Ontario's Office of the Children's Lawyer Consumer Survey Questionnaire

For parents who have had services provided by the OCL

In response to a number of complaints by parents from across Ontario in regards to their dealings with Ontario's Office of the Children's Lawyer, this survey form has been produced as part of an investigative research project to assess the quality of services being provided by the Ontario government's Office of the Children's Lawyer. Information gathered will be compiled to identify problems with this agency so that proper recommendations can be made which will improve services to the residents of Ontario. By participating in this survey you will be assisting us to help make this taxpayer funded agency more accountable to the citizens of Ontario.

Instructions

This form is to be filled out by parents who have had services provided by the Ontario's Office of the Children's Lawyer in their court matter. Fill in as many of the questions as are applicable in your case. If there is not enough space provided on the form for your answers then make a note and attach a supplementary typewritten or handwritten sheet with this form.

For those parents who made have made application to the Office of the Children's Lawyer but were rejected services then you should fill out the form specific to those parents who were declined services. Copies of the survey form for parents who were declined services may be found on the Canada Court Watch website at http://www.canadacourtwatch.com

When you have completed this form then please submit to the following:

To submit survey form by mail:

Once you have completed this form you may mail it to: Canada Court Watch Program Box 30, 5500 North Service Rd Burlington, Ontario

To submit survey form by e mail

Convert your completed document into PDF and e mail to Info@canadacourtwatch.com

To submit survey form by fax

If you wish to submit document by fax then contact us by phone at (416) 410-4115. Depending on your geographical location we will provide you with the fax number of one of our representatives who will be able to deal with your form.

To submit a form in person

You may attend one of our regular scheduled public meetings at our meeting facility in Burlington, Ontario. Check our website for dates and times.

Office of the Children's Lawyer Survey Questionnaire (For parents who have had services provided by O.C.L.)

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PART 1 - Your contact information						
Name			Home Phone:			
Street			Fax No:			
City, Town			E mail:			
Postal Code			**Work Phone			
PART 2 - Infor	mation	about your court file				
Court name		Court File #				
Street						
City, Town						
Postal Code						
Date of your last court appearance (if applicable	e):					
Date of your next scheduled court appearance ((if applicat	ole):				
Name of Applicant(s) on court file			Name of Respondent(s) on court file			
Name of person submitting this form		Signature				
PART 3 – Information about your OCL report						
Indicate whether the OCL report was 🗖 A v			ritten report was submitted to the court			
submitted to the court in writing or if it was given only verbally in the court.			erbal report only was given orally to the court.			
Approximately what was the date that your application was submitted to the OCL for their approval:						
If a written report was prepared what was the date the report was signed by the OCL worker:						
If the report was given verbally in court, what was the date when was the report was presented to the court.						
If the report was given verbally in court, who delivered the report to the court.						

What was the name of the OCL worker who signed th report?					
What was the name of the OCL worker who co-signed report?					
On what date did you first personally receive a copy o OCL report?	of the				
PART 4 - Information ab	out	the (OCL Workers/Agents		
Information about the OCL lawyer appointed	to yo	our c	ase (if applicable)		
Name of law firm (if appointed)					
Lawyer's Name			Office Phone #:		
Street			Fax No:		
City, Town			E mail:		
Postal Code					
independent legal agent working under contract with			taff lawyer employed directly by the OCL Office agent lawyer working under contract with the OCL		
the OCL.	d to	vour	ır case (if applicable)		
Information about the social worker appointed to your case (if applicable)					
Agency name (if appointed)			Office Dhane #		
Social worker's name			Office Phone #:		
Street			Fax No:		
City, Town			E mail:		
Postal Code					
OCL or an independent social worker agent working			employee of the OCL Office		
under contract with the OCL?	An a	An agent working under contract with the OCL			

Office of the Children's Lawyer (OCL)Post Performance Client Survey Questionnaire

- 1) At the time of applying for the OCL to service your family indicate below which statement best describe your initial understanding about the OCL involvement in your family matter?
 - □ I fully consented to the involvement of OCL because I clearly understood what the role of the OCL was and wanted the OCL to be involved in my case from the very beginning.
 - □ I consented to involvement because I felt that this was the only course of action available, even though I did not fully understand the process at the time.
 - □ I consented to the OCL involvement but did so reluctantly because I had been told that my refusal to accept their involvement would result in negative consequences for myself and my children.
 - □ I consented to the OCL involvement mainly for economic reasons in that it would not cost me any money.
 - □ I did not feel that the involvement of the OCL was needed and did not want the involvement of the OCL in my family but the involvement of this agency was imposed upon myself and my children despite my objections at the time.

