

Child Support Resolution Project (Edmonton)

The Child Support Resolution Project was created to help parents resolve their child support issues without having to attend a formal court hearing. Practice Note 4 of the *Alberta Rules of Court* states that all self-represented Applicants **must attend** a Child Support Resolution Meeting before they can make a court application or file court documents to obtain or change their child support order.

The purpose of a Child Support Resolution (“CSR”) Meeting is to attempt to resolve child support issues without a formal court hearing.

Before the meeting, the parents are required to provide financial information. At the meeting, the parents sit down with a lawyer known as a CSR Officer. The CSR Officer’s job is to assist the parents in having a discussion about their child support issues, to inform the parents about the law that impacts child support and to mediate disagreements between the parents on child support issues. The CSR Officer is not a lawyer for either parent; his or her role is to try to help in resolving the issues.

If the parents reach an agreement in their CSR Meeting, a consent order is prepared. Both parents are required to review and sign the consent order. Once they sign the consent order, the CSR Clerk forwards the consent order to a Court of Queen’s Bench Justice for review and signature. When the Justice signs the consent order, it is filed with the court and the parents have a new court order without having to attend a court hearing. The CSR Clerk forwards a copy of the consent order to the parents.

If the parents are unable to reach an agreement in their CSR Meeting, the next step is for either parent to file documents with the Court and set a court date to address the child support issue.

Do I qualify for a CSR Meeting?

At this time, only child support matters in **Court of Queens Bench, Judicial District of Edmonton**, must be set for a CSR Meeting when the Applicant does not have a lawyer. This includes the following situations:

- all applications for a child support order from the Court of Queen's Bench (including applications to vary or change a child support order)
- any matters referred by the Court of Queen's Bench

A CSR Meeting **cannot** be set up in the following situations:

- the Applicant has hired a lawyer to obtain or change a child support order
- the application is only dealing with the reduction of arrears
- the application is to change a child support order and the recipient is receiving social assistance, or where arrears are subrogated to the Government of Alberta.
- the application is for or to vary child support under the *Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act (ISO)*
- the application is for a provisional order under section 18 of the *Divorce Act*

If you are unsure of whether you qualify for a CSR Meeting, contact the CSR Clerk (at (780) 427- 1907).

How do I book a CSR Meeting?

The Applicant must come, in person, to the Family Law Information Centre at the Edmonton Law Courts Building to set up their CSR Meeting. If the Applicant lives outside of the City of Edmonton but in the Province of Alberta and meets all the criteria to qualify for CSR, the Applicant may contact the CSR Desk to request a CSR package to set up their meeting by mail (although this delays the process).

To book a CSR Meeting, the Applicant must provide the Family Law Information Centre with the following documents (copies are fine):

- a copy of each Income Tax Return and Notice of Assessment for the 3 most recent tax years, or all T4 slips for those years (if they have not filed income tax returns)
- the last 3 pay stubs from each source of income, this includes employment insurance stubs, social assistance payments, or student loan information
- if the Applicant is self-employed or has an interest in any business, company or corporation of more than 1%, the last 3 financial statements of that business
- a copy of the most recent child support order

In addition to providing the above information, the Applicant will be asked to complete a sworn Financial Statement (provided at the Family Law Information Centre).

Once the Applicant has provided all the required information, the Clerk will set a date for the meeting and give the Applicant copies of a Notice to Attend Child Support Resolution Meeting and the Applicant's financial statement.

The Applicant will then need to personally serve the Notice to Attend and Financial Statement on the other parent (the "Respondent"), or arrange to have it served on the Respondent by a Process Server.

Other Information and frequently asked questions

- How do I contact the CSR Office?

The CSR Office is located in the
Family Law Information Centre
Main Floor West, Law Courts Building
1A Sir Winston Churchill Square,
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0R2.

The CSR desk can be reached by calling **(780) 427-1907** directly. This number can be accessed toll-free by first calling 310-0000.

- What happens if the other parent does not show up at the meeting?

If the Respondent does not show up at the meeting, this will be noted on the court file. The Applicant may then apply to the court for a child support order.

If the Applicant does not show up at the meeting, this will be noted on the Court file and the Applicant will have to either proceed to court or serve another Notice to Attend on the other parent.

If more than 6 months have passed since the missed meeting was scheduled, another CSR meeting must be scheduled before either parent can proceed to court.

- How to cancel or change the CSR meeting date

If you are the Applicant and have served the Respondent with the Notice to Attend, but then you decide to cancel the meeting, you must notify the other parent and the CSR Clerk (at (780) 427- 1907) at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. If you or the other parent wishes to reschedule a CSR Meeting, the consent of both parents is required or else the meeting will proceed.

- Will the Judge know what happened at the meeting?

A CSR Officer Report will be completed and placed on the court file after a CSR meeting is conducted (see Court of Queen's Bench Family Practice Note 4, paragraph 11). If one of the parents fails to attend the CSR meeting this will be recorded on the CSR Report.

- What happens if we are unable to resolve the matter?

The next step would be to prepare court documents, schedule a court date, serve the other parent, and go to court to have your case heard and decided by a Judge. Instructions and court forms to assist you in representing yourself in court are available at the Family Law Information Centre, or you may obtain booklets via Family Justice Services.