

LAW SOCIETY PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Centre of Excellence for
Professional Education and Lifelong Learning



Family and Child Law Conference 2020

Date	27 November 2020
Time	10.00am to 3.00pm
Venue	Online Webinar with Live Q&A sessions
Fee	€186
Discounted* Fee	€160
CPD Hours	3.5 General 1 Management & Professional Development Skills Total 4.5 hours (by eLearning)
Event Code	20014

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this conference is to examine recent developments in core areas of family law and practice and childcare law practice. The objective is to provide practitioners with a concise and essential overview of the many recent developments and the implications for day-to-day client advice and practice and procedure. This conference has been designed by family and childcare law practitioners for their colleagues in the profession. Legal and child care practitioners and related professionals will find attendance at this conference essential to address new legislation and consequential practice changes.

Topics and Issues to be covered

-) President of the District Court – opening address
-) Case Law update – a practitioner’s perspective
-) Finances and Family Law
-) Section 32 and 47 reports
-) Family & Child Law practice – a regional update
-) Practice update
 - o Section 150 LSRA Act
 - o Family Law Act 2019 – first year of operation
 - o Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 and remote hearings
 - o Domestic Violence Act update (incl impact of pandemic)

Chairperson

Dr Geoffrey Shannon, Solicitor, Chair Adoption Authority of Ireland, Child Law Expert

Dr Geoffrey Shannon is a solicitor and is a leading authority in Child Law and Family Law. He is the current Chairman of the Adoption Authority of Ireland. He held the role of Special Rapporteur on Child Protection for the Irish government from 2006 to July 2019. Dr Shannon has recently been asked by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and the Council of Europe to assist as a child protection expert in drafting new guidelines on cybercrime for judges, prosecutors and law enforcement agencies. Dr Shannon is the recipient of several awards for his work in the area of national and international family law. These include the 2005 JCI Outstanding Person of the Year Award, the 2006 Canon Maurice Handy Award and the 2013 Irish Law Award. On 23 June 2017, Dr Shannon was presented with the Dublin Solicitors Bar Association Award for outstanding contribution to legal scholarship for his entire work to date.

Speakers (in order of appearance)

Judge Colin Daly, President of the District Court.

His Honour Judge Colin Daly completed a LLM at Queens University, Belfast in 1995 and was enrolled as a solicitor in Ireland in 1997. From 2001-2012 he was the Managing Solicitor at Northside Community Law Centre (now Community Law & Mediation (CLM) Northside) where he worked in public interest and human rights law. He was appointed as a Judge of the [Irish] District Court in June, 2012 as a moveable judge and worked for over 2 years at the Children Court. He was assigned to District 22 Carlow/Kilkenny in 2015 and in July 2019 was appointed as President of the District Court.

Tim Amos, QC

Tim Amos QC is a Barrister and Mediator, and Head of Chambers at QEB Queen Elizabeth Building, London where he has practised since qualification in 1987. He specialises in International Family Law and is a fellow and governor of the International Academy of Family Lawyers. He also acts as an Expert Witness in foreign courts. Tim speaks fluent German (including legal German) and works also in French. Tim is also a recognised expert in relation to Brexit and Family Law: see the webstream of Tim's expert evidence to the EU Parliament Juri Committee on Legal Affairs in March 2019, in relation to the effect of Brexit on families and children from the perspective of International Family Law: link here <http://www.qeb.co.uk/TimAmos01.mp4> ; and also his skype interview for the English/Welsh solicitors national annual conference in April 2019, on the implications of no-deal Brexit for International Family Law: link here <http://www.qeb.co.uk/FamilyJusticeTimAmosQC2.mp4> .

Keith Walsh, Principal, Keith Walsh Solicitors, Dublin.

Keith specialises in litigation & family law work and has published a number of articles on divorce and separation and reform of the family law courts in the Law Society Gazette and the Parchment. He has taught on the Advanced Course run by the Law Society in the area of family law and is a former chairman of the DSBA's Family Law & Minors Committee. He is Chairperson of the Law Society's Family Law Committee and he is a member of the Law Society Skillnet Steering Group. He started his career in the legal aid board, worked for a number of firms in Dublin and is principal of Keith Walsh solicitors, a three solicitor firm for the past 12 years. Keith is also Chairperson of the LSRA costs sub-group.

Jennifer O'Brien, Principal, Jennifer O'Brien Solicitors, Dublin

Jennifer O'Brien established her own firm in 2015 having previously headed up the family law team at Mason Hayes & Curran (incorporating Arthur O Hagan), where she was partner. She commenced her career at McCann FitzGerald, where she worked on the family law team for 8 years. Jennifer has over 20 years of experience in separation, divorce, jurisdiction & non-marital matters with an emphasis on cases concerning business, trusts, investments, farming and other assets. She also advises on matters pertaining to Civil Partnership & Cohabitation. Jennifer has acted in a number of leading cases before the Courts and is adept at negotiation of complex agreements, avoiding litigation where possible. Jennifer is an experienced international family lawyer handling cases concerning recognition of foreign divorce, Brussels IIbis, child abduction, re-location applications & enforcement of orders throughout the member states and elsewhere. Jennifer lectures to

members of the profession at the Incorporated Law Society of Ireland, the Family Lawyers' Association & the International Academy of Family Lawyers. She is a former chair of the Family Law & Minors Committee, DSBA, a member of the Family Lawyers' Association, an Associate member of Resolution (formerly the Solicitors Family Law Association of England and Wales). She is currently a member of the Law Society Family & Child Law Committee. Jennifer is a fellow of the International Academy of Family Lawyers. She co-authored *Family Law: A Global Guide from Practical Law*, 4th edition 2018 and *International Relocation of Children*, 2018, both published by Thomson Reuters.

