



# Legal Services Society Public Opinion Poll

**Prepared for:**

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**April 16, 2018 [FINAL]**





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A smaller version of the 'sentis' logo, consisting of a green and grey 3D cube icon.

# Objectives & Methodology



# Objectives & Methodology

## Objectives

- › The Legal Services Society (LSS) is legislated to provide legal aid services in BC. Legal aid services include legal representation in court, legal advice, and public legal information and education. Its priority is to help people with low incomes.
- › Since 2005, LSS has enlisted research partners to conduct a province-wide survey with BC residents with the purpose of understanding the awareness, knowledge and attitudes around legal aid in BC.

## Methodology

- › Due to the increasing difficulty in reaching a demographically representative sample via telephone surveying, the switch was made to begin administering the survey online in 2014.
- › This year 600 online interviews were conducted from February 6 to 13, 2018 with BC residents aged 18 and older\*. The sample was generated through a panel maintained by Asking Canadians, an online research panel provider based in Toronto.
- › The final data was weighted by age and gender within each region in order to accurately reflect the actual BC population.
- › Changes to question wording have been made over the years to accommodate LSS's changing goals and priorities, and these modifications have been noted throughout the report.

## Margin of Error

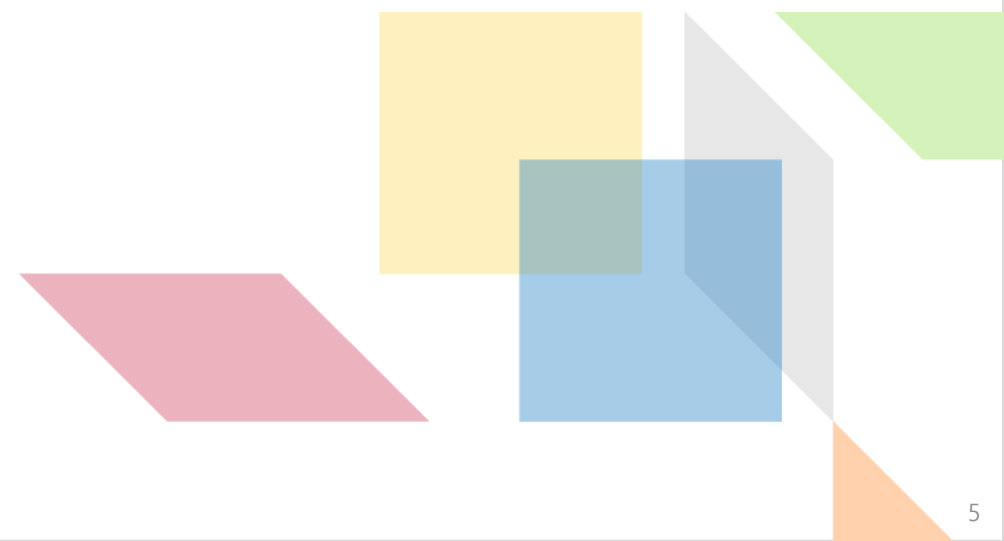
- › At the 95% level of confidence, a sample size of 600 has a margin of error of  $\pm 4\%$ .
- › Because the methodology of this tracker changed from telephone to online in 2014, percentage-to-percentage comparisons can only be made among 2005 to 2013 waves (waves conducted by telephone) and among 2014 onward (waves conducted online). Caution should be used when drawing comparisons between 2018 and waves prior to 2014 given the difference in methodologies. Waves prior to 2014 can still be used as a broad indicator of past public opinion.
- › When comparing 2018 results to 2016, at the 95% confidence level, a shift of  $\pm 6\%$  is required for the difference to be considered statistically significant.
- › When comparing 2016 results to 2018 findings on a regional level, the following differences are required for the shift to be deemed statistically significant.

Region	2016-to-2018 Required Shift (at 95% Level)
Lower Mainland / Fraser Valley	$\pm 7\%$
Vancouver Island	$\pm 14\%$
Interior / North	$\pm 12\%$

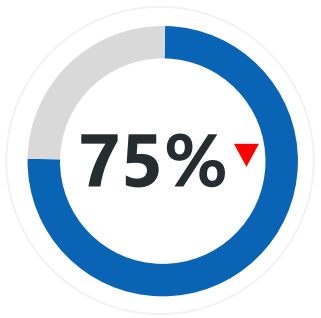
\*Note: The survey is conducted among the general BC population and not LSS clients. However, although they are not the target audience, some LSS clients could have been invited to participate in the survey.

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# Highlights



## Awareness of Legal Aid & Legal Aid Services



**Are aware of Legal Aid in General**

- The majority of British Columbians continue to report being aware of legal aid services in the province for people with low incomes.
- However, awareness that peaked at 87% in 2014 currently stands at 75%.
- When it comes to awareness of legal aid services for specific case types, the same general decline in awareness is evident.
- Most British Columbians cannot name the organization responsible for legal aid services (only 2% can).
- However, once prompted with the name, 21% confirm they have definitely heard of it and another 39% say the name is familiar to them.
- There is currently limited awareness among residents that the Legal Services Society provides legal information services for all residents, not just low income people.

### Awareness of Legal Aid for Specific Case Types (% aware)

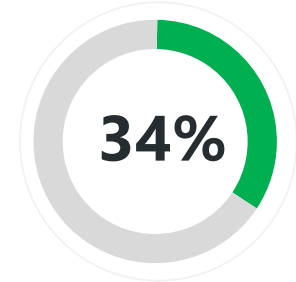
<b>Criminal Law</b>	<b>62%</b> ▼
<b>Family Law</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>Immigration/ Refugee Law</b>	<b>47%</b> ▼

**60%** have heard of the Legal Services Society when prompted or say the name sounds familiar

**28%** are aware that legal information services are available for *all* residents

## Top Sources of Information on Legal Aid

- Just one-third of British Columbians have come across information about legal aid recently.
- For those who do remember hearing about legal aid in the past few months, it was most often through stories in the media (though mentioned less frequently than in 2016), word-of-mouth, or online.

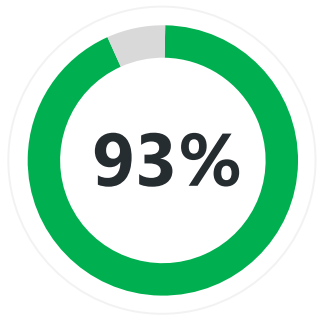


**Have heard something about Legal Aid recently**

	<b>% hearing info about Legal Aid from...</b>
<b>1</b> Stories in the Media	<b>20%</b> ▼
<b>2</b> Word-of-Mouth	<b>14%</b>
<b>3</b> Internet / website / online searches	<b>12%</b>

## Public Support for Legal Aid

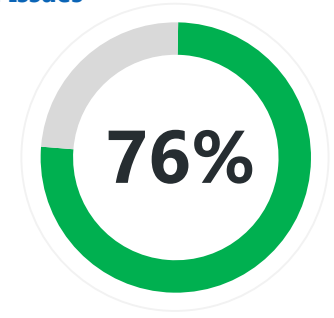
### Support for Legal Aid in General



Support Legal Aid Services

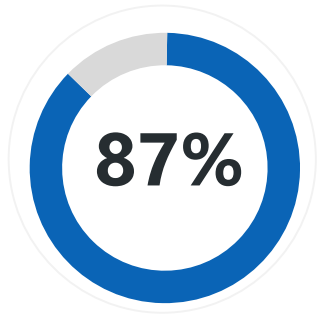
- Although awareness of legal aid may be lower than two years ago, support for the services remains high.
- Consistent with past years, 93% of residents support legal aid, including six-in-ten who express strong support.
- Three-quarters of British Columbians continue to agree that legal aid should support their clients in addressing problems that are related to their legal issues. Support for offering this type of service remains highly positive and in line with two years ago.

