



SSC # 85 – INSURANCE IN DIVORCE & SEPARATION: PLANNING OBLIGATIONS, RISK EXPOSURE, AND CLIENT STRATEGIES

This course is eligible for:

3.0 Life & A&S CE Credits for BC, AB, SK, MB & ON.

Target Audience

This course is designed for:

- **Licensed insurance advisors and brokers** holding life and/or accident & sickness licences or General P&C licences, in any Canadian province or territory;
- **Certified Financial Planners (CFP) and Qualified Associate Financial Planners (QAFP)** regulated by FP Canada who engage in comprehensive financial planning;
- **Estate planning specialists** who advise clients on beneficiary designations, insurance trusts, and post-mortem planning; and
- **Any financial professional** seeking to deepen their competency in the area of family breakdown planning.

Courses Purpose

The purpose of this course is to address a significant knowledge gap in the continuing education landscape for Canadian financial advisors: the intersection of insurance planning and family law in the context of divorce and separation. While financial planning curricula comprehensively address topics such as estate planning, retirement income, and tax optimization, the specific insurance obligations and risks that arise when a client's family unit dissolves are rarely treated with the depth and practical rigour that advisors require.

This gap has measurable consequences. Advisors who are unaware of provincial legislation governing beneficiary designations may fail to alert clients to the risk of an ex-spouse receiving death benefits. Advisors who do not understand how support obligations interact with insurance may fail to structure policies in a legally sound manner, resulting in future disputes and liability.

Advisors who do not know how to bridge a client's group benefits gap during separation may leave that client — and their children — uninsured during one of the most stressful periods of their lives.

This course addresses these gaps directly. It provides advisors with a structured, evidence-based framework for insurance planning in the context of divorce and separation — grounded in Canadian law, regulatory standards, and practitioner best practices.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

1. **Identify** the key legal distinctions between separation and divorce under the federal *Divorce Act* and applicable provincial family law statutes, and explain how these distinctions affect insurance planning obligations and client advice;
2. **Explain** how life insurance is used to secure child support and spousal support obligations in a separation agreement or court order, including the legal mechanisms of irrevocable beneficiary designation and policy assignment;
3. **Evaluate** a client's existing insurance portfolio — including life, disability, health and dental, and group benefits — to identify coverage gaps, urgent risks, and required changes arising from separation or divorce;
4. **Apply** a structured, prioritised framework to rebuild a client's insurance plan in the post-divorce context, integrating coverage decisions with the client's revised financial plan;
5. **Distinguish** between the legal and practical treatment of beneficiary designations across different registered and non-registered accounts — including RRSPs, TFSAs, RRIFs, group pensions, and insurance contracts — and advise clients accordingly; and
6. **Calculate** and articulate the economic risk to a support recipient if the payor spouse becomes disabled without adequate disability income insurance, and recommend appropriate policy structures to mitigate this risk.