

## Sharing Child Custody and Co-Parenting during COVID-19

### Tips for parents

The COVID-19 pandemic may be challenging to parents who are not living together but are co-parenting their children. Below are some tips to help you work together during this stressful time.

### Stick to the court-ordered parenting schedules as much as possible

- Regular parenting time and custody schedules should be kept, unless someone is self-isolating or under quarantine.
- Family court has been postponed during the pandemic, and only urgent matters will be heard at this time.
- If you think the other parent is not taking necessary health precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, an urgent motion can be filed. Instructions on how to file an urgent motion can be found on the [Ontario Superior Court of Justice website](#).
- Do not take advantage of this health crisis to prevent your child from having contact with the other parent. Breaches of custody orders will be noted once the courts are back in session.

### Maintain structure and routines

- Stick to regular family schedules and routines – schedule time for exercise, school work, family time, chores and hobbies. Keep regular bedtimes and meal times.

### Keep conflict away from children

- Stay child-focused and work together as a united team to help your child feel safe and reduce their stress and anxiety. Focus on what is best for your child.

### Reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19

- To model good prevention behaviour, ensure that both homes are taking measures to [prevent the spread](#) of COVID-19 such as:
  - regular hand washing
  - cleaning and sanitizing frequently touched objects
  - staying home as much as possible
  - practising physical distancing
  - [wearing a face mask or covering](#) in indoor public spaces as per a new City of Toronto [bylaw](#).
- Consider downloading the [COVID Alert app](#) so you can be notified directly if you have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.
- When carrying out parenting exchanges, do it where you can keep a safe physical distancing of two metres (or six feet) from the other parent, and wash your child's toys, clothing and personal belongings each time they return from their other parent.

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- If you have [symptoms or have been exposed](#) or tested positive to COVID-19, you will need to [self-isolate](#) for 14 days starting from the day the symptoms started. If your child was not with you when you started having symptoms you should not see them until after the 14 day self-isolation period is over, and you are feeling better and no longer have a fever. Make sure to let the other parent know as soon as possible.
- If your child was with you when you developed symptoms or were exposed to COVID-19, they must stay with you and also self-isolate for 14 days.
- Parenting exchanges should not take place when a parent or child is self-isolating, and should only resume once the isolation period is over, and the parent or child who was in self-isolation is feeling better, and no longer has a fever.
- If you are [caring for someone with COVID19](#) or are [pregnant or caring for a new baby](#) at home and have COVID19, ensure that you are taking measures to prevent spreading the virus.

### **For more information about COVID-19**

For more information, visit our website at [www.toronto.ca/COVID19](http://www.toronto.ca/COVID19) or call us at 416-338-7600.

### **For more information about co-parenting during COVID-19**

- [Superior Court of Justice](#)
- [Steps to Justice](#)
- [Covid-19 and Ontario Family Law – New Challenges New Solutions](#)
- [COVID-19 and how to Navigate Parenting Schedules in the Crisis.](#)
- [Co-Parenting in the Age of a Pandemic: How Do Social Distancing Rules Affect Existing Parenting Arrangements?](#)

### **For more legal information or support**

- [Legal Aid Ontario](#): 1-800-668-8258
- [Law Society of Ontario](#): 1-855-947-5255