

Evidence (Neighbourhood Mediation Centres) Bill

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Clause 1 states the purpose of the Act.

Clause 2 states that the Act will come into operation on a day or days to be proclaimed.

Clause 3 states that the Principal Act is the *Evidence Act 1958*.

Clause 4 inserts a new Division into Part I of the Principal Act which applies to neighbourhood mediation centres declared by Order of Governor in Council and neighbourhood mediators who are declared by a notice of the Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department published in the *Government Gazette*. The new Division states that:

- evidence of certain things, admissions and agreements made at or documents prepared for mediation conferences conducted at neighbourhood mediation centres are not admissible in any subsequent court or legal proceedings;
- that neighbourhood mediators and other persons who work or who have worked for a neighbourhood mediation centre must not disclose or publish any information or documents acquired because of their association with the centres except as set out in the Act; and
- neighbourhood mediators and other people who work for a neighbourhood mediation centre are not subject to any action because of something done in good faith for a mediation conference at a neighbourhood mediation centre.

Clause 5 makes amendments to the Division of the Principal Act which deals with family mediation centres. It provides that documents prepared for the purpose of a mediation session cannot be admitted in any legal proceedings.

