Family Court?

Tops: Button-down shirts and sweaters are safe choices. If you want to wear a sleeveless or short-sleeve shirt, put a cardigan or blazer over it.

Pants: Dress pants or slacks are appropriate.

Dresses and skirts: A skirt or a dress can be a good look if the length is appropriate when you're standing and sitting down.

Shoes: Your shoes should be clean, comfortable, and closed-toed.

Accessories and makeup: Jewellery and makeup should be simple and minimal.

What Should Men Wear to Family Court?

Shirts: A collared shirt is a must. A classic button-down shirt is best. A simple polo shirt might also work in some places, too, but a tucked-in button-down is the safest bet.

Ties: A tie is optional

Pants: Well-fitting dress slacks, chinos, or khakis all work well.

Shoes: Dress shoes, loafers, or clean sneakers

What Not to Wear to Family Court

No shorts

No tank tops

No cropped tops

No plunging necklines

No tight or baggy pants

No leggings and athleisure.

No hats

No non-prescription sunglasses

No torn clothing

No ripped jeans or cargo pants.

No flip flops or slides, and no clothing with offensive or obscene images.

If you wear clothing that is specifically banned, you could be refused entry into court.

22) How to set an appointment to see an intake officer

Appointments can be done through the contact information provided below (2274114/2274107). However, Clients can be dealt with by simply walking into the office and asking to speak to an intake officer.

23) List of services that are not available at the family court

Divorces

Probate and succession matters

Adoptions

Traffic Matters

Powers of Attorneys

Land matters

Murder

Property right

Adult Criminal proceeding (except Breach of Protection Order)

24) Where a person can go for assistance when the family court cannot deal with their matter, or they can't make an application to the court.

Referrals: The Family Court intends to be a holistic provider of family intervention legal services. However, in some cases, legal proceedings required by families will be outside the current jurisdiction of the Family Court. In those cases, the Family Court will make appropriate referrals

to other attorneys-at-law, the legal aid centre, the Departments under the Ministry of Human Development or other judicial bodies such as the Supreme Court, as may be appropriate to assist the person seeking legal assistance.

- Family Support and Gender Affairs Department
- Department of Human Services
- Police Department
- Community Rehabilitation Department
- Legal Advice and Services Centre
- Magistrate Court
- High Court
- Vital Statistics

25) Suggestion box (questions and answers) about the family court

What happens if someone is breaking family court orders?

- 1) **What is the function of a family court?** Family courts settle legal cases concerning families, including divorce, custody, and support.
- 2) You may want to consider a contempt action to take the person breaking court orders back to court. Maintain a record of every violation of the court order and build documentary evidence of each violation.
- 3) **Do I need a lawyer for family law cases?** Although not required, a lawyer can ensure that your rights are protected and that you go through the process correctly.
- 4) **How are family cases resolved?** They can be resolved through negotiation, mediation, or court proceedings.
- 5) **What is mediation?** Mediation is a process wherein a neutral third party, known as a mediator, helps parties in dispute settle their case out of court.
- 6) **How long does a typical family case take?** It depends; uncontested cases can be dealt with right away, but contested cases might take months or years.

- 7) **How is child support determined?** It's calculated based on income, the means of the person obligated to pay maintenance, a child's needs, and how children are to be cared for.
- 8) **What if a parent does not pay child support?** The court can make wage garnishments, impose fines, or jail a parent who doesn't pay child support.
- 9) **Do unmarried parents have the same custody rights?** Generally, the mother has initial custody until the father establishes paternity.
- 10) **What is a protection order?** A protection order is issued by a court to protect a person (the applicant) from another individual (the respondent) who is alleged to have caused harm or poses a threat. It is a legal tool that restricts the respondent's actions, such as prohibiting contact, harassment, or approaching the applicant, and can extend to family members or children if necessary to ensure safety.
- 11) **How does domestic violence affect custody decisions?** Courts take into account domestic violence when deciding custody and frequently prioritize the safety of the child.
- 12) **What is legal guardianship?** A court order where someone besides the parent is responsible for taking care of a child.
- 13) **What is mediation in family law?** Mediation is a process in which a neutral mediator assists families in resolving disputes outside of court, usually more quickly and less contentious.
- 14) **How is legal separation different from divorce?** Legal separation allows couples to live apart without ending the marriage, while divorce legally dissolves the marriage.
- 15) **What documents are required when making an application at the Family Court?**

ID- social security card, birth certificate, divorce documents, any other relevant documents, address of the respondent (phone #, name, and address work/home)

