

## BCMA, Meal, and Meterage Rate Changes

### BCMA rates

In accordance with our usual practice, LSS will pay the following limited number of increased BCMA rates based upon negotiations between the Attorney General and the BCMA. We apologize for the delay in advising of the increase. LSS was only recently informed of the negotiated changes. These rates will increase as follows:

Service	BCMA Item Code	Tariff Code	Effective Date	New Rate
Medical records review	A0095	1495	April 15, 2002	\$138
Forms completion or simple letter reporting on patient's condition	A0070	1511	April 15, 2002	\$122
Medical-legal letter	A0071	1537	April 15, 2002	\$255
Medical-legal report	A0072	1552	April 15, 2002	\$765
Medical-legal opinion	A0073	1578	April 15, 2002	\$1,276
General practitioners prep & court time		1651	April 1, 2002	\$166/hour
General practitioners travel time		1250	April 1, 2002	\$94/hour
Specialist prep & court time		1751	April 1, 2002	\$194/hour
Specialist travel time		1760	April 1, 2002	\$110/hour
Psychiatrists prep & court time		1677	April 1, 2002	\$194/hour
Psychiatrist travel time		1776	April 1, 2002	\$110/hour
Medical records photocopying	A0096	1504	No change	\$1.15/page

Apart from the items noted, LSS does not pay any other BCMA rates, nor does it pay in accordance with the Crown Billing Guide for Expert Witnesses. All other cautions from page 14 of the **Disbursements for All Tariffs** section of the *Guide to Legal Aid Tariffs* continue to apply.

Our usual practice is not to accept retroactive billings. However, given the size of the increases in hourly rates to practitioners, we recognize that this practice may create a disparity between those who have promptly billed for services and those who have delayed in submitting billings.

Therefore, LSS will accept retroactive billings only for the difference in hourly rates to BCMA experts. Lawyers may submit supplementary disbursement billings for the difference between the previous rates paid and the new rates for services rendered from April 1, 2002. Retroactive billings must be submitted with an invoice from the expert by March 31, 2003.

We are not prepared to accept retroactive billings for the specific items that we allow from the BCMA rates tariff, that is Medical records review, Forms completion, Medical-legal letter, Medical-legal report, and Medical-legal opinion. The changes in these items were modest and the administrative cost of

processing a second billing would far exceed the difference between the previous rates and the rates that came into effect April 15, 2002. We will, however, process all accounts received in the future at the new rates.

### **Meal rates**

LSS is increasing the meal rates to be consistent with government rates. Where LSS authorizes travel, lawyers or witnesses who stay overnight may claim the actual cost of meals up to —

- \$10.00 for breakfast,
- \$12.50 for lunch, and
- \$22.00 for dinner.

This change will apply to all billings received by LSS on or after December 1, 2002.

### **Meterage rates**

LSS is increasing the meterage rate from \$0.40/km to \$0.43/km, to remain consistent with the current government rates. This change will apply to all meterage items in the **Disbursements for All Tariffs** section of the *Guide to Legal Aid Tariffs*. LSS will pay all billings received on or after December 1, 2002 at the new rate.

In all other respects, the current provisions in the **Disbursements for All Tariffs** section of the *Guide to Legal Aid Tariffs* continue to apply to these items.

Replacement tariff pages for the above changes, along with a number of other revisions, will be sent to you by the end of the year.