

DIVORCEmate News & Views

For Users of DIVORCEmate Software

Issue Number 39 – January 2001

www.divorcemate.com

Information - call (416) 718-3461 Ext. 446

DIVORCEmate Releases Word Processing Forms! Ontario to Introduce “Amended” Family Law Forms!

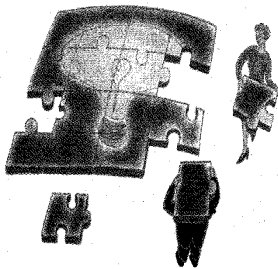
For the past 13 years, our DIVORCEmate News & Views newsletter has been an important source of information for our 5,000+ software users. Our newsletter has something for everyone - productivity hints, new product and seminar announcements, Family Law and technology information, humour and more. Please ensure that it is circulated to all family law professional staff including secretaries, law clerks, justices, judges, mediators, professors, accountants and lawyers.

DIVORCEmate Releases Ontario “Court Forms+” for MS WORD

With the introduction of DIVORCEmate’s “word processing based” family law court forms, DIVORCEmate has taken a bold step in a new direction – away from “spread sheet” based software into “word processing” based programs with a DIVORCEmate user interface.

This new direction benefits both our users and ourselves. Our users get the easy-to-use word processing based forms software that they’ve always wanted; we get more creative control in a 32-bit environment, where our programs are ready for future e-filing and internet use. **It is a unique win-win situation for all!**

Our first release of Court Forms+ is for Word 97/2000 only and includes Adoption, Child Protection, Enforcement and Miscellaneous court forms (including *Offer to Settle*, *Affidavit 14A*, *Order 25*, *Certificate of Clerk (Divorce) 36A*).



This release of Court Forms+ for Word (Release 1) is the “first piece of the puzzle”. It introduces you to our simple user interface which works in conjunction with your word processor.

This user interface gives you the ability to create a “**DIVORCEmate Merge Information File**” which holds your client’s information (applicant(s), respondent(s), child(ren) and other information). This information is then merged into the different court forms that are required for each individual court action. Once the court form is completed, you simply save it and continue to use the saved file like any other word processed document.

In the near future, we will release our original “Selected” family law court forms (Release 2) for both Word 97/2000 and WordPerfect 8/9.

As many of you are already aware, there are amendments coming to the new Family Law Rules and

Forms (see “Province Considering “New and Improved” Family Law Forms). These amendments could delay this 2nd release of our word processing based Court Forms+.

Whatever happens, you can be assured that DIVORCEmate Software will keep you informed and supplied with the best and most current forms available.

Features and Benefits of DIVORCEmate’s Word Processing Based Court Forms

- ☑ **Word Processor based:** Uses only your existing MS Word 97/2000; *no need for HotDocs!*
- ☑ **Simple, straight-forward, “Merge Information” screen:** instantly and automatically merges repetitive lawyer, client, and child(ren) information into all court forms; simply click *the client*, click *the desired form*, click *Merge!*

The screenshot shows the DIVORCEmate Forms+ application window. It is divided into three steps:

- Step 1: Select Merge Information File**: A table lists merge files with columns for Merge File Name, Applicant v. Respondent, Other Lawyer, and Last Used. The table contains entries for 'Don Test', 'Seattle', 'temp', 'test', and 'Train'. Buttons for 'New', 'Edit', 'Delete', 'Browse', and 'Reset' are on the right.
- Step 2: Select Form To Be Merged**: A dropdown menu shows 'All Forms'. A search box contains '14a'. A list of available forms includes 'Confirmation (Form 3)', 'Form 6 Acknowledgement of Service', 'Form 8B Application (child protection and status review)', 'Form 8C Application (secure treatment - extension of secure treatment)', 'Form 8D Application (Adoption)', 'Form 14A Affidavit (General)', and 'Form 23A Summons to Witness outside Ontario'. An 'Open Blank Form' button is on the right.
- Step 3: Perform Merge**: A text box shows 'Create a new Form 14A for Don Test'. A 'Perform Merge' button is in the center, and 'Setup Options' and 'Close' buttons are on the right.

