

New Zealand Law Society Family Law Section

The New Zealand Law Society's Family Law Section represents the interests of about 1,000 family lawyers and provides services and support for its members relevant to the development and practice of family law in New Zealand.

OBJECTIVES

As a Law Society section, the Family Law Section recognises the special nature of family law practice. It is active in family law reform activities and as a means of supporting and assisting in the professional development of family lawyers.

Law reform objectives

To assist and promote the reform of family law in New Zealand, to promote and uphold the rule of law as it affects family law, and to contribute to the standards and regulation of the practice of family law.

Membership support

To provide support, benefits and advocacy to Section members, and to establish and maintain professional training in all areas of family law.

MEMBERSHIP AND STRUCTURE

The Family Law Section was established in 1997 and its membership comprises family lawyers, judges, legal academics, legal executives and government employees.

Law Society staff provide secretarial and administrative support and the governance is through an Executive Committee of family lawyers elected by members.

The Section has 12 Standing Committees of members who have volunteered to be actively involved in a particular area of family law and who advise the Executive on issues relating to practice and policy matters. There are also 30 regional representatives, appointed by the Executive Committee who provide a link between members and the Executive.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS AND ACTIVITIES

The Family Law Section provides regular information on changes and developments in family law, and publishes a quarterly magazine, *The Family Advocate*. The Section's website has a members-only area with membership services and information. The Section is active in family law reform and prepares and delivers submissions on all relevant developments in the law or changes to the Family Courts system.

Section members participate in the NZLS CLE Ltd programme of family law seminars and conferences, and the Section also provides mini-seminars and forums for family lawyers to improve their practice and discuss family law issues with colleagues. The Section

also organises social functions and facilitates networking opportunities among members.

FIND A FAMILY LAWYER

The Family Law Section provides a special public website service called "Find a Family Lawyer". This enables the location of lawyers belonging to the Section who specialise in particular aspects of family law – such as guardianship, paternity, mental health or relationship property.

Find a Family Lawyer is located at http://www.familylaw.org.nz/public/find_a_lawyer.

The Section's members-only website pages also include a search function which allows members to locate family lawyers in different regions who also undertake court-appointed roles or act as instructing solicitors for family law barristers.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Section's website is located at <http://www.familylaw.org.nz/home>. Inquiries can be emailed to family@lawsociety.org.nz or phone (04) 463 2966.

