



Are the Children's Aid Societies (CAS) in Ontario still operating during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes, the CAS are still providing core services including conducting child protection investigations.

This also means that if you think a child has been harmed or is at risk of likely harm, then you still have a legal duty to call the CAS and let them know.

For up-to-date legal resources during the COVID-19 pandemic please visit the website linked through the QR code above.

Summary legal advice is available over the phone. To find out if you can get free legal advice in family law, call Legal Aid Ontario (toll-free):
1-800-668-8258
*interpreters are available

What is a Children's Aid Society (CAS)?

An organization that has a legal responsibility under Ontario's *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* to provide child protection services in Ontario.

What is a child protection investigation?

A formal process where a CAS worker determines if a child needs protection. They are looking to see if a child has been harmed, or is at risk of likely harm. The CAS worker may visit your house and talk to you and your family.

What types of harm or risk are the CAS looking for?

Examples of different types include: physical, sexual, and emotional. The CAS looks to see if a child has been harmed or is at likely risk because of their caregiver's action or lack of action.

For example, if a parent is using physical discipline on a child, or if a child is not being supervised adequately.

You can find out more information at www.StepsToJustice.ca or www.OneFamilyLaw.ca

**I can't buy food or pay rent
because of COVID-19.**

**I'm worried that the Children's
Aid Society (CAS) may visit me
and my children. What can I do?**

If a child doesn't have basic needs met—like food, shelter, and a safe environment—then the CAS may think the child has been harmed, or is at risk of harm. If a child has been harmed or is at risk, they might start a protection investigation, even in a pandemic.

**You can get support to make sure
that your child's basic needs are met
(see the back of this card).**



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I need help with housing or evictions:

Contact the Hamilton Community Legal Clinic for free legal advice at **905-527-4572**.

I need help accessing food or community support near me:

You can call **2-1-1** to find out which services can support you. It's good to know that sharing information about a child who has been harmed or is at risk is **NOT confidential**.

I need free legal advice about my family situation:

Contact Legal Aid Ontario toll-free at 1-800-668-8258 between 8 am and 5 pm (EST). Interpreters are available.

You will need to provide information about your legal and financial situation to find out if you are eligible. Try to be prepared with documents that show your income, like pay stubs, employment assistance statements, or social insurance stubs, but don't delay in making this application if you don't have these documents handy.