- ☑ **All word-processing features and benefits are available:** virtually nothing new to learn; use paragraph numbering or outlining; change fonts, bold, italics; ~~strikeout~~; double line spacing; use cut, copy, paste; input notes...even change the form!
- ☑ **Picks up merge information from Lotus 123 based DIVORCEmate:** uses your existing DIVORCEmate client information merge files.
- ☑ **Save your files anywhere you wish:** save your client’s completed forms in any directory you wish; keep a separate directory for each client.
- ☑ **All court forms are stable and user friendly:** forms input areas are expandable as required; tables do not move around; simply click and input, forms are designed to be consistent and stable.
- ☑ **Unlimited Respondents and/or Applicants:**

additional Respondents (or Applicants) are simply created and neatly appear in the Title of Proceedings.

- ☑ **Unlimited expansion:** each input area expands as required; one continuous form, in the proper order.
- ☑ **Text input font is your choice:** easily and globally change your text input font throughout each form.
- ☑ **Optional shaded input areas:** Optional shaded input areas for easier input and easier reading.
- ☑ **Professional-looking forms:** these new forms are better designed than original court forms under the Rules, with more space and bigger fonts.
- ☑ **E-mail ready:** e-mail court form file or Acrobat file.
- ☑ **Law Firm Database:** keeps lawyer, law firm and address information for immediate and/or future use over your network or locally.

Here is what one user said about our new Court Forms+ for Word:

*"I have just completed my first adoption forms using your new forms. **They are great!** I found them easy to use with the merge feature. The forms are legible and easy to read. I previously downloaded forms from the internet which used Wordperfect. My Corel Wordperfect 8 would lock up and if you were able to save a form, the next time you wanted to open it, it wouldn't. They were in a smaller font and hard to read. **Your forms look great when printed!** I ran into no problems completing them!"*

<u>Form Groups Available</u>	<u># of Forms</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Adoption	14 forms	\$139
Child Protection and Enforcement	14 forms	\$139
Miscellaneous (includes Offer to Settle, Affidavit 14A, Order 25, Certificate of Clerk (Divorce) 36A)	14 forms	\$139

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY PRICE 42 forms \$199 less applicable SUPREME discount + \$15 S&H + 15% GST/PST. **That's less than \$5 per form!**

Special Bonus Offer: Purchasers of Release 1 (all 42 forms) will receive a \$50 discount off of our future Release 2 "Selected" Family Court Forms+ for Word or WordPerfect.

Why the Delay for WordPerfect Users?

Our intention was to release both Word and WordPerfect programs at the same time. However, we found WordPerfect to be less than "perfect" when it came to developing excellent court forms templates.

The performance of our actual court forms templates in WordPerfect... ease-of-use, stability, consistency and WordPerfect's own technical support help was not up to our standards.

Couple these shortfalls with the significant Family Law court form changes planned for 2001 and we decided to delay our WordPerfect module until the new year.

We are committed to having a WordPerfect 8/9 version of our new Court Forms+ as soon as possible!

Province Considering "New and Improved" Family Law Forms

The Family Law Rules Committee and the AG's office are very busy working on **amendments to the new family law Rules and Forms**. The amendments include significant changes to the Case Conference, Settlement Conference and Trial Management Briefs; the Form 13 Financial Statement; Form 13A Direction to DNR; Adoption, Child Protection and CAS forms.

Also rumoured is the inclusion of "same sex couples" wording in the new forms.

Suggestions have been made that the forms will be ready by Spring of 2001, with implementation to follow.

Child Support Guideline Amendments Effective November 1st 2000

Justice Canada has quietly introduced a number of minor but significant amendments to the Federal Child Support Guideline Regulations.

Amendments include changes to Special Expenses 7.(1); Changes to circumstances for variation 14.; Pattern of Income 17.(1); Schedule II and Schedule III.

For an MS Word or HTML version of the updated CSG Regulations, please visit:

<http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/sup/grl/glp.html>

IMPORTANT: We have compiled a summary document of the changes available for e-mailing, please send your request to mharris@divorcemate.com.

DIVORCEmate and LPIC - A Partnership

As most of you already know, the **Lawyers' Professional Indemnity Company (LPIC)** has purchased a **20% interest in DIVORCEmate Software Inc.**

Our long-term plan is to develop an integrated, internet-ready, matrimonial law software package which will enable family law practitioners to run all aspects of their law practices from the PC desktop while taking advantage of technology initiatives including the province's Integrated Justice project.