2) Prior to the involvement of the OCL with your family did anyone with the OCL make you aware that there was any alternative to the OCL?

- Yes, I was advised that there were alternatives to the OCL.
- No, I was not advised of any other alternative to the OCL.

If <u>Yes</u> to above, can you describe what alternatives you were told about and who was the person who mentioned these to you?

If Yes to above, can you describe why you did not choose an alternative to the OCL?

3) To the best of your recollection, how much time passed from the time that you submitted your application to the OCL to the time when workers first met with you or your children in person?

- Less than 15 days
- □ 15 to 30 days
- □ 30 to 45 days
- more than 45 days

4) Do you feel that consumers should have a choice of selecting from several <u>government funded</u> agencies rather than having to deal with only the OCL when it comes to a government funded assessment?

- ☐ Yes, I feel that consumers should have the option of choosing between several government funded agencies which help determine child custody and access issues. The OCL should not be the only agency that is government funded to conduct child custody assessments.
- **No**, I don't think it makes a difference to consumers. It is OK for the OCL to be the only agency that is government funded to conduct child custody assessment.

5) At the beginning of the OCL involvement, did workers clearly explain to you what the purpose of the OCL involvement and what the role of the workers was to be?

Yes, it was clearly explained to me what the purpose of the OCL was and the role of the workers.

6) Did the OCL workers ever provide you with any guidance or help early in the assessment process as to how you could be a better and more capable parent?

- **Yes,** workers provided early guidance and help on how to be a better, more capable parent.
- **No,** workers did not provide any early guidance and help as to how to be a better, more capable parent.

If <u>No</u> to above, do you feel that the workers should have provided guidance and help to show you how to have been a more capable parent?

Yes_____ No _____

- 7) At the beginning of OCL involvement with your family, was it clearly explained to you the process that would be followed by the OCL during the involvement of the agency?
 - **Yes,** at the beginning, workers explained clearly what the process involved.
 - **No,** at the beginning, workers did not explain clearly what the process involved.
- 8) At any time, did workers with the OCL make you feel like you were under pressure to accept a certain position or sign any form or agreement that you did not feel was fair or in the best interest of your child or your family?
 - Yes, at times I did feel that I was under pressure by OCL workers to accept a position I did not feel was right for my child.
 - **No**, I did not feel under pressure at any time by workers to accept a position that I felt was not right for my child.

If Yes to above, could you explain how you felt that you were put under pressure?

No, it was not clearly explained to me what the purpose of the OCL was and the role of the workers.

- 9) Did workers with the OCL at any time make your child feel like he/she was under pressure to accept a certain position or to make a certain statement that they did not feel was truthful or what they wanted to say?
 - **Yes,** at times my child did feel under pressure by OCL workers.
 - **No,** my child did not feel under pressure at any time by OCL workers.
 - My children were too young to express their opinion to me

If Yes to above, could you explain how you felt that your children were put under pressure?

- 10) Do you feel that the workers with the Office of the Children's Lawyer accurately reflected in their report (verbal or written) information that the children had reported to them including their wishes and preferences?
 - **Yes,** I felt that the OCL reflected accurately in their report what the children had disclosed to them.
 - **No,** I felt that the OCL did not reflect accurately in their report what the children had disclosed to them.

If <u>No</u> to above, could you please explain why you felt that their report was not accurate.

- 11) Do you feel that the workers with the Office of the Children's Lawyer accurately reflected in their report (verbal or written) what you had reported to them?
 - Yes, I felt that the OCL reflected accurately in their report what I had disclosed to them.
 - **No,** I felt that the OCL did not reflect accurately in their report what I had disclosed to them.

