

FAMILY COURT COUNSELLING SERVICES



The Asia Foundation



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Supported by the Fiji Young Lawyers Association

IF YOU NEED HELP:

Please contact: • Family Court Counseling Service, Suva Tel: 3211811, Lautoka Tel: 6660016, Labasa Tel: 8811772 • Legal Aid Commission, Suva Tel: 3311195 Private Mail Bag, Suva, Lautoka Tel: 6650011 Private Mail Bag, Lautoka, Labasa Tel: 8815118 P.O.Box 1241 • Department of Social Welfare (Suva) Tel: 3315585 • Fiji Law Society Secretary (Suva) Tel: 3315690

FAMILY COURT LOCATIONS

There are specialist Family Courts in Suva, Lautoka and Labasa, but every Court across the Fiji Islands can hear your Family Court matters.

Central/Eastern Division • **Suva** - Government Buildings, Telephone: 3211341, GPO Box 2215 Government Buildings, Suva. • **Navua** - Navua Court: The court operates on ad hoc basis. Contact Suva Family Court. • **Nasinu** - Nasinu Magistrate's Court, Telephone: 3390466, PO Box 7748, Nasinu. • **Nausori** - Nausori Magistrate's Court, Telephone: 3400006, PO Box 227, Nausori. • **Vunidawa** - Vunidawa Court - Ad hoc basis only, contact Nausori Magistrate's Court. • **Korovou** - Tailivu Court House, Telephone: 3430060, PO Box 102, Tailivu. • **Levuka** - Levuka Magistrate's Court, Telephone: 3440355, PO Box 66, Levuka.

Western Division • **Lautoka** - Lautoka Magistrate's Court - Telephone: 6660016, PO Box 103, Lautoka. • **Lautoka High Court** - Telephone: 6660877, PO Box 388, Lautoka. • **Sigatoka** - Sigatoka Magistrate's Court, Telephone: 6500067, PO Box 87, Sigatoka. • **Nadi** - Nadi Magistrate's Court, Telephone: 6701322, PO Box 1275, Nadi. • **Ba** - Ba Magistrates Court, Telephone: 6674096, PO Box 430, Ba. • **Tavua** - Tavua Magistrate's Court - Telephone: 6680023, PO Box 516, Tavua. • **Rakiraki** - Rakiraki Magistrate's Court, Rakiraki, Telephone: 694348.

Northern Division • **Labasa** - Labasa Magistrate's Court, Telephone: 8811772, PO Box 56, Labasa. • **Nabouwalu** - Nabouwalu Magistrate's Court - contact Nabouwalu Police Station: 8836022. • **Savusavu** - Savusavu Court, Telephone: 8850272, PO Box 160, Savusavu. • **Taveuni** - Taveuni Magistrate's Court, Telephone: 8880081, PO Box 31, Taveuni.



FAMILY COURT COUNSELLING SERVICES

Counselling is when you talk about your family issues with a person who is trained to help you. The counsellor will work with you, and possibly also your husband/wife, to come up with ways to make things better for your family.

The Court Counselling Service is staffed by trained counsellors with special skills in working with families who are facing separation, divorce and issues to do with their children.

Before filing an application in the Court, you may seek counselling from the Court Counselling service. Your discussions with Court Counsellors are **CONFIDENTIAL**. This means that the information you give to Court Counsellors can not be used in Court or told to anyone else.

There are several organisations also offering counselling services in the community.

Ask your nearest Court Registry for information.

WHEN CAN I SEE A COURT COUNSELLOR?

You can make an appointment to see a Court Counsellor at any time, if you want to. When your case is before the Court, the Court may order you to see a Court Counsellor.

DO I HAVE TO SEE A COURT COUNSELLOR?

This all depends on how your case is going. Usually, the Court will order you and your husband or wife to see a Counsellor. This process is to help you and your husband or wife work through any difficult areas and to also help the Court.

DO I HAVE TO PAY TO SEE A COURT COUNSELLOR?

No. This service is FREE.

HOW CAN THE FAMILY COURT COUNSELLING SERVICE HELP ME?

You can see a Family Court Counsellor about your children, parenting issues and the ending of your marriage.

A counsellor of the Family Court Counselling Service can help you work out what is in the best interests of your children and what arrangements need to be made for the children.

You can see a counsellor on your own, or you and your husband, wife or partner may wish to discuss these things together with a counsellor. Counselling may help you become clear about your issues. You will also have a better idea of the way the Court will look at your problems.

COUNSELLING SERVICES DURING DIVORCE PROCEEDINGS

There are many advantages to seeking counselling when your marriage is ending, and they include:

- You can greatly reduce the financial costs and the emotional pain of fighting a court case
- You may be able to make your own decisions with help
- Your continuing relationship as parents is likely to work better
- You are able to move forward and make a new life for yourself
- You may improve communication with your former husband, wife or partner and be able to solve problems in the future through discussion and negotiation.

COUNSELLING SERVICES DURING CUSTODY (CONTACT & RESIDENCE) DISCUSSIONS

Counselling sessions in children's matters can help you to:

- Identify any possible risks of violence or abuse towards your children and your family
- Look at each person's needs and interests
- Assist in finding the most suitable solution, taking into account the age of your children and your individual circumstances
- Assist in developing agreements about children e.g. parenting plan

Sometimes, it will take more than one session with the Counsellor to work through your issues BUT it is important to remember that counselling allows you and your husband or wife to talk in a safe environment. You need not fear and you can say what is on your mind to the Counsellor.