Donogh McGowan, Managing Partner, Gerrard L. McGowan Solicitors, Dublin

Donogh is Managing Partner of Gerrard L. McGowan Solicitors and leads the firm's property, family law and commercial departments. Donogh has over 20 years of wide and varied legal experience and is a highly respected member of the local legal and business community. He is involved locally in sports clubs, charitable organisations and the Balbriggan Chamber of Commerce. Donogh has acted on behalf of many prominent companies, businesses and individuals in North County Dublin and beyond. Donogh, a great-nephew of the firm's founder G L McGowan and a son of the late Joe McGowan, is an active member and former President of the Balbriggan Chamber of Commerce, Skerries Rugby Club and he is also a member of the Dublin Solicitors Bar Association. Donogh's work ethic and business acumen has helped to develop the firm's excellent reputation and growth. He is committed to managing a team that provide practical and pragmatic advice in our local community to ensure that the personal and business needs of our clients can be met in our offices in Balbriggan and Skerries. Donogh was educated at Trinity College Dublin, Law Society of Ireland and he is also trained as a collaborative law practitioner and is a member of the ACP (www.acp.ie).

Caitríona Gleeson, Programme & Communications Manager, Safe Ireland.

Caitríona Gleeson (B.Comm, MA Women's Studies) is a double graduate of National University of Ireland, Galway. Caitríona has worked for Safe Ireland since 2008 mainly as programme and communications manager. She has been working in Ireland to respond to and prevent domestic abuse and coercive control for 20 years. Caitríona was centrally involved in Safe Ireland's national advocacy campaigns and collaborations which were key drivers to the establishment of a criminal offence of coercive control and many other changes in the Domestic Violence Act 2018.

Joan O'Mahony, O'Mahony Solicitors

Joan O' Mahony solicitor qualified in 1971 and is a sole practitioner since 1981. She practices in Deansgrange Co Dublin and is a member of the Family Law Committee of the Law Society. She also sits on the Monitoring Committee of the National Strategy for Domestic and Gender based violence.

Jacqueline McShane, Forensic Accountant, Browne, Murphy & Hughes.

Dr Vincent McDarby, Chartered Clinical Psychologist

Dr Vincent Mc Darby is a Chartered Clinical Psychologist with over twenty years of experience working as a psychologist in Ireland and New Zealand, in areas including risk assessment, custody & access, child development, intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorders and chronic illness, among others. He currently works part time as Senior Clinical Psychologist with Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin (formally Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin) and has his own private practice, where he provides assessments for the Courts in relation to personal injury and child custody and access. Dr Mc Darby has sat on the board of the Psychological Society of Ireland since 2014 and is the 2021 President Elect of the society. He is a regular contributor to national radio, television, podcasts, websites and print media on all aspects of psychology, parenting, and child development. As well as having lectured on numerous third-level academic courses, Dr Mc Darby also provides educational talks and training to parents, other healthcare professionals and industry on numerous topics, including parenting, child development, resilience, and psychological aspects of chronic illnesses. Dr Mc Darby continues to be actively involved in research and his current primary areas of research include child development, social media, adjustment to chronic illness and childhood diabetes.

Gerard Durcan SC.

Gerard is a Senior Counsel who practices in the area of family and child care law.

Ailbhe Burke, MacSweeney & Company, Galway

Ailbhe Burke qualified as a solicitor in Michealmas 1998. She holds a BA, LL.B. from NUI Galway and a higher Diploma in Employment Law from UCD. She has trained as both a Mediator and a Collaborative Lawyer. After a number of years working in Dublin, Ailbhe returned to Galway and first worked in the Legal Aid Board and then moved to a specialised family law firm, Pauline O'Reilly Solicitors where she worked for 12 years. She has been with MacSweeney & Co Solicitor since September 2016 where she heads up the Family Law Department. MacSweeney & Company were awarded "Family law firm of the year for Connacht and Munster" at the Irish Law Awards in 2019. Ailbhe has been a member of the Family and Child Law committee of the Law Society of Ireland since 2016 and has given many talks on various family law topics. She previously tutored in both the Law Society of Ireland and in NUI Galway. She was a Vice Chair on the Employment Appeals Tribunal and is a former President of the Galway Solicitors Bar Association. Ailbhe is a member of the Family Lawyers Association.

Siún Hurley, O Donovan Murphy & Partners LLP, Cork.

Siún works in Bantry, West Cork specialising in the areas of Family Law and Litigation. She is on Council of the Law Society of Ireland and a member of the Family Law Committee since 2017.

Aidan Reynolds, Partner, Gallagher Shatter

Aidan has practised in the area of Family Law since joining Gallagher Shatter Solicitors in September 1998 and becoming a partner there in October 1991. He is a long standing member of the Law Society Family Law and Child Law Committee and is the current Vice Chairperson. He was appointed by the Law Society as its nominee to the Circuit Court Family Law Procedure Consultative Group in 2016 and to the Dublin Circuit Family Law Users Group in 2017.

Helen Coughlan, Partner, Patrick J Farrell Solicitors.

Helen Coughlan qualified as a solicitor in 2004. She studied law in University College Cork and obtained a first class honours BCL degree in 1999. Helen is a partner in Patrick J Farrell and Company in Newbridge, Co Kildare. She is a trained collaborative law practitioner and is a founder member of the Kildare West Wicklow Collaborative Solicitors Group. She regularly appears in the Circuit and High Court and also in the Court of Appeal. Helen is Chair of the Family and Child Law Committee of the Law Society. She is the President of the Kildare Solicitors Bar Association and an elected member of the Council of the Law Society. She is a Chairperson of Mental Health Tribunals for the Mental Health Commission.

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