If <u>No</u> to above, could you please explain why you felt that their report was not accurate.

12)	Overall, do you feel that the Office of the Children's Lawyer performed well and acted
	in the best interest of your children and family?

- **Yes,** I felt that the OCL performed well and acted in the best interest of my child and family.
- **No**, I felt that the OCL did not perform well and did not act in the best interest of my child and family.

If **Yes or No**, could you please explain why you feel that the OCL did, or did not, act in the best interest of your child and family. (use extra pages if necessary)

13)	For the purpose of ensuring accuracy in the event of a dispute do you feel that
	interviews with children should be videotaped or audiotaped?

- **Yes,** I feel that videotaping or audiotaping of the interview would help to ensure accuracy.
- **No,** I do not feel that videotaping or audiotaping of the interview would help to ensure accuracy.
- I have no opinion in relation to tape recording of the children's interviews.

If <u>Yes or No</u>, could you please explain the reasons for your response.

14) Do you feel that the Office of the Children's Lawyer dealt with your family's matter in a prompt and efficient manner?

- **Yes,** I felt that our family matter was dealt with in a prompt and efficient manner.
- **No,** felt that our family matter was not dealt with in a prompt and efficient manner.

If <u>Yes or No</u>, could you please explain why you felt that the OCL did, or did not, deal with your family matter in a prompt and efficient manner.

15)	Did you feel that workers opened up any issue that did not need to be opened or that
	the parties were already in agreement with?

- Yes, I felt that OCL workers opened up new issues which were not necessary.
- **No**, OCL workers did not open up new issues or upset previous agreements between the parties.

If **Yes**, can you explain the issues that you felt that the OCL workers opened up that should not have been opened up.

16)	Were you ever told how much the government was billed by the Office of the Children's Lawyer for the work it did in dealing with your family's matter?
	 Yes, I was made aware of how much money was billed in my family's case. No, I was not made aware of how much money was billed in my family's case.
	If <u>Yes</u> , do you feel that the charges to the government were reasonable for the services rendered?
	Yes No
	If <u>No</u> to above, would you have liked to have been able to see how much money was charged to the government for services to your family
	Yes No
17)	To the best of your knowledge, was your child satisfied with their dealings with the workers with the Office of the Children's Lawyer?
	Yes, my child indicated that he/she was satisfied with the OCL.
	 No, my child indicated that he/she was not satisfied with the O.C.L. My child did not express and opinion or was too young to do so
	If Yes or no, can you explain why your children were, or were not, satisfied
18)	Did you feel that you and your solicitor (if you have one) were given adequate time to review the contents and recommendations in the worker's report before it was submitted to the court?
	Yes , I had sufficient time to review the worker's report before it was submitted to the

court.

- **No**, I had sufficient time to review the worker's report before it was submitted to the court.
- **Not applicable**, the OCL did not submit a report.

If <u>No</u>, would you have liked more time to have discussed the report with the worker before it was submitted to the court?

Yes_____ No _____

19) Overall, did you find the workers with the Office of the Children's Lawyer friendly, helpful and willing to give their attention to your case?

- **Yes**, I found workers friendly and willing to give attention to my case.
- **No**, I did not find workers friendly and willing to give attention to my case.
- □ No comments.

If <u>No</u> to above, please explain how they were not friendly and helpful.

20) At any time, did workers explain to you what methodology or criteria they used to determine custody and access arrangements for your children?

- Yes, the methodology and criteria used by worker to determine the custody and access of my child was explained to me.
- **No**, the methodology and criteria used by worker to determine the custody and access of my child was not explained to me.

If <u>No</u> to above, do you feel that it would have been helpful to you if workers had explained the assessment process to you before it began?

Yes_____ No _____

21) Did the Office of the Children's Lawyer ever provide you with the resume of the social worker assigned to your family's case prior to the involvement of that worker?

- **Yes,** workers provide me with their resume outlining their qualifications and experience prior to their involvement with my family.
- **No,** workers did not provide me with their resume outlining their qualifications and experience prior to their involvement with my family.