26) Practice and procedures of the family court

The Belize Family Court operates under the Family Court Act, Chapter 93 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2003. Established on April 1, 1989, the court aims to provide a complete, professional, family-centred service in a caring, committed, and confidential manner, based on the principles of dignity and respect for all. The court's mission is to settle family and juvenile matters in a holistic manner, offering alternative methods for reconciliation, protection, rehabilitation, growth, and development. It plays a vital role in keeping society together by administering justice

for family and juvenile matters. The court has seen a significant increase in the number of cases it administers annually, with the majority falling within the areas of Maintenance and Domestic Violence. The Domestic Violence Chapter 178, revised edition 2020, provides greater protection and assistance for victims of domestic violence, including the power to direct respondents to relinquish firearms used in domestic violence and to receive professional counselling or therapy. The court also oversees cases regarding child custody, including securing the rights of a child, appointing custody, providing support, determining family maintenance, determining parentage, ensuring proper care and protection, and assigning proper foster care placements.

27)What Is Child Maintenance?

Maintenance Process at the Family Court

In Belize, maintenance refers to the legal obligation of parents to provide financial support for their children after separation or divorce. This duty continues until the child reaches 18 years old.

APPLYING FOR MAINTENANCE: WHO CAN APPLY FOR A MAINTENANCE ORDER? MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES IN BELIZE CITY

In Belize City, all maintenance applications are made through the Belize Family Court. (For the application procedures in the districts, refer to the section entitled “Maintenance Procedures in the Districts”.) When applying for maintenance, the Applicant must discuss his/her options with an Intake/Welfare Officer of the Belize Family Court.

Types of Maintenance Orders

1. **Maintenance Agreement** – A voluntary, written agreement between parents, often mediated or assisted by the Family Court, outlining payment terms.
2. **Maintenance Order** – A court-ordered payment, issued when parents cannot agree or when one party refuses to pay maintenance.

Applying for Maintenance

- **WHO CAN APPLY FOR A MAINTENANCE ORDER?**

The mother, the father, the guardian

- **Process:**

1. **File a petition** with the Belize Family Court in Belize City or the relevant District Court.
2. **Serve the other parent** with the petition(summons). Done by a bailiff or police officer.

3. **Court hearing:** The court will assess the applicant's needs, the respondent's ability to pay, and any other relevant factors.
4. **Order or agreement:** The court may issue a maintenance order or approve a maintenance agreement.
5. **The conditions of a Maintenance Order:** are decided upon by a magistrate.
6. At this hearing, the magistrate will decide the amount of maintenance to be paid, how often it will be paid, and the dates of payment, based on the means of the party required to pay maintenance.
7. The court recommends that the Applicant bring the following documents:

- Valid Social Security Card,
- marriage license, and
- the child's birth certificate
- Active Banking information

. These documents can assist the Court and speed up the process.

8. The Applicant must pay a small fee (\$2.50) to the court for the issuing of a summons to the other parent (the Respondent) to attend a court hearing.
9. After a maintenance order is granted by the court, the respondent is required to pay through the court. The applicant must fill out a vendor form and provide a copy of his/her social security card and banking information so that the money can be deposited into their account.
10. Documents are forwarded to the Treasury Department for processing.
11. After processing of documents:
 - Payments are entered into the system
 - payments are 1st approved
 - payments are 2nd approved
 - Treasury Department uploads payments to the account.

Key Considerations

- **Changes in payments:** If circumstances change (e.g., income, child's needs), the court order or agreement can be reviewed and adjusted.

- **Non-payment consequences:** Failure to comply can result in legal action or imprisonment in severe cases.

28) How to Contact Us:

The Belize Family Court

Charles Bartlett Hyde Building

Mahogany Street Ext.

Belize City

Phone: 227-4114, 227-4107

Fax:227-0068

Email: bzfamilycourt@gmail.com

Court Hours:

Monday to Thursday

8:00 am- 5:00 pm

Friday

8:00 am- 4:30 pm

FAMILIES AND CHILDREN ACT CHAPTER 173

RELINQUISHMENT OF CUSTODY:

The court may make an order on the application of any parent of a child as it think fit.

VARIATION INCREASE/ DECREASE/REVOCATION REVIVAL OF MAINTENANCE ORDER (UNMARRIED)

Where an order for payment of Maintenance has been made, the court may at any time by an application, vary the existing order by increasing or decreasing the amount, or revoke the order or revive any order that has been revoked.

RECOVERY OF ARREARS (UNMARRIED)

At any time after fourteen days from the making of a Maintenance Order, it appears to the court that any sum to be paid pursuant of the order has not been paid; the court may issue a warrant.

ATTACHMENT OF SALARY

When a Maintenance Order has been made and the person has without reasonable cause made default under the order, the court at any time in any case where there is any salary, pension or income payable to the person order that such an amount specified in the Maintenance Order be attached.