"Working with LPIC enables us to combine our technological knowledge and our sincere desire to provide an excellent, new generation of DIVORCEmate products with the strategic management and advisory expertise of LPIC – all for the benefit of the family law bar," explained Mark Harris, president of DIVORCEmate.

"We are looking forward to working with our new partner, who recognizes the importance of technology in a

successful law practice. I appreciate LPIC's initiative and commitment to the future of family law in Canada."

The Future

(Feb 2001): begin shipping our all new and totally redesigned **2001 DIVORCEmate Tools Update**. This software will be a TOTALLY new product and will replace the old Lotus 123 based DIVORCEmate Tools (The DIVORCE-mate GUIDELINE Calculator, SUPPORTmate Maintenance Planner, SOLmate Standards of Living Test, VARYmate Variation Optimizer, PENSIONmate Pension Valuator and LIFE mate Life Insurance Estimator).

(April - June 2001): we will offer for sale a **NEW DIVORCEmate Court Forms+ for Word and WordPerfect** replacement for our existing Lotus 123 based Selected Ontario Family Court Forms+.

This means that by Summer 2001, all existing Lotus 123 based DIVORCEmate software will have been updated or upgraded to either Word 97/2000 or WordPerfect 8/9 based Court Forms+ software and, new generation, stand-alone DIVORCEmate Tools software.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO RECENT PURCHASERS: All recent purchasers of an original license of DIVORCEmate Tools or Forms software after October 1st 2000 will receive the equivalent 2001 updates or upgrades at no charge!

(2002): We will bring both our Court Forms+ and our GUIDELINE and other Tools into one integrated package, **"DIVORCEmate Forms+ and Tools Office"**.

Employment Opportunity

DIVORCEmate Software Inc. is currently looking for an educated, clear-speaking and clear-thinking professional with the following experience and skills:

- legal background with practical experience in the New Family Court (preferably a new lawyer, secretary or law clerk).
- must be a Corel WordPerfect 8/9 expert with proficiency in forms/template development.
- a willingness to learn MS Visual Basic, including advanced Visual Basic programming.

We offer:

- competitive salary and bonus possibilities, health and medical plan, flexible work schedule, a comfortable working environment in a central Toronto location.
- contract or full-time position.

If interested, please e-mail mharris@divorcemate.com.

Record Federal Tax Cut For 2001

Our completely new and redesigned GUIDELINE Tools for 2001 will also include a number of significant federal income tax changes including:

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
Low rate (income to \$30,754)	17%	16%

Middle rate (\$30,754 to \$61,509)	26% *	22%
New rate (\$61,509 to \$100,000)	29%	26%
Top rate (income \$100,000)	29%	29%
Deficit Surtax Reduction **	5%	0%

* the 26% middle rate was reduced to 24% on 7/1/00.

Other changes include:

- CPP contributions rise from \$1,330 to \$1,496, while EI contributions fall from \$936 to \$878.
- Four new tax brackets of 16, 22, 26 and 29 per cent
- Tax brackets, credits and benefits will rise by 2.5% to take inflation into account.
- Disability credit rises to \$6,000
- Full-time education tax credit to \$400 per month, part-time to \$120 per month
- Heating relief rebate to everyone eligible for the GST credit, \$250 families, \$125 individuals.
- Higher Canada Child Tax Benefits starting in July 2001.

Source: Department of Finance

Of course, the 2001 GUIDELINE Tools will also include the provinces' new model for income tax collection based on individual provincial taxes on income (TOI).

Did You Know That ...

The CBA – Ontario has dropped DIVORCEmate as the sponsor of the annual Institute's **"Excellence in Family Law"** award. It seems that the CBA-O sees us as a "competitor" and would no longer allow our sponsorship, although it was offered. Previous award winners have included The Hon. Mr. Justice George Walsh, Phil Epstein and James MacDonald.

Professor Jay McLeod states in a recent E-Carswell newsletter " ... I'm not sure how many people routinely read and apply Schedule III (*Adjustments to Income*). So long as you use your trusty DIVORCEmate software (*The DIVORCEmate GUIDELINE Calculator*) (or whatever you use) there's no problem because the program will do the entire Schedule III work for you. You just fill in the blanks as they come up. The problems (with Schedule III) begin when some people start to think for themselves."