If <u>No</u> to above, do you feel that if would be helpful if workers provided a copy of their qualifications and experience to all of the parties involved?

Yes_____ No _____

22) Did the Office of the Children's Lawyer workers ever provide you with a sample report so that you would be able to see what a final report might look like?

- Yes, workers provide me with a sample copy of a report.
- **No**, workers did not provide me with a sample copy of a report.

If <u>No</u> to above, do you feel that if would be helpful if workers had provided you with a copy of a sample report prior to their involvement?

Yes_____ No _____

23) Were you satisfied with the way that telephone calls were returned to you by the OCL and/or its workers?

- □ I was satisfied with calls being returned. Calls were returned promptly and in a timely and businesslike manner.
- □ I was not that satisfied with calls being returned. Calls were not returned promptly or in a businesslike manner.
- □ I don't have a comment there was very little telephone communication between the worker and myself.

24) Do you feel that the process used by workers with the Office of the Children's Lawyer to determine custody and access arrangements of your child was open and accountable?

- **Yes**, I feel that the OCL process was open and accountable.
- **No**, I do not think the process was open and accountable?

If <u>Yes or No</u> to above, please indicate why you felt the OCL process was, or was not, open and accountable.

25) Was there anything that the workers with the Office of the Children's Lawyer did or said that you felt was beneficial to your child or family?

- **Yes,** the workers did do or say things which I felt beneficial to my child.
- **No**, the workers did not do or say anything that I felt was of benefit to my child.

If <u>Yes</u> to the above, provide details as to what the workers did that you felt was beneficial to your child.

If <u>No</u> to the above, what do you think that workers could have said or done that would have been beneficial to your child.

26)	Did OCL workers report physical or emotional abuse of your child to child welfare
	protection agencies, as required by law, if your child reported being abused to them?
	Yes. the workers did report to child protection agencies the abuse that my child reported

- Yes, the workers did report to child protection agencies the abuse that my child reported to them.
- □ <u>No.</u> workers did not report to child protection agencies the abuse that my child reported to them.
- There was no abuse reported by my child for workers to report about.

If <u>No</u> to the above, provide details as to the abuse your child disclosed to them that you felt was not properly reported.

27) Was there anything that workers with the Office of the Children's Lawyer did or said that you felt was harmful to your children and family?

Yes, workers did do things that I felt harmful to my children.

No, workers did not do things that I felt were harmful to my children.

If <u>Yes</u> to the above, provide details as to what was done or said that you felt harmful to your children.

28) Do you feel that the workers with the Office of the Children's Lawyer showed any bias in favor of one parent/party or the other?

- Yes, I felt that the workers with the OCL expressed bias in favour of one parent/party.
- **No,** I felt that the workers with the OCL did not express any bias in favour of one parent/party.

If <u>Yes</u> to above, indicate why you felt the workers were biased and to which parent you felt they were biased in favour of. Use additional sheets if necessary.

	s your child ever indicated to you workers with the Office of the Chil	that he/she disliked, distrusted or had a fear dren's Lawyer?
		ne/she did not like dealing with the OCL worker. e/she did not like dealing with the OCL worker.
lf <u>Y</u>	es to above, indicate why your child f	elt this way. Use additional sheets if necessary.
bei		ers with the OCL? If there was more than
bei	ng interviewed/observed by work	ers with the OCL? If there was more than
bei chi	ng interviewed/observed by work Id, then put in what you felt was the	Total number of children
bei chi	ng interviewed/observed by work Id, then put in what you felt was the Total Hours you feel that OCL workers spent enoug Yes, I felt that the OCL spent enoug	ers with the OCL? If there was more than a e average time spent per child. Total number of children ugh time with your child (children)?
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bei chi Do Do I I I Do I Do I Do Ove	ng interviewed/observed by work Id, then put in what you felt was the Total Hours you feel that OCL workers spent enoug Yes, I felt that the OCL spent enoug No, I felt that the OCL did not spend your best estimate, indicate belo erviewed/observed by workers with Hours you feel that OCL workers spent enoug Yes, I felt that the OCL spent enoug No, I felt that the OCL spent enoug No, I felt that the OCL did not spend erall, do you feel that the worker	ers with the OCL? If there was more than a e average time spent per child. Total number of children ugh time with your child (children)? In time with my child (children). If enough time with my child (children). Sow (in hours) how much time you spent be a the OCL?