FAMILIES AND CHILDREN ACT CHAPTER 173



GUARDIANSHIP:

- On the death of one parent of a child, the surviving parent, if any, shall be the guardian of the child, providing that if the parents were separated and the deceased parent had custody of the child.
- The surviving parent may be guardian alone or jointly with any guardian appointed by the deceased parent.
- The court if it thinks fit can appoint a guardian to act jointly with the surviving parent.

The mother of any child born out of wedlock may be deprived of her guardianship/ custody by order of the court if:

- The mother has deserted or abandoned the child in a manner to endanger the child's health/well-being
- Such mother is by reason of intemperate or immoral habits or for any other reason unfit to have custody
- Such mother does not exercise proper care and control of the child
- The order if made, will be in the best interest of the child
- The court is satisfied that there exists some other circumstances which renders the mother unfit
- The father applies for custody and proves to the satisfaction of the court that it is in the child's best interest for him to have custody.

FAMILIES AND CHILDREN ACT

CHAPTER 173

ACCESS/VISITATION:

The court may make an order to any parent of a child as it may think fit regarding the right of Access.

REVOCATION/VARIATION OF ACCESS ORDER:

An order may be varied or discharged

- by a subsequent order made
- after the death of either parent

LEGAL CUSTODY:

The father of a child born to a single woman may apply to the court for an order granting him legal custody of the child while under the age of eighteen years if he has satisfied the court that he is the father.

An application made under this section shall allege one or more of the following:

- the mother has deserted or abandoned the child in a way to endanger the health or well-being of the child
- the mother is by reason of intemperate or immoral habits unfit to have custody of the child
- the mother does not exercise proper care and control of the child

VARIATION OF CUSTODY:

Where the court is satisfied that the parent who has custody of the child is:

- willfully neglecting
- mistreating the child

custody may be granted to the other parent.

Jurisdiction of the Court

The Family Court is a Magistrate Court established under the Family Courts Act, Chapter 93 and has jurisdiction to hear matters affecting children and families arising under the following laws:

- Families and Children Act Chapter 173
- Domestic Violence Act Chapter 178
- Juvenile Offenders Act Chapter 119
- Married Persons (Protection) Act Chapter 175
- Probation of Offenders Act Chapter 120
- Certified Institution (Children Reformation) Act Chapter 121
- Summary Jurisdiction (Procedure) Act Chapter 99
- The International Child Abduction Act, Chapter 177
- The Penal Reform (Alternative Sentences) Act, Chapter 102.01

Families and Children Act

Applications most frequently made:

- Child maintenance
- Recovery of Arrears/Remittance of Arrears
- Revocation/Revival of maintenance order
- Continuance of payment
- Attachment of salary
- Legal Custody
- Access/Visitation
- Variation of Orders
- Guardianship
- Declaration of Parentage
- Care/Supervisory Orders

Domestic Violence Act

Who Can Apply:

- A spouse, ex-spouse, a child, a police officer, an officer of the Women's Department and a member of the respondent's household.

Types of Applications

- Protection Order
- Protection/Occupation Order
- Variation/Revocation of Protection/Occupation Order
- Tenancy Order
- Counseling Order

Married Persons Protection Act

Orders to which wife or husband is entitled to:

- Child/Spouse Maintenance
- Recovery of Arrears
- Continuance of Payment
- Revocation of Maintenance/Legal Separation
- Variation of Orders
- Legal Custody
- Legal Separation

Summary Jurisdiction Act

Who Can Apply:

A person who has an Access/Visitation Order

Type of Application

- Contempt of Access Order

What is a Maintenance Order

An order to pay monetary contribution towards the welfare of a child/spouse.

Any person who has custody of a child and who is:

- The mother of the child
- The father of the child
- The guardian of the child

may make an application for a maintenance orderunder the Families and Children Act.

A **married woman** or a **married man** may make an application for spousal/child maintenance under the Married Persons Protection (Amendment) Act, 2017

WHERE SHOULD PAYMENTS BE MADE

- To the collecting officer (cashier) of the District Court.

WAF

What is a Protection/Occupation Order

A Protection Order is an order that:

- Prohibits a person from acts of domestic violence.
- Directs a person to comply with conditions of an order.

An Occupation Order is an order that:

- Directs the respondent to vacate (leave) any place or residence.
- Can only be granted with a Protection Order.

Who Can Apply:

- Spouse
- Member of the abuser's household
- Child
- Dependant
- Parent or guardian
- Police officer
- Public officer experience in social welfare
- Officer of the Women's Department

What is an Access/Visitation Order

An order which allows the parent without custody/physical care and control of a child to spend time with him/her.

Who Can Apply:

- The mother of the child
- The father of the child