DIVORCEmate was asked by the Department of Justice to suggest improvements to the often misused Household Standards of Living Test. We have submitted our research and final report, along with recommendations to make the SOL Test more accurate and a truly objective method of comparing the "standards of living" in two or more differing households.

DIVORCEmate New Product Announcements

- Ontario - **NEW** Court Forms+ for Word, Release 1 includes: Adoption 14 forms; Child Protection / Enforcement 14 forms Miscellaneous 14 forms (*includes Offer to Settle, Affidavit 14A, Order 25,*

Certificate of Clerk (Divorce) 36A). All 42 forms \$199, less SUPREME discount, if applicable.

- ☑ All provinces – **SUPREME Service Support and Discount Plan** – unlimited support calls, discounts on new software, updates and upgrades, free minor updates, replacement CD's, 1-800 number and more. From \$169 per year.

Please use the enclosed order form and return by fax to (416) 498-0059, or e-mail your order information to ssoil@divorcemate.com and include your firm name.

Simon Says...

Q. Sometimes when I try to save a client file I get a "The worksheet file has no reservation" and I am unable to save my work... what gives?

A. The "no reservation" message simply means that someone had this client file open when you opened it... your file is therefore "read only", signified by a "(RO)" just after the file name on the top line of your computer screen.

If you see this (RO) or you get the "no reservation" message, you have a number of choices: 1. ask the person who has the file open to close it (only one user of a client file at one time); 2. you may do a "Save as" and rename the client file, but remember that you will have two files for the same client; or 3. you can "get the reservation" as follows – click **Reset** from the top DIVORCEmate menu; click **reset 123 menu**; click **File, Protection, Get file reservation** and the (RO) message will disappear. You can now save the client file.

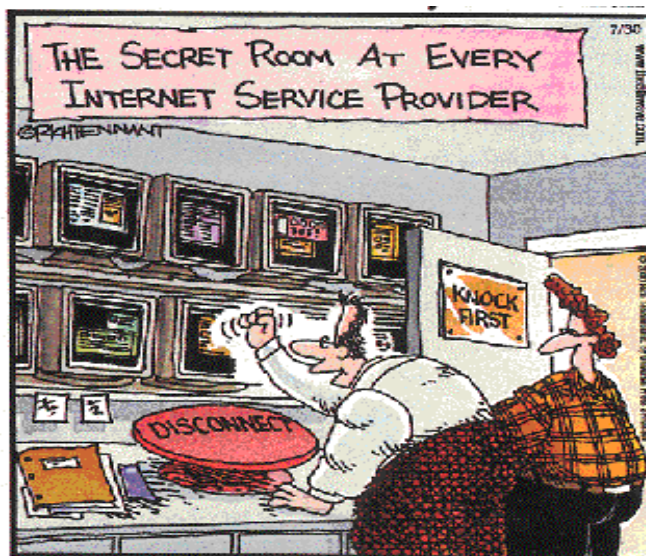
Q. I was wondering how to input a "Debts and Other Liabilities on the Date of Marriage" number into the 69N Net Family Property Statement, Section 3 on page 7. Do I put it in as a negative or positive number?

A. Put the "i) Debts and other liabilities" number in as a negative number, or simply use the **Form, Transfer** feature of your DIVORCEmate software. This feature *automatically* transfers all the numbers from your 69K Financial Statement to your 69N Net Family Property Statement. Remember to specify your client... husband or wife!

Q. How do I get just the year in a date column?

A. Precede the year with a [spacebar] or a ^. Example, input "1999" in a B.C. Form 89 Financial Statement, as **^1999**. This will put the 1999 in the middle of the column!

Any serious user of the internet will appreciate this one!



"I'll be right there. Let me just take care of this user. He's about halfway through a three-hour download."



We Need Your E-mail Address

From time to time we send out important information to the Family Law bar via e-mail (changes to legislation and court forms, including Child Support Guideline Regulations; advanced copy of our newsletter; advanced notice of new products and price promotions; etc.). We need your e-mail address(s) sent to mharris@divorcemate.com. Please include contact, firm, and family lawyer's name(s).

Thank you

Thanks again for all your support over the past year; we sincerely appreciate your business. We look forward to providing you with the best family law software, service and support available anywhere at any price!

Best wishes for a happy and healthy year,
Mark, Sid, Simon, Mike, Emile