No, I felt that the OCL did not spend enough time to conduct interviews and to properly gather evidence.

If <u>No</u> to the above, provide details as to why you feel that they did not spend enough time to conduct a proper evaluation.

33) Did the OCL workers interview your child while he/she was in school?

- Yes, my child was interviewed by OCL workers at the child's.
- **No,** my child was not interviewed by OCL workers at the child's school.

If <u>Yes</u> to the above, did OCL worker ask your authorization to speak to your child while at the school.

34) Did the OCL workers gather evidence and/or testimony from all of the persons who you felt had important information to give to the workers?

- Yes, the OCL did collect evidence from all of the possible witnesses. I do not feel that other witnesses needed to be spoken to.
- **No,** the OCL did not collect evidence from all of the possible witnesses. I do feel that other witnesses should have been spoken to.

If <u>No</u> to the above, provide details as to why you feel that they did not collect information from all witnesses.

35) During the course of the OCL investigation, did you ever experience any difficulty in contacting the OCL workers by telephone when you needed to contact them?

- **Yes,** I experienced difficulty in contacting the OCL and its workers. Calls and other forms of communication were returned promptly.
- **No**, I did not experience any difficulty in contacting the OCL and its workers. Calls and other forms of communication were not returned promptly.

If yes, explain the difficulties you experienced in contacting the agency or its workers

36)	Did workers with the OCL respond to your written correspondence to them in a timely
	and appropriate manner?

- **Yes,** workers responded in a timely and appropriate manner to the written correspondence I put forth to them.
- **No,** workers did not respond in a timely and appropriate manner to the written correspondence that I put forth to them.

If <u>No</u>, explain the difficulties you experienced below

37)	Did you ever	r request to	see the	worker's	notes	but we	ere refused	access	to	the
	worker's files	on your cas	e by the (OCL?						

- **Yes**, I was refused permission to access workers notes in their files.
- **No**, I was allowed access to review my family's files when I requested.
- I was not ever aware that one could review worker's notes.

If <u>Yes</u> to above, provide details of your experience.

38) Did you ever request to tape record your meeting with OCL workers but your request was turned down by OCL workers?

- **Yes**, my request to tape record my meeting with OCL workers was refused.
- **No**, my request to tape record my meeting with OCL workers was granted by the OCL.
- I did not request to tape record my meetings with workers

If $\underline{\textbf{Yes}}$ to above, why did workers tell you that you could not tape record your meeting with them.

If you did not request to tape record your meetings, in hindsight do you feel that it would have been helpful to have had the meetings tape recorded?

- **Yes**, I feel that tape recorded meetings would have been beneficial.
- **No**, I feel that tape recorded meetings would not have been any more beneficial.

39)	Did workers with the OCL inform you of the complaints process relating to their report should you ever want to make a complaint about it?
	 Yes, I was informed by workers of the process to complain about a report. No, I was not informed of the process to complain about a report.
	If <u>No</u> to above, do you feel that the workers should have made you aware of the complaints process relating to reports?
	Yes No
40)	Did workers with the OCL ever provide you with written information about the Ontario Ombudsman's office which handles complaints about the OCL?
	 Yes, I was given informed by OCL workers about the Ombudsman's office. No, I was given informed by OCL workers about the Ombudsman's office.
	If <u>No</u> to above, do you feel that the workers should have provided you with written information about the Ontario Ombudsman's Office?
	Yes No
41)	Were you given the opportunity and given sufficient time to review the report with the OCL worker and to discuss any errors or omissions with the worker prior to the report being served or orally given to the court?
	Yes, I was given the opportunity and given sufficient time to review the report with the worker.
	No, I was not given the opportunity and given sufficient time to review the report with the worker.
	If <u>No</u> to above, do you feel that you should have been given time to review the report with the worker?
	Yes No
42)	Did the OCL workers provide you with a business card when they first met with you?
	 Yes, I was provided a business card by the OCL worker. No, I was not provided a business card by the OCL worker.
	If No to above, do you feel that they should have provided a card to you?
	Yes No
43)	Did the OCL worker make it clear to you on your first encounter whether he/she was employed directly by the OCL as an employee or whether he/she was hired as an independent agent under contract for the OCL?
	Yes, the worker clearly explained their business relationship with the Office of the Children's Lawyer.
	No, the OCL worker did not explain their business relationship with the Office of the Children's Lawyer.
44)	Did any of the workers with the OCL ever say anything to you or your children that you felt was discriminatory, harassing, biased, rude or unprofessional in nature?

