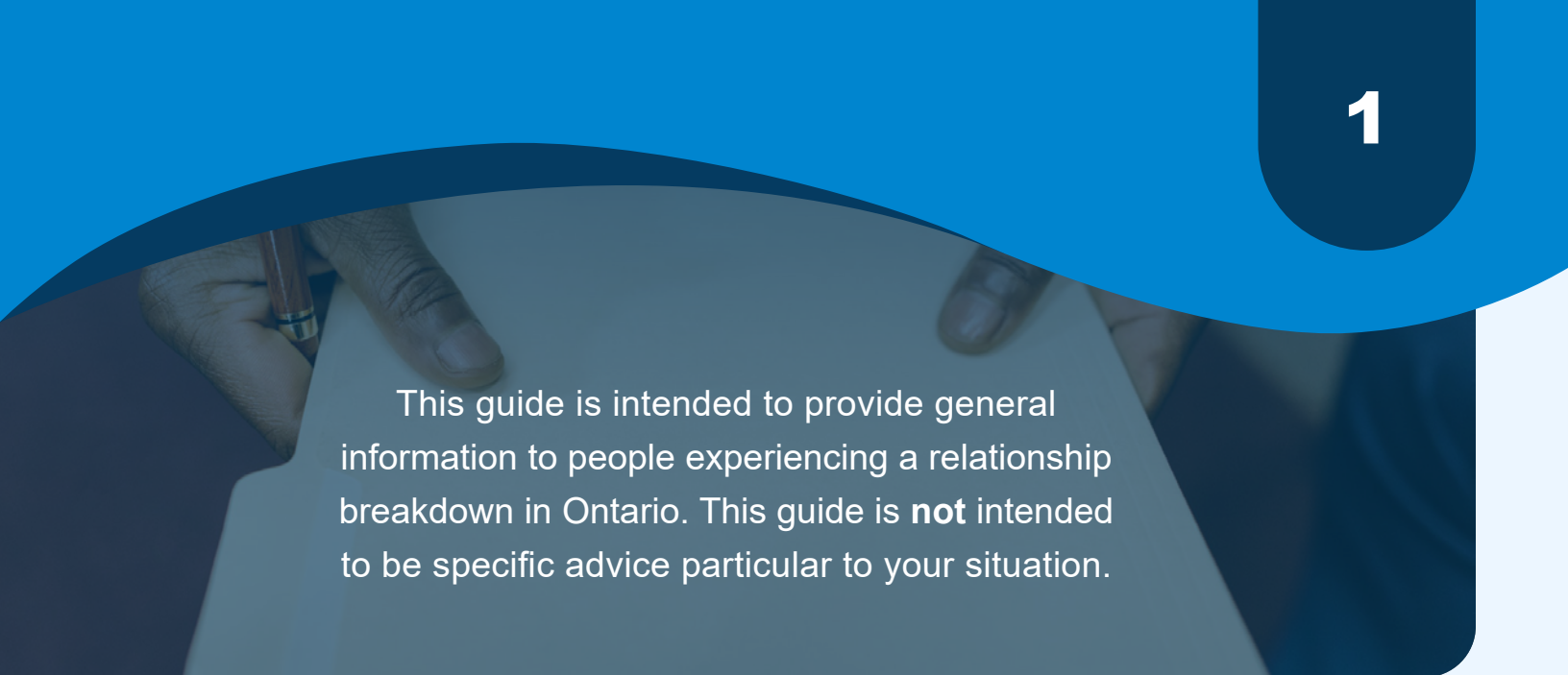


# Divorce Resource Guide

Quick guide on making your divorce as smooth as possible.



This guide is intended to provide general information to people experiencing a relationship breakdown in Ontario. This guide is **not** intended to be specific advice particular to your situation.

Upon separation, certain rights and responsibilities arise for both married and unmarried couples, regardless of orientation.

If you are married, the only way to legally end your marriage is to apply for a divorce through the court system. Canada is a 'no fault' divorce jurisdiction. That means that once you have been separated for a year, you are entitled to a divorce. You can apply for a divorce any time after you have separated but a court will not grant a divorce until you have been separated for a year. The other issues that arise like spousal support, child support, custody access, or equalization of net family property, are what we call, corollary relief.

A settlement is often contained in a document called a Separation Agreement. The name can be misleading because it enshrines the agreement reached after separation, but it does not establish separation.

## General Checklist:

Have you separated?

If yes, indicate the date of separation:

Gather financial disclosure including:

Last three years tax returns and notices of assessment.

Last three pay stubs or a letter from your employer setting out your current income.

Last three financial statements and/or corporate tax returns for any incorporated or unincorporated business.

Proof of extra expenses for children (receipts for braces/tutoring/tuition etc.)

### Statement of all debts at the date of separation such as:

Mortgage statement

Line of credit statement

Credit card statements

Promissory notes

### Statement of all assets at the date of separation such as:

Jewellery/content/art appraisals

Statement of vehicle value

Investment accounts

Bank accounts

Shareholdings

Statements of all assets or debts owned on the date of marriage.

Tracing of all inherited funds (copies of Will, cheque, cover letter etc) and where those funds are at the date of separation.

## Financial Divorce Checklist:

Close joint credit accounts.

Remove your spouse's name from bank accounts, credit cards, and employer records.

Change your status and relevant information (like marital status and address) on tax records, post office records, professional licenses, property titles, utility bills, and health insurance.

Open a new bank account and credit card account in your name.

Disinherit your spouse from your will, trust, medical directive, living will, and power of attorney.

Change beneficiaries on your pension, RRSPs, TFSAs and life insurance policies.

Use a personal finance app to track child support, spousal support, medical and other expenses.

Establish sound credit in your name if you have not done so.

## Other things to consider

Update your resume/cv

Undergo a vocational assessment

Upgrade your training or education