

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.

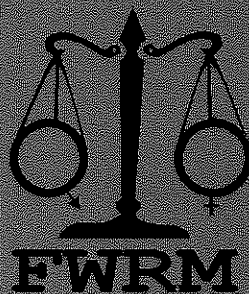
Central/Eastern Division • Suva - Government Buildings, Telephone: 3211341, GPO Box 2215 Government Buildings, Suva. • **Navua** - Navua Court. The court operates on ad hoc basis. Contact Suva Family Court. • **Nasinu** - Nasinu Magistrate's Court, Telephone: 3390466, PO Box 7748, Nasinu. • **Nausori**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



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

HOW THE FAMILY COURT WORKS



HOW YOUR PROPERTY & CHILDREN'S MATTERS MAY PROGRESS THROUGH THE FAMILY COURT

There are five steps by which your case may progress through the Family Court.

1. CASE ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE (CAC) The Case Assessment Conference is a meeting between you, your partner (husband/wife), your lawyers (if you are represented) and the Court officers to look at your case. This is an opportunity for you to reach an agreement on the main issues.

The next step after the CAC is EITHER a **Conciliation Conference** OR a **Procedural Hearing**.

2. CONCILIATION CONFERENCE A Conciliation Conference is for you to identify the issues that you CANNOT agree on and discuss whether you can reach an agreement on those issues. The Conciliation Conference is normally set up by the Registrar of the Family Court. However, if you and your partner (husband/wife) disagree about matters involving children, a joint conference may be set up by the Registrar and the Court Counsellor. If you settle your issues during the Conciliation Conference, you do not need to go to trial (court case).

You have reached agreement, what is the next step?

If you and your husband/wife have reached an agreement on all issues, your lawyer (if you're represented), or the Registrar will prepare Terms of Settlement for you and your husband/wife to sign. The Terms of Settlement is a document that lists the things that you both have agreed on. The Court will check the Terms of Settlement and if it is satisfied, will make **Consent Orders**.

What happens if you do not reach agreement?

If you are unable to reach agreement, the Registrar may:

- Stop the Conference and make orders or give directions on the next steps to take
- List the matter for further Procedural Hearing or
- List the matter for a Pre-Trial Conference before the Magistrate

IMPORTANT: It is important that you honestly provide ALL facts and documents relevant to your application. If you don't, it will delay your settlement and increase costs.

3. PROCEDURAL HEARING

The Procedural hearing is held after the CAC and is conducted by the Registrar. In a Procedural Hearing, the Registrar will give orders or make directions setting out the next steps and what must be done to move your case forward. At this stage, you should negotiate with your husband/wife to settle the issues in dispute. If the issues are resolved, the Registrar or your lawyers (if you're represented) will draw up the agreement you have reached. This agreement will be sent to Court for review before the Consent Orders are filed in Court.

What if you do not reach an agreement?

The Registrar will assist you in looking at other choices to solve the issues you and your husband/wife disagree on and will give you directions on what other choices you have or any papers you need to file in Court to allow your case to be heard by the Magistrate.

4. PRE-TRIAL CONFERENCE

A Pre-Trial Conference is held to determine whether your matter is ready for trial in Court. This conference is set up by the Registrar and it involves all parties and their lawyers, if you are represented. The Registrar will give directions on the documents you need to bring, and will draw up a draft trial plan to determine how much time the Court should give to your case, before your case is listed for trial.

REMEMBER, you can settle your case anytime before trial. The Pre-Trial Conference offers a good opportunity for you to try and settle your case.

5. THE TRIAL

The Trial is held in a Court before a Family Court Magistrate. The Magistrate will hear all your arguments and those of your witnesses and will make a decision and make orders to finalise your case.