### Support for LSS Helping Clients Address Related Issues



Agree that LSS should support clients in addressing their related issues

## Importance of Legal Aid in Ensuring Fairness in the Justice System



Feel Legal Aid is Important to Ensuring Fairness in the Justice System Overall (average of the importance for the 4 legal areas)

### Importance By Legal Area (% very/somewhat important)

Family Court	93%
Criminal Court	89%
Other Civil Legal Proceedings	88%
Immigration/Refugee Hearings	78%

- As in past waves, the vast majority (87%) of British Columbians feel that legal aid is important to ensuring fairness in the justice system overall.
- Broadly nine-in-ten residents believe that offering legal aid in family court, criminal court, and other civil legal proceedings is important to ensuring fairness in the justice system, while slightly fewer (eight-in-ten) feel the same about immigration / refugee hearings.

## Public Positions on the Justice System & Legal Aid



### 83%

Strongly/  
Moderately Agree

**Everyone should have the right to access the justice system even if the provincial government has to spend more money on it**

- Public positions on the justice system and legal aid have not changed.
- The large majority (83%) of British Columbians agree that everyone should have the right to access the justice system even if the BC government has to spend more money on it.
- After edging up in 2016, agreement has held steady when it comes to prioritizing legal aid funding – 70% of residents feel that legal aid funding should be given the same priority as funding for other social services.



### 70%

Strongly/  
Moderately Agree

**Governments should give legal aid funding the same priority as funding for other social services**

## Legal Aid Funding Perceptions

Among the 53% offering an opinion:



### 62% ▼



Funding is **inadequate**

### 30%



Funding is **adequate**

### 8%



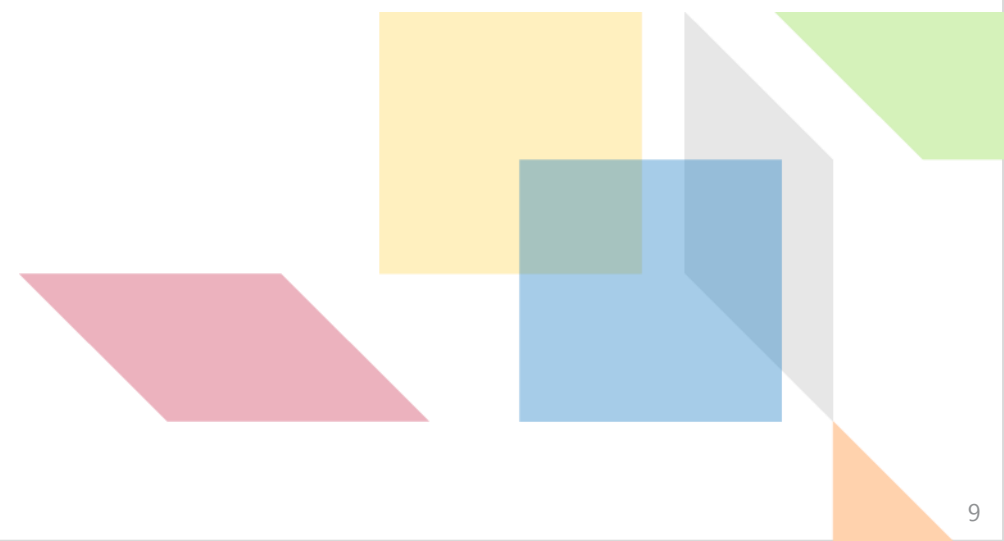
Funding is **more than adequate**

- Consistent with the lower levels of awareness, a smaller proportion of BC residents this year are able to offer an opinion on the adequacy of legal aid funding (just 53% can, compared to 60% in 2016).
- The majority of those sharing their perspective continue to believe that legal aid funding is inadequate. However, this point-of-view is not held by as many BC residents as in 2016 (two years ago, 71% felt that legal aid funding was inadequate).



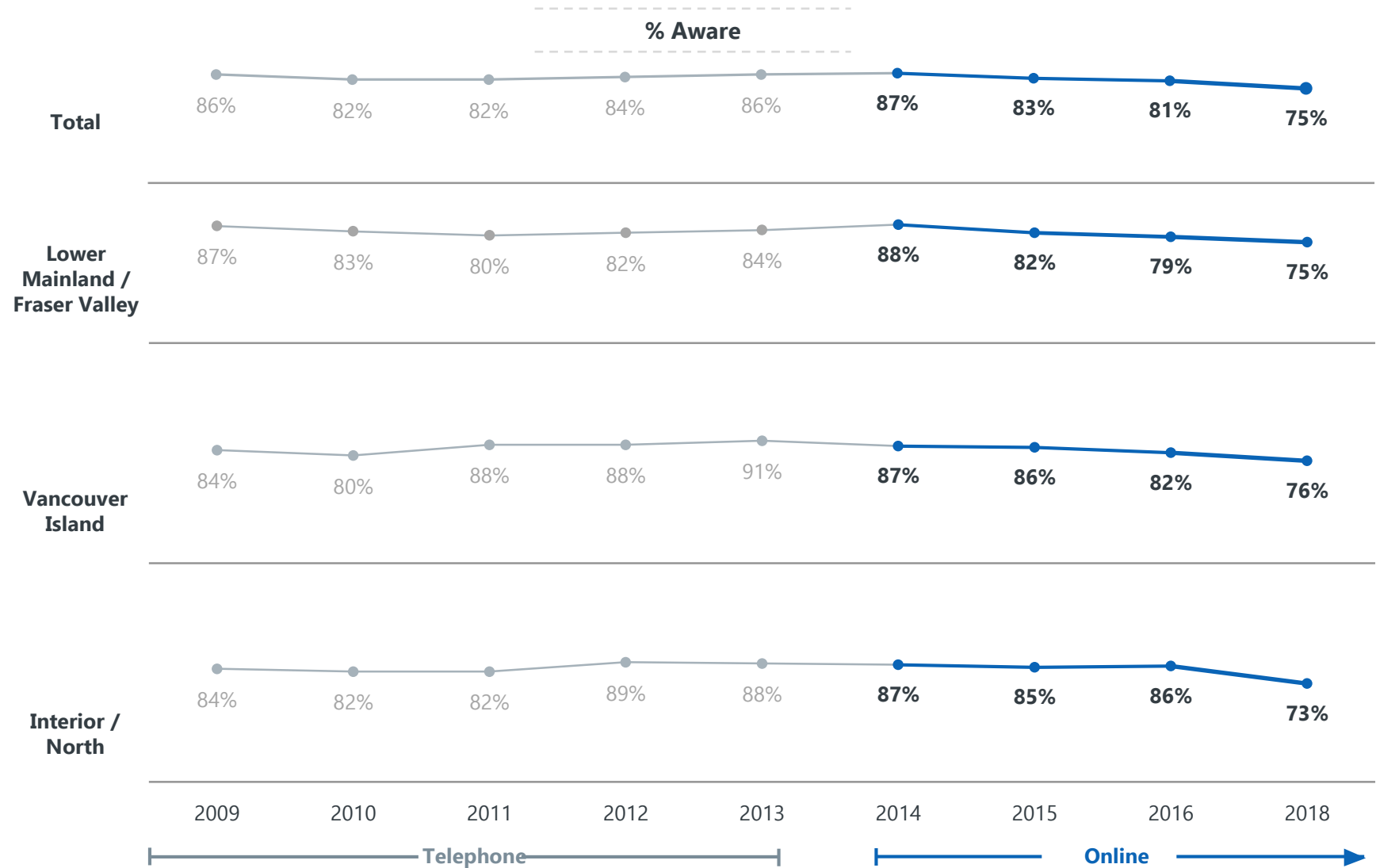
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# Summary of Findings



# Awareness of Legal Aid in BC

- › Three-quarters of BC residents report being aware that there are legal aid services available for British Columbians with low incomes. Awareness continues to edge down, which is a trend that has been evident since 2015.
- › While awareness of legal aid has been trending down across all areas of the province, it is significantly lower this year compared with 2016 in the Interior (73% this year versus 86% in 2016).
- › As in previous years, awareness of legal aid services is higher among older residents (88% of those 55+ are aware of legal aid versus 75% among those 35 to 54 and 55% among those 18 to 34).
- › Consistent with 2016, those with the lowest household incomes (earning less than \$25,000 a year) are the least likely to be aware of legal aid services (62% are aware).

