

Definitions

Marriage: The legally recognized union of two people in an exclusive relationship.

Civil-Union: A couple that solemnly commits to living together exclusively. Civil Union couples benefit from the same legal protection that results from a marriage.

De Facto Union: Simply a couple living together with a common life goal. Usually after one year of cohabitating or if the couple has a child, they are recognized as a *de facto union*. In general, this type of union does not have legal effects concerning the couple's rights and responsibilities towards one another. *See below Unjustified Enrichment.*

Common-Law Union: In Quebec, Common-Law Union is not a relationship protected under the law. Common-law couples are officially known in Quebec law as having a "de facto union" (*see definition above*).

Family Patrimony: The family patrimony is composed of the couple's property predetermined by the provincial legislation. At the end of the union, the value of said patrimony will be calculated in order to determine a claim benefiting the spouse who is financially disadvantaged.

Inheritance, Gift and Donation: A good received free of charge by one of the spouses.

Alimony: A form of monetary support granted to the spouse that is financially disadvantaged within the couple.

Unjustified Enrichment: A legal mechanism providing a *de facto union* spouse the opportunity to make a claim against their ex-spouse for a compensation payment at the end of their union.

For further information, please visit Educaloi's Website for additional information on divorce and separation at www.educaloi.gc.ca/en/categories/separation-and-divorce