

FAMILY



Our family lawyers assist clients with all of the legal ramifications that accompany the breakdown of a marriage or relationship. We also provide advice and assistance regarding agreements that preserve business and personal assets, should marriages or common-law relationships falter.

We emphasize an approach to family law and divorce matters that mixes equal amounts of resourcefulness and common sense. Judicial intervention is often the most appropriate means of resolving a dispute, but we frequently resolve issues through direct negotiation or alternate dispute resolution in order to maximize results and minimize disruptions and costs for our clients.

British Columbia's *Family Law Act* (Bill 16), came into force on March 18, 2013. This legislation fundamentally changes the framework for the distribution of family property, and now broadens the application of that framework to include common law and same-sex partners in the regime governing distribution of property on marriage breakdown. Our lawyers are well versed on what the new family law rules will mean for our clients.

OUR SERVICES

Services we frequently provide to our family law clients include:

- **Divorce Settlements:** We assist clients in obtaining divorce settlements and in resolving the accompanying property division and spousal support issues.
- **Business Valuations:** We have extensive experience in family law cases involving business valuations and complex financial settlements. Business holdings are frequently among the key assets subject to division in a divorce proceeding.
- **Prenuptial Agreements:** We advise on and structure prenuptial and cohabitation agreements in order to allow our clients to organize their affairs in a way that protects their future security, and to better facilitate the implementation of the parties' intentions, should the marriage or relationship subsequently fail.
- **Mobility Rights:** After a marriage or relationship has dissolved, the ability to relocate to another city, province, or country with a child of the relationship is an issue that often arises. We help protect our clients' rights to mobility and access.
- **Estate Litigation:** Family trust assets can be put at risk in a divorce

TEAM LEADER



JO ANN
CARMICHAEL, QC*
PARTNER

EMAIL jcarmichael@ahbl.ca

TEL 604 484 1771

FAX 604 484 9771

* Professional Law Corporation

TEAM MEMBERS

| Emma Ferguson

proceeding. We act to protect and preserve family trust assets in the event of marital breakdown, and we defend against challenges to family trusts.

- **Adoption:** We have assisted parents with the adoption of children, and step-parents with the adoption of their partners' children.