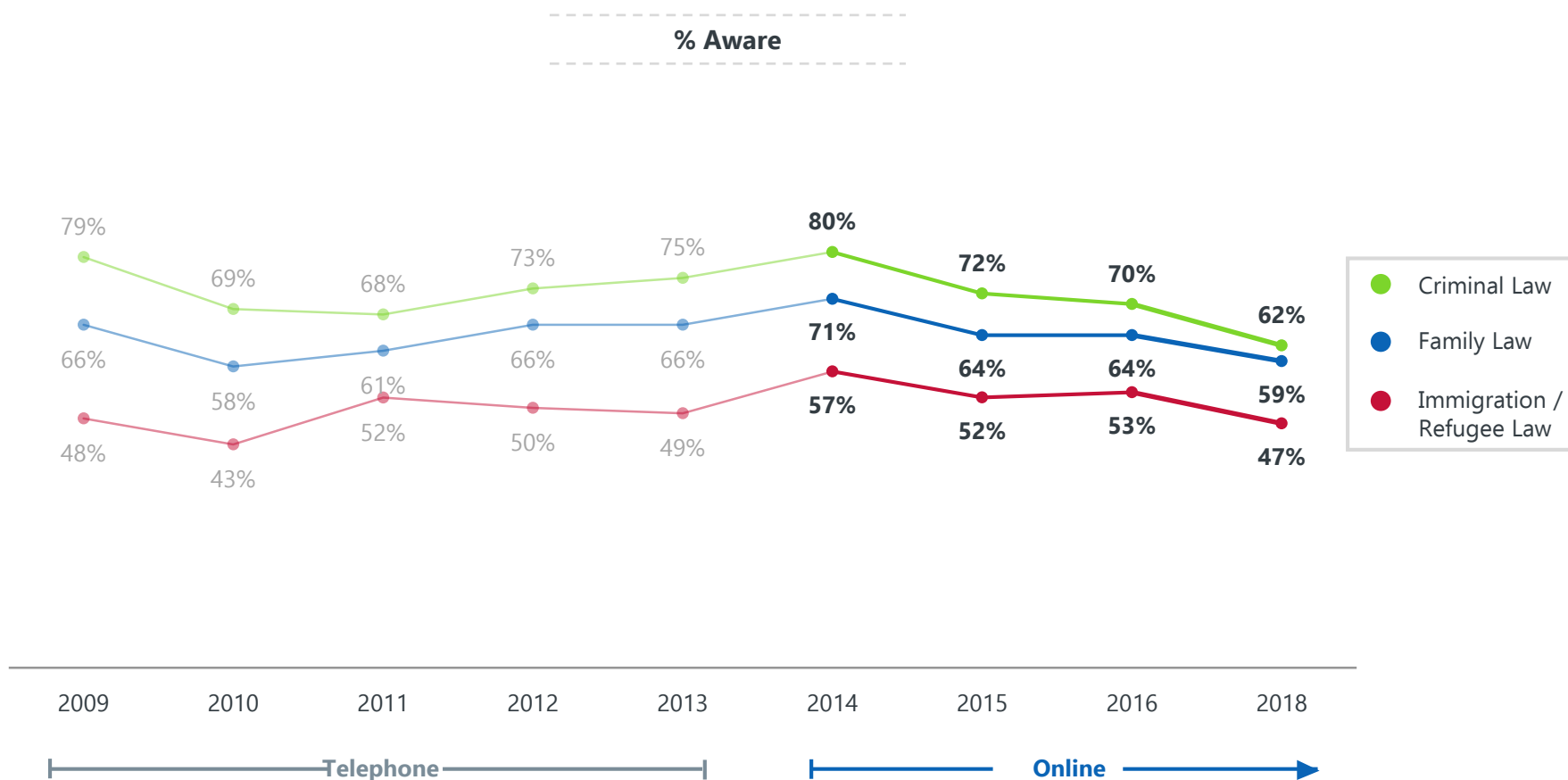


Total base size: 2009 (753), 2010 (574), 2011 (562), 2012 (602), 2013 (600), 2014 (612), 2015 (600), 2016 (620), 2018 (600)

LS1. Now we would like to ask you a few questions about legal aid. First of all, are you aware that there are legal aid services in BC for people with low incomes?

# Awareness of Legal Aid for Different Types of Cases

- › Consistent with historical trends, BC residents are more likely to be aware that legal aid services are available for people facing criminal law matters (62%) and family law matters (59%), than for immigration/refugee law matters (47%).
- › As with legal aid in general, awareness of legal aid services for different types of cases has also been trending down since 2015. For criminal law matters in particular, awareness which was at 80% in 2014 now stands at 62%.
- › Awareness of legal aid services being available for criminal, family and immigration/refugee matters increases as age increases – similar to general awareness of legal aid.
- › Women are more likely than men to be aware that legal aid services are available for family law matters (65% versus 54% among men) and for immigration/refugee law matters (52% versus 42% among men).



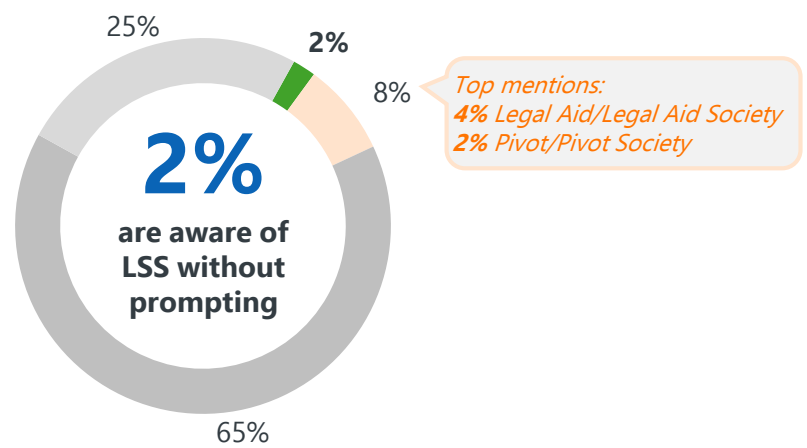
Total base size: 2009 (753), 2010 (574), 2011 (562), 2012 (602), 2013 (600), 2014 (612), 2015 (600), 2016 (620), 2018 (600)

LS2a-c. Did you know that legal aid services are available for people who are facing criminal law / family law / immigration/refugee matters?

# Legal Services Society Unaided & Aided Awareness

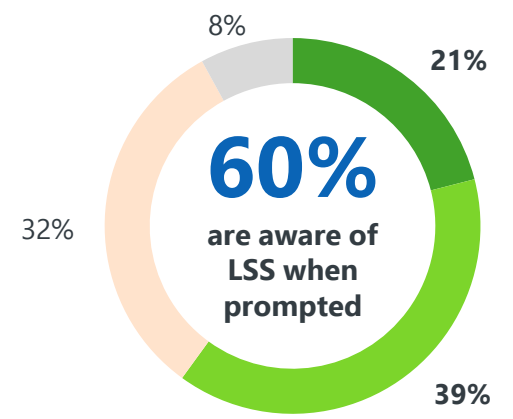
- Without being prompted, only 2% of British Columbians are able to correctly name the Legal Services Society as the organization that provides legal aid services in BC.
- Once prompted with the name, 60% of BC residents report recognizing the name, including 21% who report that they have definitely heard of it before.
- Among residents who are aware of legal aid in general, aided awareness of the organization's name reaches 71%.
- Again, awareness is highest among older residents – 71% of those 55+ say they have definitely heard of the name (30%) or say it sounds familiar (41%).

