

DIVORCEmate News & Views

For Users of DIVORCEmate Software

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www.divorcemate.com

Information - call (416) 718-3461 Extension 446

“DIVORCEmate Office 2001” Transition Plan Announced Ontario French Family Law Forms Now Available

For the past 12 years, our DIVORCEmate News & Views newsletter has been an important source of information for our 5,000+ software users. Our newsletter has something for everyone - productivity hints, new product and seminar announcements, Family Law and technology information, humour and more. Please ensure that it is circulated to all family law professional staff including secretaries, law clerks, justices, judges, mediators, professors, accountants and lawyers.

A Glimpse of DIVORCEmate Office 2001

DIVORCEmate Software Inc. is announcing today that it will **beta-test** a limited number of new Ontario Family Law Forms which will use the latest versions of **Word** and **WordPerfect**.

While DIVORCEmate is exploring other possible solutions, the beta-testing of “word-processing based” software will herald a new era and direction.

“We think that we can give our users greater flexibility, ease-of-use, and superior word-processing by harnessing the power of a word-processor.” said Mark Harris, “In the near future, we will be using a word-processor for all text-intensive forms. This approach is what our customers told us they wanted!”

“Our long-term goal is the introduction of “DIVORCEmate Office 2001” - a fully-integrated software package for use in any Canadian family law office. This new software will marry the power and convenience of the Web, to the everyday business, organizational and software needs of our customers and their clients.”

5 Steps to “DIVORCEmate Office 2001”

Step 1: Beginning July 1st 2000, we will provide to a limited number of SUPREME Service, Support and Discount Plan subscribers, a **FREE** “beta” copy of:

- the current Form 14A Affidavit (General) and Form 25 Order (General) for Word or WordPerfect; *and*
- the new 13 page Toronto Family Law Case Conference Brief for Word or WordPerfect.

Step 2 (Sept-Dec 2000): using what we have learned from our beta-testers over the summer, we will offer for sale the balance of the new Family Law Court Forms for the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, Family Court and the Ontario Court of Justice (including **child protection, adoption, enforcement**, etc.) in both Word/WordPerfect formats.

NOTE: You will be able to easily merge information from your *existing* DIVORCEmate Lotus 123 “Client Merge Screen” into these two new word-processing based Family Law Court Forms.

Step 3 (Jan-Mar 2001): we will offer for sale an upgrade to our existing **DIVORCEmate Lotus 123 Forms+** users. This upgrade will move all DIVORCEmate Software Forms+ away from a spreadsheet-only environment and into an “internet-ready, 32 bit environment”.

Step 4 (Apr-Jun 2001): we will offer for sale an upgrade to our existing **DIVORCEmate Lotus 123 and VB32 Tools** users. This update will move all DIVORCEmate Software Tools into an “internet-ready, 32 bit environment”.

Step 5 (Sep-Dec 2001): we will announce the availability of the completed “**DIVORCEmate Office 2001**”. Family law professionals and their support staff across Canada will find DIVORCEmate Office 2001 has something for everyone – court forms, tools, templates, reminders, checklists, communications, e-tools, etc.

Our commitment to the DIVORCEmate Office 2001 transition will be supplemented by superb service and support and timely communications with each of our customers across Canada. As well, we will keep the upgrade costs as low as possible!

Your Law Firm Action Plan: Over the next 12 months, we strongly suggest that you position your law firm’s technology as follows:

1. upgrade your hardware & operating system software (minimum Pent III, 64MB, Windows 98/2000, hi-speed modem, internet and e-mail access).
2. upgrade to either Microsoft Office 2000 (*our choice!*), *or* Corel Office 2000;
3. learn to use e-mail and the Internet;
4. obtain a **FREE** copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader. It is available from the www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html website and takes about 10 minutes to download. It will enable you to read and print important web files in .PDF format;
5. send us the e-mail address of your firm’s designated DIVORCEmate contact person;
6. **Immediate To-Do:** Ontario users should request **FREE** software (see Step 1), if they are current SUPREME subscribers.

