

Family Law Section Report 2020-2021

We had quite a busy year dealing with the introduction of amendments to the *Divorce Act*, pandemic related issues, proposed amendments to the scope of practice of non-lawyers, and changes to procedure in the Court of Queen's Bench - Family Division.

The 2019-2020 year ended with an ongoing series of roundtable meetings over Zoom during which members could informally discuss questions and concerns arising from practicing during the pandemic. Speakers included Acting Associate Chief Justice Dueck, Chief Justice Joyal, and several Section members who had argued motions remotely, or argued motions dealing with pandemic-related issues. The meetings which took place after our last report, and were therefore not previously reported, occurred on May 1 and May 20, 2020.

Other Continuing Professional Development programs over the year included:

- Amendments to the *Divorce Act*, presented by Claire Farid, Director and General Counsel for Justice Canada, on May 14, 2020;
- Mid-Winter, Annual review of Family Law and Pandemic-Related Practice Issues, presented by Martha McCarthy, Q.C. and Dean Kropp on January 21, 2021;
- Child Support Service and MEP – What's new?, presented by Michael Williams and Ron Majors on February 24, 2021;
- Assisted Reproduction Issues, presented by Robynne Kazina on February 25, 2021;
- Changes in Family Law, our annual joint presentation with the judiciary, with presenters including Nick Bala, Marie Gordon and Justice Freda Steele, which took place on March 19, 2021.

In addition, there have been meetings between members of the Executive and the judiciary, as well as meetings between the Law Society and the Executive on access to justice issues.

Submitted by,
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