



Russell Alexander Collaborative Family Lawyers
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MEDIA ADVISORY

**Panel of Ontario Family Lawyers to Hold Virtual Press
Conference Calling for Courts to Continue Remote Hearings**
Lawyers say so-called 'Zoom divorces' save clients' time and money and should continue

WHAT: A panel of veteran Ontario family lawyers will host a virtual press conference to discuss the recent Notice to the Profession from the Ontario Superior Court of Justice ordering the return to in-person court attendance. The thrust of these pronouncements is that many court hearings will revert to in person from virtual, which will mean less access to justice and higher legal costs for many clients.

The panel recently [started a petition that has received over 900 family lawyer signatures](#) thus far in attempt to reverse the decision.

The media is invited to attend the press conference to learn more about what this means for family lawyers in Ontario and those seeking divorce. There will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Registration is required to attend via Zoom by completing the sign-up form below.

WHERE: On Zoom

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_zw6hCGIIT36zQ-7vGpAPBQ

WHEN: Tuesday, May 10, 10 a.m. ET

WHO: The Ad Hoc Committee for the Preservation of Access to Justice consists of:

- **Russell Alexander**-Founder and Senior Partner at Russell Alexander Collaborative Family Lawyers, practicing for 24 years (Called to the Ontario Bar in 1998)
- **Gene C. Colman**-Founder of Gene C. Colman Family Law Centre, practicing for 43years (Called to the Ontario Bar in 1979)
- **Natalie Derbyshire**-Partner at Stanchieri Family Law Professional Corporation, practicing for 16 years (Called to the Ontario Bar in 2006)
- **Brian Galbraith**-Owner and Founder of Galbraith Family Law Professional Corporation, practicing for 32 years (since 1990)
- **Lisa Gelman**-Founder of Gelman and Associates, practicing for 27 years (Called to the Ontario Bar in 1995)
- **Gary Joseph**-Managing Partner and Chair at MacDonald & Partners LLP, practicing for 44 years (Called to the Ontario Bar in 1978)
- **Karen Kotansky**-Managing Partner at Gelman and Associates, practicing for 28 years (Called to the Ontario Bar in 1994)

- **Nafisa Nazarali**-Managing Associate Lawyer at Russell Alexander Collaborative Family Lawyers, practicing for 12 years (Called to the Ontario Bar in 2010)
- **Ram Shankar**-Founder of Shankar Law Office, practicing for 28 years (Called to the Bar in India in 1994 (Called to the Ontario Bar in 2014)

BACKGROUND INFO: Veteran Ontario family lawyer, Russell Alexander, says virtual family court hearings, which gained huge popularity during the coronavirus pandemic, have saved clients' time and money, allowing them to hire a wider range of lawyers and reducing the chances of interpersonal conflicts at the courthouse. By forcing lawyers and their clients to return to in-person hearings, access to justice will suffer.

He added that virtual hearings were a dramatic improvement for many clients, who no longer had to take a day off work, drive to the courthouse, go through security, and wait for hours just to have a routine hearing. They were cheaper, since lawyers had fewer hours to bill, and in cases involving spousal abuse, less stressful for clients who did not have to see their abuser in person.

“As few as one in 10 divorces are resolved at the first hearing, so they could be easily handled remotely,” Alexander said. “And because other pretrial meetings are mostly going through formalities, it doesn't make sense to require clients to take a day off work and drive to the courthouse just to sit in a courtroom.

ABOUT RUSSELL ALEXANDER COLLABORATIVE FAMILY LAWYERS:

Russell Alexander Collaborative Family Lawyers is committed to practicing exclusively in family law in Ontario dealing with all aspects, including separation and divorce, child custody and access, spousal support, child support, and division of family property. A team of lawyers provide guidance from start to finish, helping clients identify and understand the legal issues as well as the options and opportunities available through the transition. The firm has offices in Lindsay, Concord, Whitby, Oshawa, Markham, Peterborough and Toronto, Ontario.

For more information, visit <https://www.russellalexander.com>