French Translation of Ontario Family Law Court Forms+ Now Available

DIVORCEmate Software Inc., in conjunction with the AJEFO (The French Speaking Juristes' Association), is pleased to announce the availability of "French" Family Law Court Forms+ software.

We have taken our current Family Law Court Forms+ software and translated the English into French. And although the software is still in English, the forms show and print in French! It is **an ideal solution for members** of the Ontario Family Bar who need French forms!

This French Translation version was made possible by the efforts of **Nathalie Boutet**, with the translation being done by **Celine Allard** of Ottawa and her secretary, **Ginette Guenard**. Thanks to all for your commitment.

"Les nouvelles formules en droit de la famille sont maintenant disponibles en français!

Procurez-vous les dès maintenant à prix réduit.
Tout bon praticien sait que les produits de

Divorcemate sont essentiels en anglais. Ils le son encore plus en français!" - Nathalie Boutet

The cost of the French Family Law Court Forms+ Upgrade is \$399.50, less a 10% AJEFO membership discount and a SUPREME 15% discount, if applicable.

McLaughlin v. McLaughlin, (1999) 44 RFL, 4th, 176, (B.C. C.A.), Van CA023706

People often ask us, "Why do we need software to calculate a proper Child Support Guideline amount?", well here is a very good reason! If you don't give the Judge all of the necessary information, how can you expect him/her to order child support according to the CSG?

I read in a BC Court of Appeal case, *McLaughlin v. McLaughlin*, something that disturbed me. "**He (the chambers judge) was not advised of, or asked to consider, any tax consequences relating to these expenses**".

But, I thought "the court must take into account any subsidies, benefits or income tax deductions or credits relating to the expense..." (CSG 7(3)).

It appears that this "oversight" may have resulted in an amount of special expenses that was not according to the Child Support Guidelines, because indeed **there were significant "subsidies, benefits or income tax deductions or credits"**! If the CSG legislation has a chance to work, the family law community must embrace the software tools that give them the ability to calculate these CSG amounts properly.

A Report on the Canadian eBusiness Opportunity



eBusiness (e-biz'nis) *n.1.* the use of Internet technologies to bring together customers, business partners, suppliers and employees.

Recently, I had the opportunity to hear **Mr. David Pecaut, VP Boston Consulting Group**, speak on the "Canadian eBusiness opportunity". What David had to say should be of keen interest to all Canadian family law professionals.

Although there is a lot of unnecessary "noise and smoke" around the eBusiness opportunity, David feels that over the next 5 years, the eBusiness revolution will take over! And make no mistake, eBusiness is a "revolution" which will cause significant fundamental changes to business as we know it!

While David did not specifically address lawyers or software companies... **you can be sure that the landscape is changing quickly for all of us.**

As an example, David used Columbia's "Record of the Month Club" which before the eBusiness was an established, highly profitable and long-time successful business selling records and CDs.... To-day, this business is dead, gone, buried... in one year!

By 2003, business to business eCommerce will account for 25% of all business... including law.

How does eBusiness work? Simply, like a "stock exchange" or "auction". Customers request products/services; businesses bid on supplying these products/services; and customers decide based on needs and pricing. In fact, it's out there right now for the purchasing of legal services www.elawforum.com.

What is feeding this eBusiness revolution? The doubling of computer power every 18 months for the same \$, the lowering of world-wide telecommunication costs and the enormous increase in knowledgeable internet users.

DIVORCEmate is looking at opportunities beyond our wildest "visions", and, over the next few years, we'll be taking our customers with us into the eCommerce world.

2000 GUIDELINE Tools Shipped

We have now shipped our **2000 Update to the GUIDELINE Tools, PENSIONmate and LIFEmate** in all versions for all provinces. All users should have received and installed their 2000 update.

IMPORTANT: Please be aware that if you refuse this 2000 update, you will be using outdated software. The use of outdated software is unprofessional as your calculations may not be correct for your client's

particular situation. We recommend that you keep your GUIDeline Tools current or cease using them!

