

Individual 43

Submission 1.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to request that there is a full review of the legislation and that there is accountability for the decisions of the court in relation to Family Proceedings.

The reason why I believe this needs to be review is that I have personally went through the process and have been clearly discriminated against. The following are only some examples of what I have been advised:

- "the system favours women" [REDACTED] solicitors
- "The judge is a ladies man" [REDACTED] – Barrister
- "I know it's unfair, there is nothing I can do about the system" [REDACTED] – Barrister
- "let it go, you are getting more contact than 90% of men" [REDACTED] – Barrister
- The court also had Women Aid posters around it and no support for men.

An audit on the court judgements will conclusively show you how men are being discriminate against with more than 90% of women getting residence of the children automatically with no consideration that residing with the father may be the better option for the child. This is clearly not acceptable and is clearly not in the child's interest. This not only affects the child but also the father. I cannot fathom how if you go to get a job there is legislation that protects the applicant from discrimination but when it comes to Family proceeding no such protection measures are in place.

We are living in the 2020, where all people should be treated equally, no matter what race, age or gender. The law should be there to protect us but it is clearly not.

Can you please advise if I can organise a meeting with someone to talk through the issues and to understand what can be done to change this process.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Submission 2

Good Evening

I am a father of a young [REDACTED] and am now separated from mother. I believe that the system has failed me. I was in a physically and emotionally abusive relationship and marriage for over 10 years with no way out as I was always threatened that if I left, I would not see [REDACTED]. The family court system allows for these mothers to continue to control and emotionally abuse the fathers for years after they have left these toxic relationships.

I am pleased that this Bill is being discussed and this may have improved my situation had it been around when I was still in an abusive relationship. However my concern is that it is one thing writing these things down but its another for judges to actually apply them equally to men as to women. Currently there is no law which states that the mother always gets residency of a child/children however in practice this is exactly what it happening. A precedent has been set. If you look at the

statistics on this, I believe that you would be shocked. These mothers are not even assessed to see if they are fit parents but assumed to be so as they are the mother. There are two parents however in my case, which I have been told is better than most men get by my own solicitor and barrister, one gets their [REDACTED] for 5 days of the week and the other 2 days. How is this fair? However it is accepted by everyone throughout the judicial system as "just the way it is". I fear that this same principle will apply to this Bill if it is made law. Women will be looked at more favourably than men and turning on the waterworks will mean that sympathy will be given to the woman. This happened in the Family Proceedings Court in my case. I brought all the evidence to show that my ex wife was abusive towards me and her mental health was such that she should not be responsible for a child but she brought the tears and somehow that trumped the hard evidence. There needs to be some way that judges be accountable for their decisions which in many cases are completely discriminatory.

My question here is will this domestic abuse Bill be able to be used to protect me against the continued emotional abuse and control that I face at the hands of my ex wife? She uses [REDACTED] as a weapon to get her own way and it still has a massive effect on my mental health, [REDACTED] years after my split. I cannot move on with my life and cannot make any plans as my ex dictates everything that I do through [REDACTED] and my contact with him. The current harassment legislation has fallen short here to protect both myself, [REDACTED] and my new partner from my controlling ex. I hope that this Bill goes some way towards me getting my life back and acts as a deterrent to my ex.

I would appreciate an update on how things are progressing with this Bill and how the inequality in the Family Proceedings Court can be dealt with as the mental health of dads all over the country is being affected each and every day that you let the current system continue as it is. I believe that the current inequalities will be dealt with in the future by way of claims as fathers have lost time that they can't get back with their children and lives have been lost as a consequence.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]