



Legal
Services
Society

British Columbia
www.lss.bc.ca

Extended Family Services Opinion Letter

Name of client

LSS file #

Name of referral
counsel

Name of opposing
party

Name of opposing
counsel (if represented)

To consider your Extended Family Services Opinion Letter, LSS requires up-to-date accounts submitted to Tariff Services.

The decision to issue Extended Services is a discretionary decision made by a Case Review Lawyer, and is based on established criteria, a merit test, and available budget. This is required to ensure that:

- our Family Services' budget is directed to the clients and cases which have priority; and
- Family Services are as effective as possible in assisting clients to resolve their family law disputes.

Counsel and clients are expected to use their initial Emergency Services referral to advance the case as much as possible, including obtaining interim orders on the referable issue and to explore all reasonable ways to settle their case. This opinion letter should be used where reasonable efforts to resolve a case have been exhausted and additional time is justified by the significance of the outstanding issue(s), a meritorious position taken by the client, and the position taken by the opposing party.

If approved, Extended Services are provided as a one-time standard allocation of preparation hours – 25 hours for Provincial Court cases and 40 hours for Supreme Court cases. Extended Services hours will be added to counsel's existing Emergency Services referral. Any unused hours from the existing Emergency Services referral will continue to be available.

What are the issues between the parties?

Custody

Division of assets

Access

Spousal violence

Child support

Other (specify):

Spousal support

Stage of proceedings	
Date(s) of next appearance	_____
Nature of next proceeding	_____ _____
Date(s) set for trial	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Date(s) _____
Court level	Supreme <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial <input type="checkbox"/>
How many General Preparation hours have you spent on the file so far?	<input type="text"/>
Provide a brief summary of the facts and legal issues. Describe the remaining issues and whether they involve sexual, physical, or mental abuse of the client or children.	
Describe efforts to resolve the issues. Include confirmation that your client has provided appropriate disclosure. Provide summary of mediation or collaborative process.	
How has the opposing party conducted the litigation? Provide a copy of written offer to settle given to the opposing party. Provide a copy of response from opposing party.	

Provide summary of steps taken in the proceeding. Provide copies of pleadings and interim orders. If no interim orders have been obtained, explain why.

Is the client at risk of being alienated from his/her children? If so, describe and explain why the interim order is insufficient.

Will the client or children be left at risk or without safety if coverage is not extended? If so, describe and explain why the interim order is insufficient.

What further steps do you recommend to protect and advance the client's interests?

Please provide your legal opinion on the merits of each issue at this stage.

Please attach a copy of any relevant pleadings and any other documents in support of your application for extended services (e.g., Section 15 reports, other expert reports, New Westminster Litigation Plan, etc.).

What is the source and estimated amount of the client's gross monthly income and assets?

Please provide a copy of the relevant pages of the client's summary of financial information (if one has been prepared and is up to date).

Social assistance	\$	_____	
Maintenance	\$	_____	
Employment	\$	_____	
Other	\$	_____	Please describe _____
Assets	\$	_____	Please describe _____
	\$	_____	Please describe _____

Counsel signature

Date

Preparation of a submitted opinion letter is billable as up to one hour of General Preparation (please refer to the Family Tariff chapter of *LSS Tariffs*).

Mail or fax your request to:

Case Management Section
400 – 510 Burrard Street
Vancouver, BC V6C 3A8

Fax: (604) 681-7963

**For more information:
(604) 601-6145**

Note: If you anticipate any disbursements that require prior authorization under the *LSS Tariffs*, please submit a Request for Authorization form with this opinion letter.

Please send a copy of this opinion letter to your client.