

CANADIAN Lawyer

The pros & cons of practising...

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PROS:

- Family law touches almost everyone. The separation agreements we help clients with affect them for the rest of their lives.
- Practising family law where your clients live, in the suburbs, makes sense. Family law clients are stressed because their relationship has failed and their whole world will change. In the type of law you want to practise, think hard about where your clients are and how far they want to travel to buy legal services. Greater Toronto is a big geography with lots of legal talent; clients have choices and they vote with their feet.
- The women-to-men lawyer ratio is better in many small and mid-size firms. Meanwhile, this continues to be an issue for women lawyers in big Bay Street law firms.
- Commercial real estate is less expensive in the suburbs than downtown, generally speaking. This is good for your bottom line: the cost of setting up an office may be significantly less in the suburbs.
- Clients are increasingly sensitive to posh offices, as they realize that a portion of their legal fees are likely paying for luxurious offices. Smart lawyers are sensitive to the optics of their office space to their overall reputation.
- Traffic and parking are easier than downtown Toronto. For lawyers wanting a better work-life balance, practising in the suburbs makes sense.

CONS:

- You can see the other party while shopping in the neighbourhood. For example, you can get an order denying access and then see that person at the grocery store. This is much less likely in Toronto.
- Family law is stressful and emotional for lawyers, too. Do not allow yourself to get into a negative headspace. You have to take care of your health, including your fitness, to give savvy and balanced advice to your clients.

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