## Unaided Awareness



- Correctly identified the Legal Services Society unaided
- Identified incorrect organization name
- Aware of legal aid but not aware of organization's name
- Not aware of legal aid services

## Aided Awareness



- Yes, definitely heard of the Legal Services Society
- Maybe, name sounds familiar
- No, never heard that name before
- Not sure

Total base size: 2018 (600)

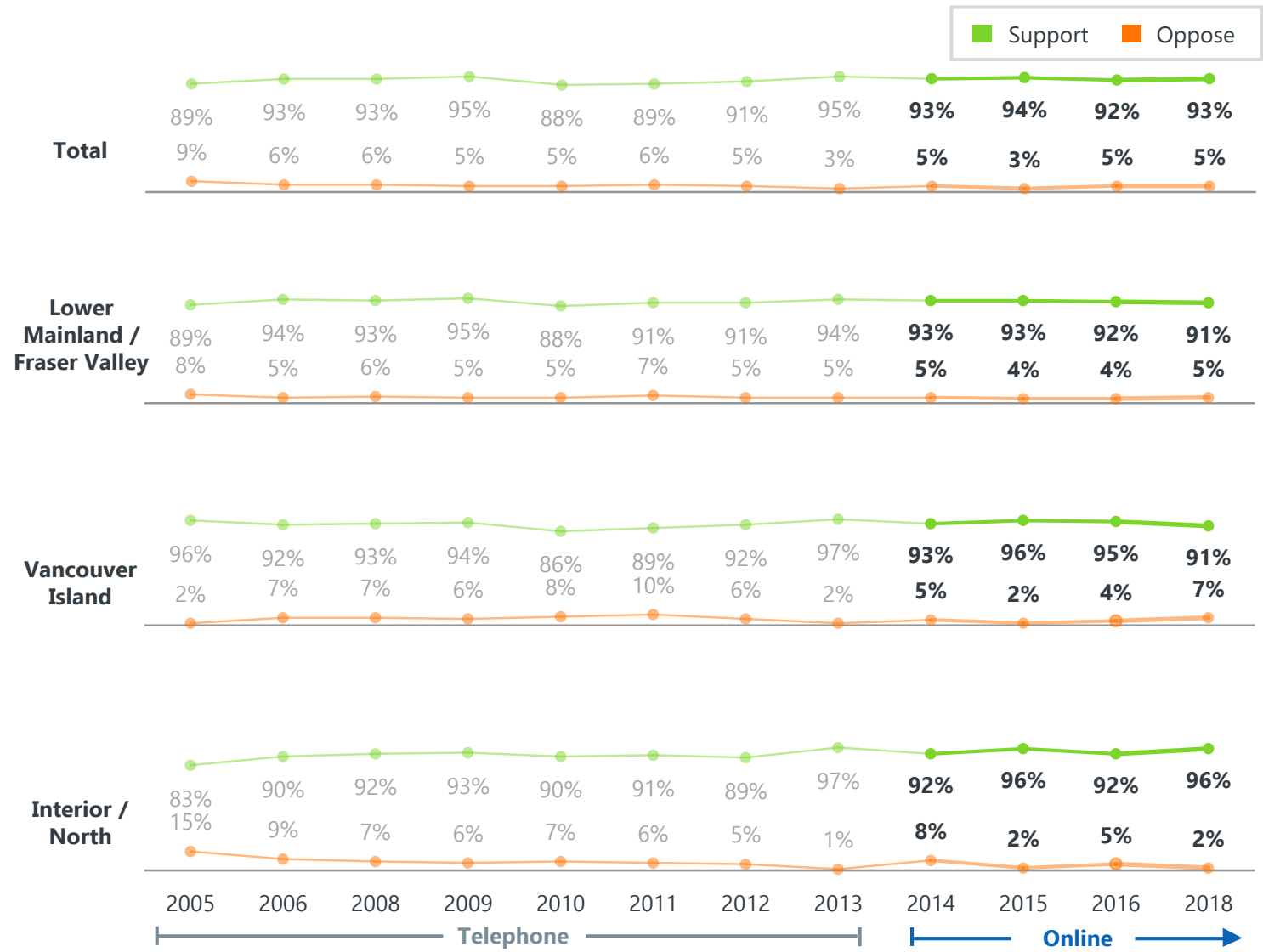
LS2b. Do you happen to know the name of the organization in BC that provides legal aid services for people with low incomes?

LS2c. What is the organization's name? (please specify)

LS2d. As you may or may not already know, the name of the organization in BC that provides legal aid services for people with low incomes is the Legal Services Society. Before today, had you heard of this organization?

# Support / Oppose Legal Aid Services

- Overall, 9-in-10 BC residents continue to support legal aid services, including 59% who express strong support. Only 5% of British Columbians oppose legal aid services.
- Support for legal aid remains largely unchanged from 2016.
- The level of support for legal aid services is comparable across regions, with the strongest support coming from residents of the Interior (67% strongly support legal aid services).
- Residents with household incomes of less than \$25,000 a year are significantly more likely to *strongly* support legal aid than the average BC resident (83% compared to 59% overall).
- Women, compared to men, also express stronger support for legal aid (64% strongly support it versus 53% of men).



Total base size: 2005 (763), 2006 (745), 2008 (730), 2009 (753), 2010 (574), 2011 (562), 2012 (602), 2013 (600), 2014 (612), 2015 (600), 2016 (620), 2018 (600)

LS3. As you may already know, legal aid services provide low income people with legal information, advice, and/or representation in court. This can include providing them with self-help materials, giving them a few hours of legal advice, or paying a lawyer to represent them in court for serious family, criminal, or immigration/refugee problems. Knowing this, to what extent do you support or oppose legal aid services?

2018	
Base	(600)
<b>Strongly</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>Moderately</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Moderately</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Strongly</b>	<b>1%</b>
No opinion / don't know	3%