Spousal Support Database

We have a special surprise for users of our B.C. and Ontario 2000 SUPPORTmate Maintenance Planner – we've added a Spousal Support Database Fax-Back Input Form as an additional coloured tab; you may use this form whenever you feel the need to research recent Canadian spousal support cases.

This “pay-as-you-play” **research service** has been used by 100's of Canadian judges and lawyers to quickly resolve, settle or litigate difficult spousal support issues.

Once in your GUIDeline Tools Client File, click on the blue “Spousal Supt DB” tab; complete your information, print and fax. Please visit their website at www.spousalsupport.com to learn more.

The cost of a spousal support case and information search is currently \$275 + GST.

The Spousal Support Database Corporation and DIVORCEmate Software Inc. are separate and independent companies. All questions regarding this service should be directed to John Syrtash (416) 496-8880, or 1-800-776-2701.

Ontario's Form 13A refused by Feds

Six weeks ago, we advised all our DIVORCEmate “e-mail news” users that Ontario's **Form 13A Direction to Department of National Revenue – Taxation** is not being honoured by National Revenue. The Ministry is aware of the problem and is working on new wording which will satisfy the feds. In the mean time, clients should request their own returns directly from the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

To-do: If you would like to subscribe to our “e-mail news” service and receive HOT and TOPICAL Family Law News and Information, send us your e-mail address: mharris@divorcemate.com.

Did You Know That ...

☑ Make sure that you read a superb article written by **Vivian Alterman**, CA, CBV of Cole & Partners, Toronto, Ontario, “Guidance for Determining Income Under the Federal Child Support Guidelines”. It is available from the Federal Child Support Guideline Team Reference Manual.

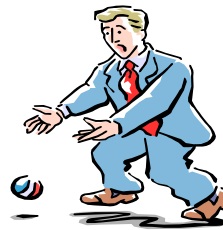
☑ **John Bacon**, a family law lawyer in Mississauga and long-time DIVORCEmate user, was contacted by a new client on the Web. The client specifically contacted John because his website mentioned that he was using our SUPPORTmate Maintenance Planner software!

☑ There is a second edition of the **The Nathans, Siegal Guide to Family Law Courts in Toronto, Jan 2000**. The guide contains valuable information on the who, what, where, when, why and tips/tricks of dealing in the Family Law Courts! It is available by return e-mail request to mharris@divorcemate.com.

☑ As of April 19th 2000 Ontario's **new court names** must be used: *Ontario* Superior Court of Justice, Family Court, *Ontario* Superior Court of Justice, and *Ontario* Court of Justice. We believe that the stylized “*Ontario*” in italics maybe be optional. However, one thing is for sure, the clerks will no longer accept any forms using the outdated “General Division” and “Provincial Division” names.

☑ We have a few evaluation copies of the April issue of **Canadian Lawyer** magazine; this is the Canadian legal software issue complete with vendor contacts. E-mail if you would like a copy.

☑ We have sent a donation to **Gilda's Club Toronto** - a support organization which will soon provide a place where people with cancer and their families and friends join with others to build social and emotional support as a supplement to medical care. Thank you to all who responded to our last user survey.



☑ The LSUC/CBAO has rescinded their enhanced CD “**SATISFACTION GUARANTEED OR MONEY REFUNDED**”; they are now charging a new \$25 administrative fee ... Hmmm, I wonder why? *Too many returns?!*

☑ Plan on attending the **2000 National Family Law Program**, July 10 – 13, 2000 in St. John's, Nfld. Please contact Ms. Heather Walker at (705) 374-4083, h.walker.n.f.l.p@sympatico.ca. DIVORCEmate will be there with free software and prizes!

CSG Calculation Contest – Win a Cool Shirt

Recently, we sent DIVORCEmate logoed shirts to a number of our DIVORCEmate users who *tried* to answer our Guideline question in our last newsletter.

