



Shared care arrangements for children – statement from the Principal Family Court Judge

Principal Family Court Judge Jackie Moran released a [press statement](#) yesterday on shared care and how this should be approached during the current level 4 alert status. The overriding consideration is for parents to make decisions that are in the best interests of their children and parents should remember that the alert 4 level is intended to stop the spread of covid-19. The statement gives advice on when a shared care arrangement should be continued and when a child should stay in one place.

Shared care arrangements for children – Morning Report

Following Judge Moran's statement Minister of Justice Andrew Little spoke on Morning Report this morning to talk about shared care in the midst of an alert level 4 lockdown. Click [here](#) to listen to the interview. Minister Little says that in more complex shared care arrangements, i.e. where day-to-day care is shared between more than two parents outside of the same town/city, the child should stay where they are for the four week period. If this is the case, parents should put aside their conflict and be generous with contact with the other parent via skype/facetime/phone so that the child feels loved and cared for by both parents through this difficult time.

FAQs

We are currently preparing some FAQs that will be available on the home page of the FLS website (no need for a username and password) with what we know to date. These will be available tomorrow morning. As you know, this situation is evolving on a daily basis and we will be updating the FAQs as confirmed information comes to hand.

Task force – regional reps

Your regional representatives are also working hard to support local members and the issues faced by the local registries and family lawyers. They are currently establishing

small task forces within the regions to assist with queries and any local arrangements the Family Court registries might have – some already have these groups established. We will be contacting the regional reps today to discuss what other matters the task forces may be able to assist with.

Thank you to all our members

Thank you to those who have sent in ideas to address the issue of witnessing affidavits. We wish we could send you more substantive guidance on this issue but are still waiting to hear what the court and ministry will do in terms of this. I have passed these ideas on to Judge Moran to assist with discussions around the issue and consideration of an interim solution. Thank you also to the kind words we have received from members who are grateful for the updates we are providing – they are greatly appreciated.

Kirsty Swadling

FLS Chair