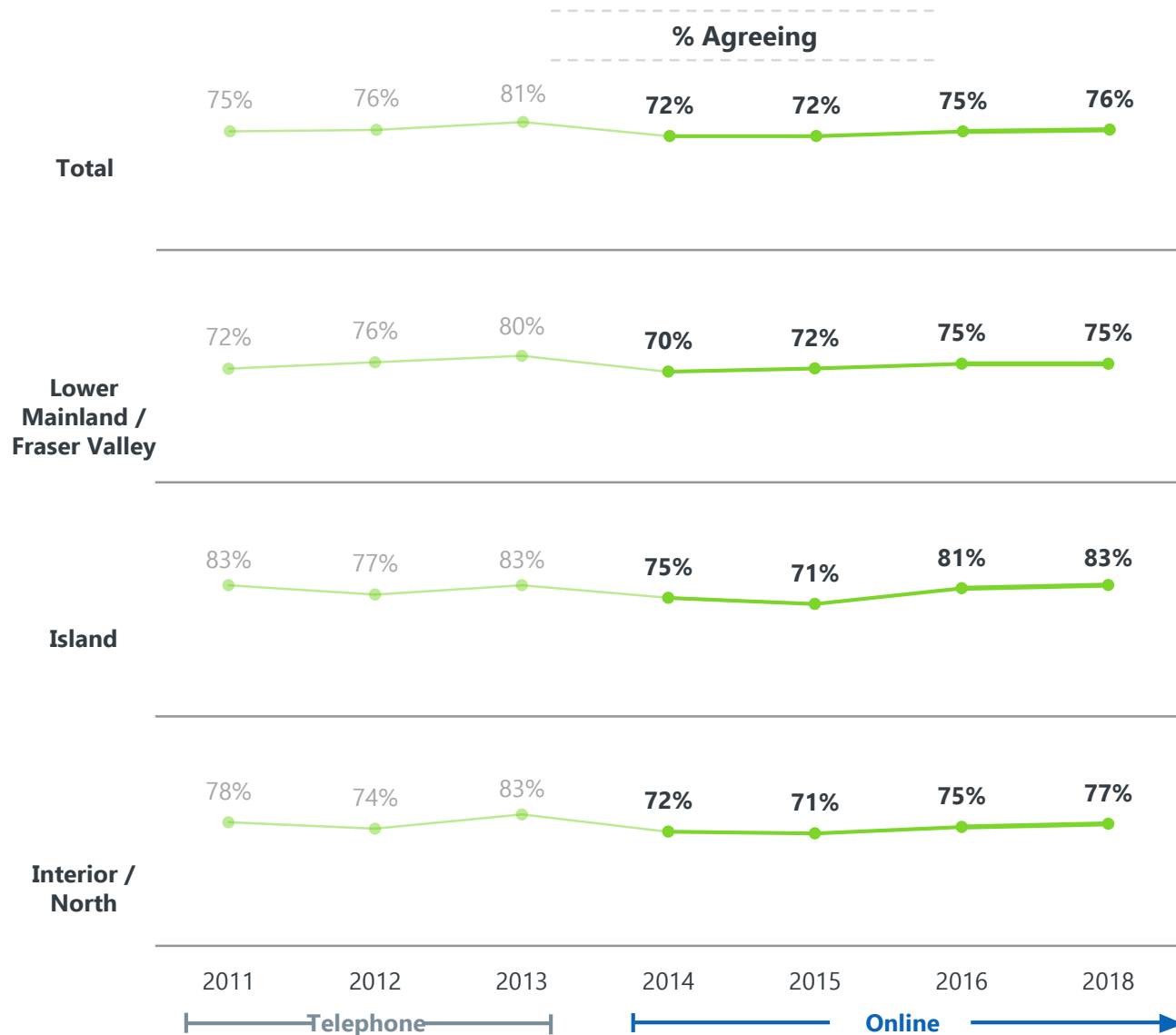
<b>Strongly</b>	<b>56%</b>
<b>Moderately</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Moderately</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Strongly</b>	<b>1%</b>
No opinion / don't know	4%

<b>Strongly</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Moderately</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Moderately</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Strongly</b>	<b>1%</b>
No opinion / don't know	2%

<b>Strongly</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Moderately</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Moderately</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Strongly</b>	<b>1%</b>
No opinion / don't know	2%

# Should LSS Support Clients by Addressing Related Issues?

- › Unchanged from 2016, 76% of BC residents agree that LSS should support their clients in addressing problems that are related to their legal issues.
- › The greatest support for offering this type of service comes from residents of Vancouver Island (83% support it).
- › Meanwhile, compared to other regions, Metro Vancouver residents are less likely to *strongly* agree that LSS should help clients in this way (36% compared to just under one-half of Vancouver Island and Interior residents).
- › Support is highest among lower income households – 91% among those with a household income of less than \$25,000 a year agree that legal aid should support their clients by addressing problems related to their legal issues.



Total base size: 2011 (562), 2012 (602), 2013 (600), 2014 (612), 2015 (600), 2016 (620), 2018 (600)

LS3a. Do you strongly agree, agree, partly agree/partly disagree, disagree or strongly disagree that... Legal Aid should support their clients in addressing problems that are related to their legal issues (such as housing problems, debt, health problems, etc.)?

2018	
Base	(600)
Strongly agree	40%
Agree	36%
Partly agree / disagree	15%
Disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	1%
No opinion / don't know	3%

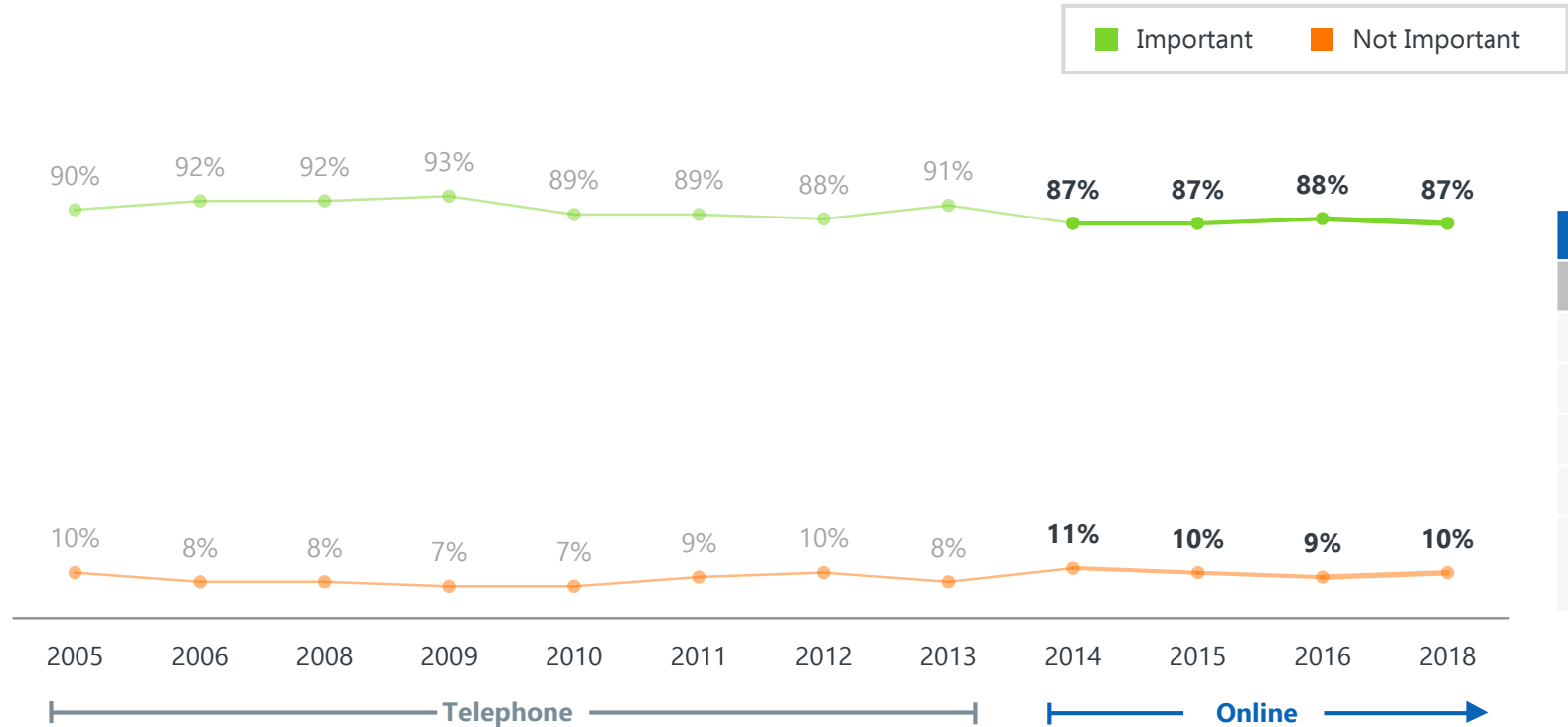
Strongly agree	36%
Agree	39%
Partly agree / disagree	15%
Disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	1%
No opinion / don't know	5%

Strongly agree	49%
Agree	34%
Partly agree / disagree	12%
Disagree	2%
Strongly disagree	1%
No opinion / don't know	2%

Strongly agree	47%
Agree	30%
Partly agree / disagree	16%
Disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	2%
No opinion / don't know	1%

# Fairness in the Justice System – Overall

- > Overall, 87% of BC residents think it is important to fairness in the justice system for BC to provide low income people with legal aid. Perceptions are generally in line with historical trends.
- > There are several groups who are particularly apt to indicate that legal aid is *very* important to fairness in the justice system:
  - > Interior residents (64%)
  - > Women (63%)
  - > Residents with the highest level of education reached being high school or less (66%)
  - > Households making less \$45,000 a year (67%)