I stumped them all! Our set of facts produced an income tax windfall to the Father because of the Special Expense income tax savings generated for the Mother. This windfall resulted in the Father paying less than the Table amount of child support. This answer was confirmed by a Judge of the *Ontario* Superior Court of Justice.

DIVORCEmate Finds Someone Special!

We would also like to introduce a new member of our DIVORCEmate staff, **Ms. Randie Cartman**. Randie is a graduate of York University; she has excellent technical skills in MS Word, Corel WordPerfect, MS Access, MS Visual Basic, MS Excel. Randie possesses endless patience and has a cool and calming manner. Randie's extension number is 552, please call her with your technical support questions... and let's give Simon a well-deserved rest! Simon will be moving on to our "DIVORCEmate Office 2001" project!

DIVORCEmate New Product Announcements

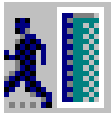
- ☐ Ontario – *NEW* French Family Court Forms+, available now, starting at \$399.50 less discounts.
- ☐ Ontario - *NEW* Toronto Case Conference Brief, available July 1st 2000, *FREE* to first 25 SUPREME subscribers; e-mail or fax only, please specify Word 97/2000 or WordPerfect 9.
- ☐ Ontario - Form 14A Affidavit (General), Form 25 Order (General), complimentary option to our existing New Family Law Court Forms+, available July 1st 2000, *FREE* to SUPREME subscribers; e-mail or fax only, please specify Word 97/2000 or WordPerfect 9.
- ☐ All Provinces, GUIDELINE Tools 2000 Update, Lotus 123 and VB32 shipped to all users in good standing.
- ☐ All Provinces, PENSIONmate and LIFEmate 2000 Update, Lotus 123 and VB32 shipped to all users in good standing.

Please use the enclosed order form and return by fax to 416 718-3450, or e-mail your order information to ssoil@divorcemate.com and include your firm name.

Simon Says...

Q. What is the best method for exiting DIVORCEmate?

A. To exit DIVORCEmate: click the "Exit DIVORCEmate" button on the Opening Help Menu; or click File, then Exit from pull-down menu; or the "Exit" Icon on the top Icon Bar →



Q. I want to eliminate Part 7 (Children's Budget) in the Ontario Form 13 Financial Statement, how do I change the "x" in the appropriate box?

A. You may choose the appropriate Parts by clicking the long grey button in #2 on page 1. The button states "You may click this button to change the selected 'Parts' for this Financial Statement". Try it!

New Family Law Court Forms+ Amendment

DIVORCEmate Ontario Family Law Court Forms+ Users, please make this minor change when using Page 1A of the Reply (Form 10A), #2 and #3 refer to "claims made by the *Applicant*", the word "Applicant" should be changed to "Respondent".

Put your cursor on the word "by", press F2 & backspace out "Applicant" and input "Respondent". Thanks to **Kerri at Willoughby, MacLeod and Gene Colman**.

A Timely Memo From an Old Friend



Ontario Court of Justice Acceptance of Our Computer Generated Forms

It seems that some of the courts around Ontario still do not realize that there are **two sets of "acceptable" new Family Law Court Forms**. Although there is only one set of Forms under the New Family Law Rules, the Ontario Court of Justice has prepared a "modified" set of court forms to be given out to unrepresented litigants. These "modified" forms have removed references to "divorce" and "net family property".

As a result of seeing these "modified" forms, a few courts are refusing our "unmodified" forms. If you are running into this problem at your courthouse, please advise the court that Courts Administration has okayed both sets of forms according to this 11/19/99 e-mail:

"RE: OCJ Forms under the new Family Law Rules

Further to our earlier e-mail exchange, I am advised by Courts Administration that both modified and unmodified forms are now being accepted throughout the Province. I trust that this will resolve the problem that you identified.

Brian W. Lennox"

Again, we wish to thank the Chief Judge, **The Hon. Mr. Justice Brian Lennox** and the staff of Courts Administration for their timely response to a potentially confusing situation.