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ONTARIO FAMILY LAW ACT MANUAL

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The Ontario Family Law Act Manual, Second Edition is a comprehensive and efficient working tool to help keep up with the changes in the law and the body of case law that follows. With this resource, you can have access to immediate answers to day-to-day issues that arise in your practice. Divided into clearly defined sections, you can get all the support you need to handle your case with confidence and the substantial case law provides backup whenever and wherever you need it.

What's New in this Update:

This release features updates to Chapter 2 (Part I Family Property), Chapter 3 (Part II Matrimonial Home), Chapter 4 (Part III Support Obligations), Chapter 5 (Part IV Domestic Contracts) and Chapter 9 (Child Support Guidelines).

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Highlights

- Household pets are personal property. Thus, the determination of ownership is based on the laws relating to personal property. Cases include MacDonald v. Pearl, 2017 NSSM 5 (N.S. Small Cl. Ct.); Franco v. Franco, 2024 ONSC 6436 (Ont. S.C.J.); King v. Mann, 2020 ONSC 108 (Ont. S.C.J.); Enei v. Enei, 2024 ONSC 6323 (Ont. S.C.J.), affirmed 2025 ONSC 6279 (Ont. Div. Ct.); Turner v. Ross, 2026 ONSC 3592 (Ont. S.C.J.). See § 2:10 Preliminary Question.
- The court is not required to decide on one basis of support to the exclusion of the others. Non compensatory claims can include both an inability to meet basic needs but also a significant decline in the standard of living. Thus, a spouse's inability to meet his or her needs post-separation can be engaged. The doctrine of equitable sharing, founded upon the concept of economic merger, is an overarching principle to be focused on by the court. The merger of the parties' economic lifestyle creates a joint standard of living which must be considered in the support analysis: M.N. v. J.D.R. (2026), 26 R.F.L. (9th) 303 (Ont. S.C.J.). See § 4:88 Length of Relationship.
- The court can add reasonable terms to a restraining order. Thus, in Maharajh v. Mathura, 2026 ONSC 3284 (Ont. S.C.J.), the court restrained the father from any and all communications with the mother except for parenting time or urgent parenting issues. Those communications were directed to be by way of "Our Family Wizard". See § 4:251 The Test.