2018	
Base	(600)
<b>Very</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Not very</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Not at all</b>	<b>3%</b>
No opinion / don't know	3%

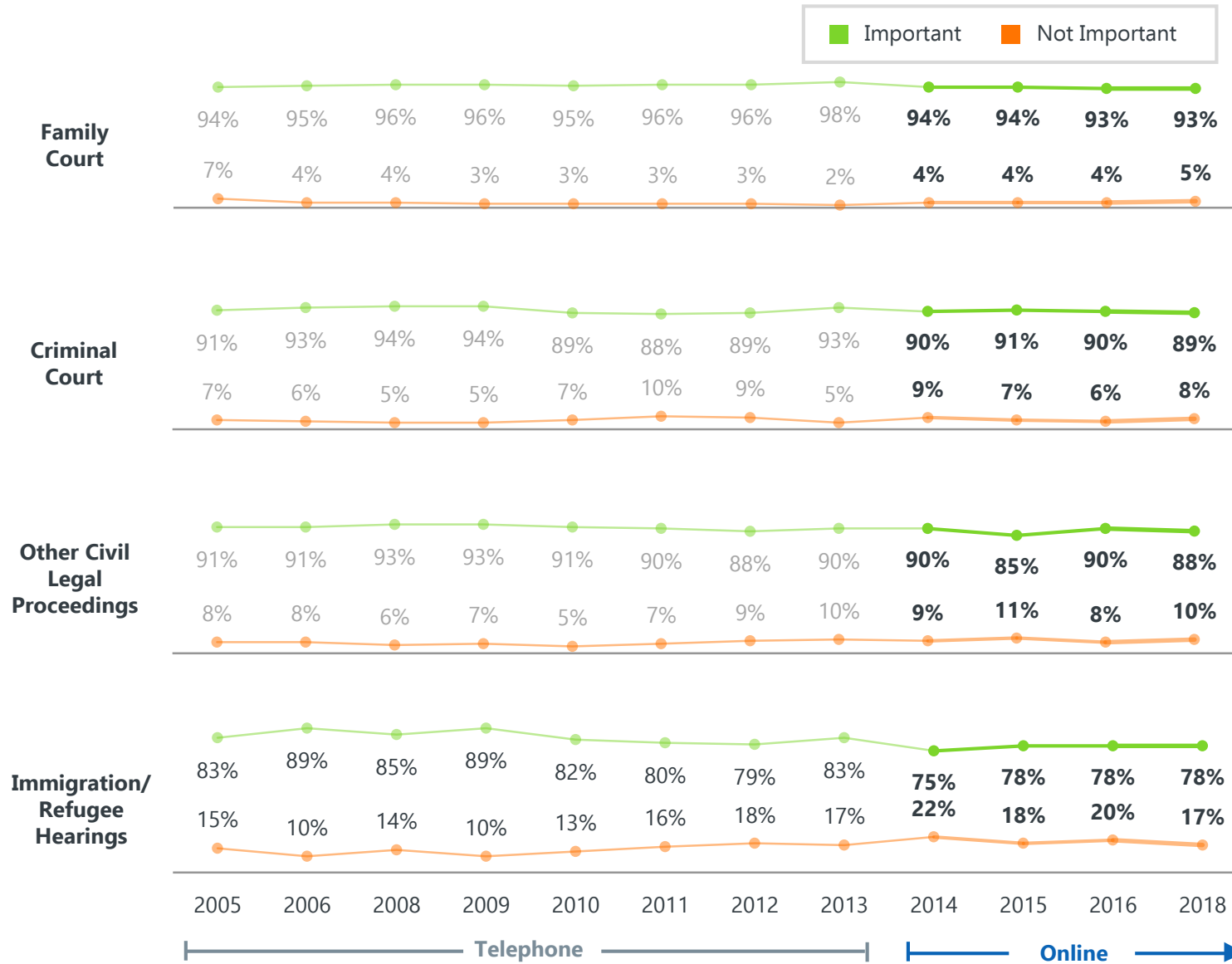
Total base size: 2005 (763), 2006 (745), 2008 (730), 2009 (753), 2010 (574), 2011 (562), 2012 (602), 2013 (600), 2014 (612), 2015 (600), 2016 (620), 2018 (600)

Results are based on an average of importance ratings for providing legal aid in the following four areas combined: family court, criminal court, immigration/refugee hearings and other civil legal proceedings.

LS4. In your opinion, how important is it to fairness in the justice system for BC to provide low income people with legal aid in...?

# Fairness in the Justice System – By Type of Law

- While the large majority of residents continue to consider providing legal aid for family court, criminal court and other civil legal proceedings important to ensuring fairness in the justice system, the strongest importance is accorded to family court (69% rating it as *very* important), followed by criminal court (61%).
- Also consistent with past trends, offering legal aid services for immigration/refugee hearings is perceived as the least important of the four areas when it comes to ensuring fairness in the justice system (78% rating it as important overall and 46% rating it as very important).
- Residents with the lowest household incomes (less than \$25,000 a year) place particularly high importance on having legal aid for family court (87% rating it as very important) and criminal court (81% rating it as very important) to ensure fairness in the justice system.
- Conversely, this same group of low income residents are the least likely to think that it is important to ensuring fairness in the justice system to offer legal aid for immigration/refugee hearings (65% consider it to be important versus 78% overall).



Total base size: 2005 (763), 2006 (745), 2008 (730), 2009 (753), 2010 (574), 2011 (562), 2012 (602), 2013 (600), 2014 (612), 2015 (600), 2016 (620), 2018 (600)

LS4. In your opinion, how important is it to fairness in the justice system for BC to provide low income people with legal aid in...?