- **Yes,** OCL workers made statements which I felt were either discriminatory, harassing, biased, rude or unprofessional.
- **No,** OCL workers did not make any statements which I felt were either discriminatory, harassing, biased, rude or unprofessional.

If <u>Yes</u> to above, please describe these incidents.

45) Please check off below, the box which you feel describes your overall level of satisfaction with the OCL.

Overall, I felt that the OCL did a good job. I felt that the organization was highly professional and competent in the work that it did.

Overall, I felt that the OCL did a reasonable job and I was more satisfied with the involvement of the OCL than I was unsatisfied

- Overall, I felt that the OCL did not do that good a job and I was more unsatisfied with the involvement of the OCL than I was satisfied.
- Overall, I feel that the OCL did a poor job. I feel that the organization did not operate in a professional or competent manner.

46) Do you feel that the recommendations made by the OCL in their report were fair to both parents and families

- **Yes**, I feel that the OCL recommendations were fair to both parents.
- **No**, I do not feel that the OCL recommendations were fair to the parents.

If <u>Yes or No</u> to above, please indicate why you felt that the OCL recommendation were, or were not, fair to both parents and families.

47) Do you feel that your custody and parental rights were violated as a result of the recommendations of the OCL?

- **Yes**, I feel that my custody and parental rights to my child were unjustly violated as a result of the recommendations from the OCL.
- **No**, I do not feel that my custody and parental rights to my child were unjustly violated as a result of the recommendations from the OCL.

If **Yes**, to the above, would you like to contact other persons who also feel that their custody and parental rights have been violated because of the involvement of the Office of the Children's Lawyer?

Yes_____ No _____

48) Do you feel that the recommendations made orally or in written report by the OCL were in the best interest of your children?

Yes, I feel that the OCL recommendations were in the best interests of the children.

No, I do not feel that the OCL recommendations were in the best interest of the children.

If <u>Yes or No</u> to above, please indicate how you felt the OCL report was, or was not, in the best interest of the children. You may answer this on a separate sheet if the space below is not sufficient.

Based on your family's experience with the OCL, do you feel that you can put your 49) trust again in the agency to do a competent and professional job?

- **Yes,** I feel that I can still trust the Office of the Children's Lawyer.
- **No**, I do not feel that I can trust the Office of the Children's Lawyer.

50) Do you feel that you or your child has suffered financial or emotional harm because of the involvement or the recommendations made to the court by the OCL workers?

- Yes, I feel that financial or emotional harm has been caused as a result of the Office of the Children's Lawyer involvement in our family matter.
- **No**, I do not feel that any financial or emotional harm has been caused because of the Office of the Children's Lawyer involvement in our family matter.

If **Yes**, to the above, would you like to contact other persons who also feel that they have suffered financial or emotional harm because of the involvement of the Office of the Children's Lawyer?

Yes_____ No _____

If **Yes**, to the above, would you or your children be willing to be personally interviewed about your experience with the OCL in your family court matter?

Yes_____ No _____

Problems relating to the Office of the Children's Lawyer (OCL)

Please describe any other problems you experienced with the Office of the Children's Lawyer that may not be covered in the previous part of this questionnaire. If the space below is insufficient then please attach separate additional sheets to this form.



Suggestions for improvements to the OCL

Please provide your comments about what you feel the OCL could do to improve on the quality of its service to the members of the public. If the space below is insufficient then please attach separate additional sheets to this form.