2018	
Base	(600)
Very	69%
Somewhat	24%
Not very	4%
Not at all	1%
No opinion / don't know	2%

Very	61%
Somewhat	28%
Not very	5%
Not at all	3%
No opinion / don't know	3%

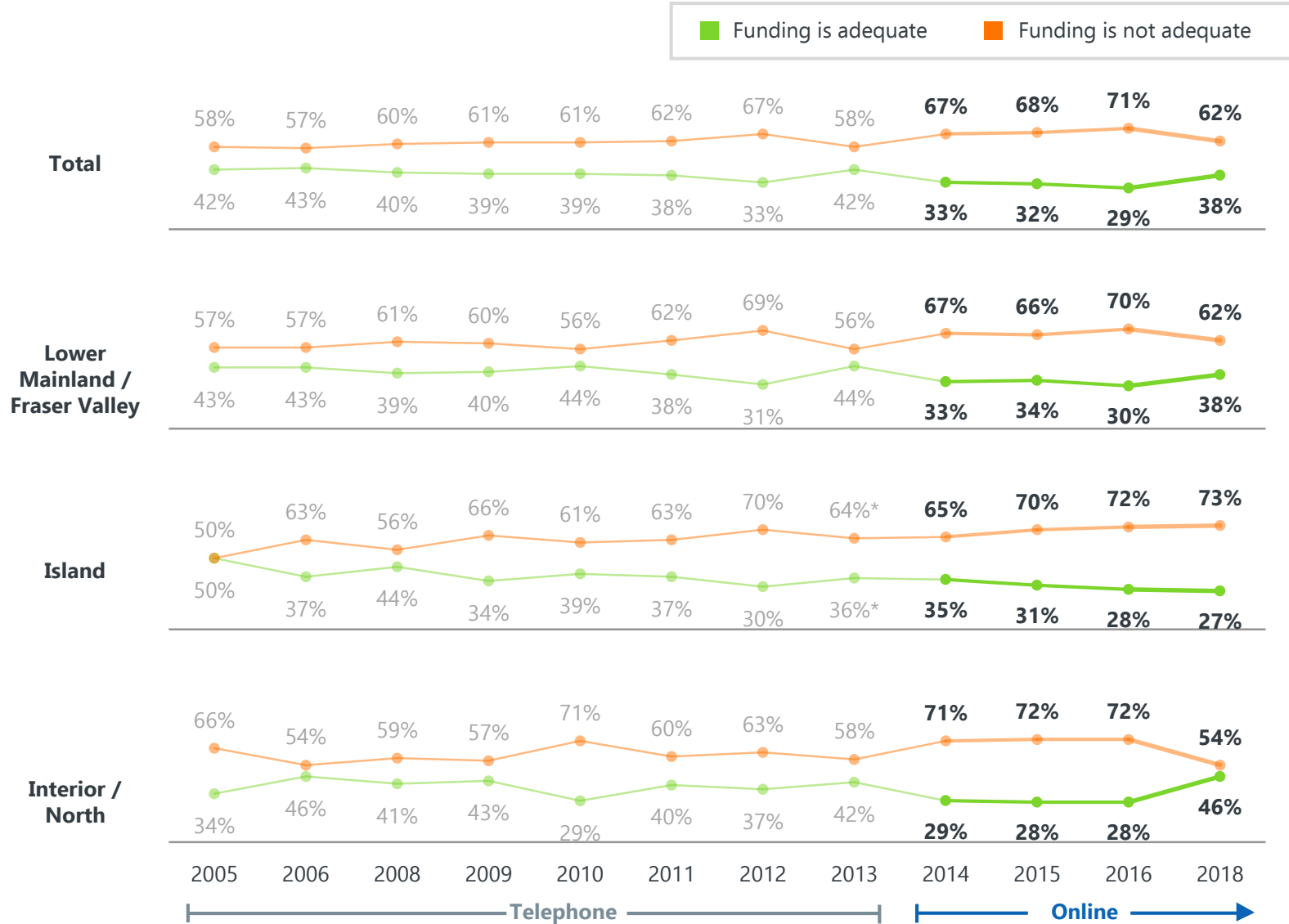
Very	55%
Somewhat	33%
Not very	7%
Not at all	3%
No opinion / don't know	3%

Very	46%
Somewhat	32%
Not very	10%
Not at all	7%
No opinion / don't know	4%



# Legal Aid Funding Perceptions (among those with an opinion)

- Consistent with lower awareness of legal aid in general, fewer BC residents this year compared to two years ago are able to offer an opinion about the adequacy of legal aid funding (60% could offer an opinion in 2016 and this year only 53% could).
- Among those who can provide an assessment, the majority (62%) feel that legal aid services are underfunded, while 38% think funding is adequate or more than adequate. Compared to two years ago, significantly more residents feel that funding is adequate/more than adequate.
- There is disparity among funding perceptions across the regions.
- Vancouver Island residents continue to be the most likely to believe funding is inadequate (73%).
- In the Interior, residents are almost equally likely to feel funding is inadequate (54%) as they are to feel it is adequate (46%). Since 2016, Interior resident perceptions have significantly shifted, as two years ago 72% felt funding for legal aid was inadequate and only 28% thought it was adequate.



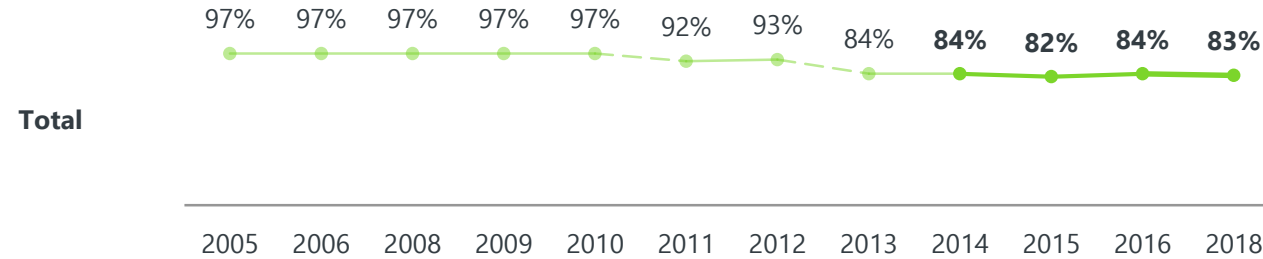
Base: Among those giving an opinion - 2014 (399), 2015 (372), 2016 (371), 2018 (316). Note: Base sizes for 2005 to 2013 are not available  
 \*Caution small base size  
 LS5. Based on anything you may have read, heard or seen, would you say that legal aid services in British Columbia are...

# Public Positions on the Justice System & Legal Aid

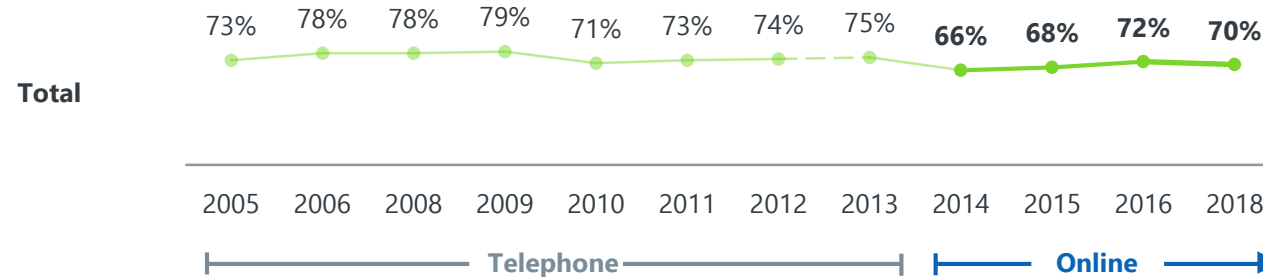
- › Generally unchanged from 2016, 83% of BC residents agree that everyone should have the right to access the justice system, even if that means the provincial government has to spend more money on it.
- › Also unchanged from past trends, 70% agree that governments should give legal aid funding the same priority as other social services.
- › While general perceptions on these two positions remain in line with past trends, the strength of agreement has softened:
  - › When it comes to agreeing that everyone has the right to access the justice system 40% strongly agree with this position versus 46% in 2016.
  - › Government giving legal aid funding the same priority as other social services currently has 22% strongly agreeing versus 29% in 2016.
- › Those with lower household incomes (less than \$25,000 a year) express particularly strong agreement with both points-of-view compared to their higher earning counterparts (this being especially true for making sure everyone has access to the justice system).

## % Agreeing

*Everyone should have the right to access the justice system even if that means the provincial government, which provides most of the funding for legal aid, has to spend more money on it.\**



*Governments should give funding for legal aid the same priority as they give to funding for other social services such as health care, education, welfare, and child protection.\**



2018	
Base	(600)
Strongly agree	40%
Moderately agree	43%
Moderately disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	3%
No opinion / don't know	5%

Strongly agree	22%
Moderately agree	48%
Moderately disagree	18%
Strongly disagree	7%
No opinion / don't know	6%

Total base size: 2005 (763), 2006 (745), 2008 (730), 2009 (753), 2010 (574), 2011 (562), 2012 (602), 2013 (600), 2014 (612), 2015 (600), 2016 (620), 2018 (600)

\*New wording/question order was implemented in 2011 and 2013, trends should be viewed with caution.

LS6. Would you agree or disagree with the following statement? Everyone should have the right to access the justice system even if that means the provincial government, which provides most of the funding for legal aid, has to spend more money on it.

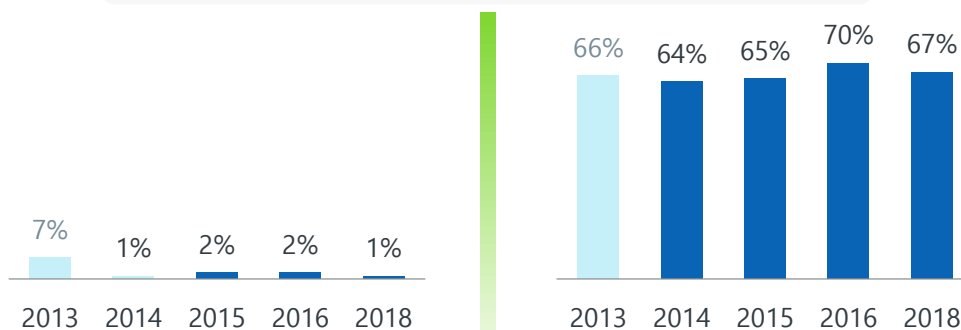
LS7. Most of the funding for legal aid comes from the provincial government. Would you agree or disagree with the following statement? Governments should give funding for legal aid the same priority as they give to funding for other social services such as health care, education, welfare, and child protection.

# Public Positions on the Justice System & Legal Aid (cont'd)

This chart combines BC resident opinions on everyone having the right to access the justice system, even if the provincial government has to spend more money on it *and* their opinions on governments giving legal aid funding the same priority as they give other social services. The majority agree with the two positions (top, right-hand quadrant), whereas one-in-ten disagree with both (bottom, left-hand quadrant).

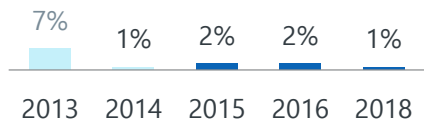
- Public opinions on the justice system and legal aid are in line with two years ago.
- Two-thirds continue to agree that everyone should have the right to access the justice system *and* that legal aid funding should be given the same priority as other social services. Meanwhile, 10% disagree with both points of view.
- For 13%, while they agree that everyone should have access to the justice system even if the government has to spend more money on it, they do not support prioritizing legal aid funding equally with other social services.

**Agree** governments should give funding for legal aid the same priority as they give to funding for other social services



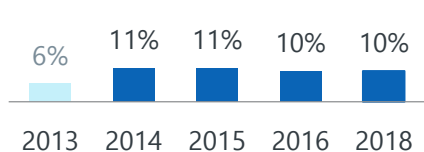
■ Telephone  
■ Online

**Disagree** everyone should have the right to access the justice system

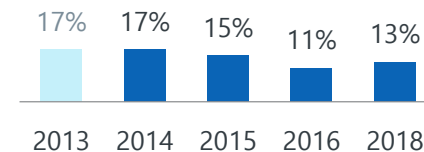


**Agree** everyone should have the right to access the justice system

**Disagree** everyone should have the right to access the justice system



**Disagree** governments should give funding for legal aid the same priority as they give to funding for other social services



Total base size: 2013 (600), 2014 (612), 2015 (600), 2016 (620), 2018 (600)

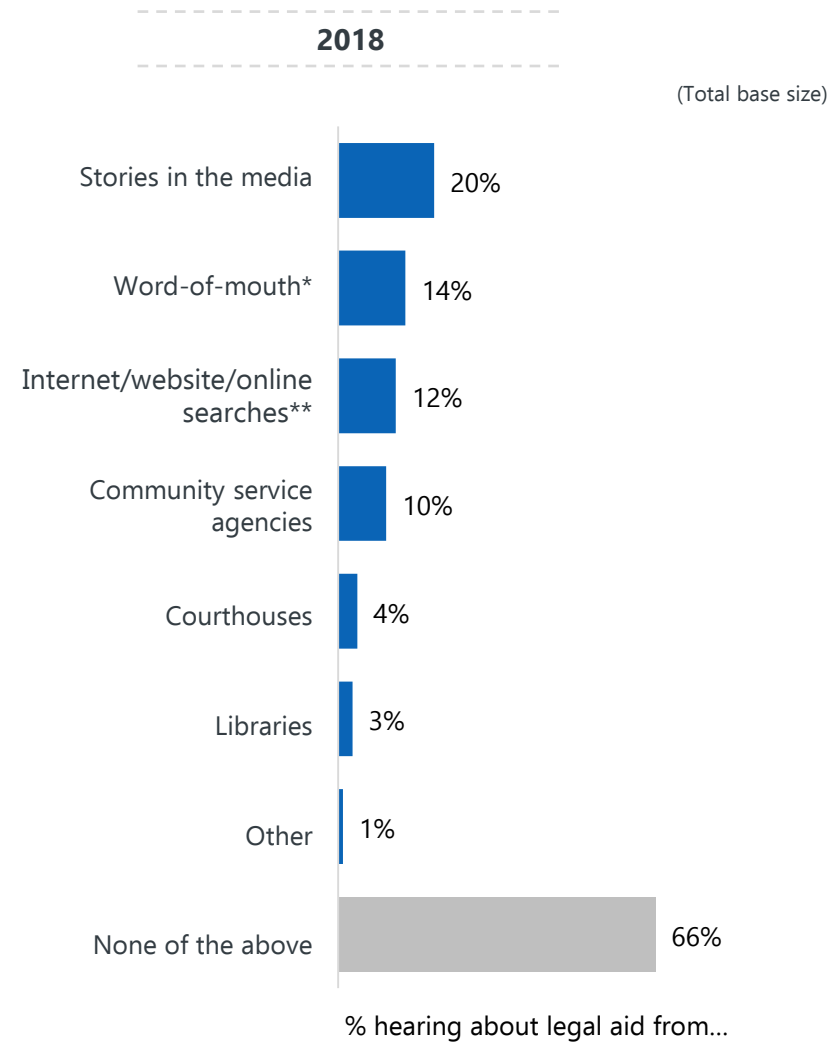
Note: "No opinion/don't know" responses were 3% in 2013, 7% in 2014, 6% in 2015, 5% in 2016 and 3% in 2018.

LS6. Would you agree or disagree with the following statement? Everyone should have the right to access the justice system even if that means the provincial government, which provides most of the funding for legal aid, has to spend more money on it.

LS7. Most of the funding for legal aid comes from the provincial government. Would you agree or disagree with the following statement? Governments should give funding for legal aid the same priority as they give to funding for other social services such as health care, education, welfare, and child protection.

# Sources of Legal Aid Information

- Consistent with 2016, two-thirds of British Columbians don't recall getting any information about legal aid or hearing anything about legal aid in the past few months.
- For those who have heard about legal aid recently, it's most likely to be through stories in the news (20%), although this has been trending down for the past several years.
- Broadly 1-in-10 obtained information about legal aid through word-of-mouth, community service agencies, or on the internet.



(Total base size)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2018
	(753)	(574)	(562)	(602)	(600)	(612)	(600)	(620)	(600)
Stories in the media	43%	42%	43%	49%	34%	31%	31%	26%	<b>20%</b>
Word-of-mouth*	4%	26%	24%	22%	20%	17%	17%	14%	<b>14%</b>
Internet/website/online searches**	N/A								<b>12%</b>
Community service agencies	14%	12%	10%	11%	12%	12%	11%	10%	<b>10%</b>
Courthouses	11%	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%	5%	4%	<b>4%</b>
Libraries	6%	7%	4%	5%	7%	4%	3%	4%	<b>3%</b>
Other	4%	4%	1%	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%	<b>1%</b>
None of the above	42%	41%	45%	38%	47%	58%	58%	64%	<b>66%</b>



Total Base size: 2018 (600)

\*This response was added to the response list in 2010.

\*\*This response was added to the response list in 2018.

LS8. In the past few months, did you hear about (get information about) legal aid from any of the following sources?

# Suggested Improvements for Legal Aid Services

- › The top suggestion to improve legal aid services in BC continues to be improving or increasing the funding (mentioned by 9%). This is followed by suggestions to increase advertising and public awareness (7%) and improving access and availability (6%).
- › Among those in the lowest household income bracket (earning less than \$25,000 a year), the top suggestion provided is to have better access and availability of services (mentioned by 14%).
- › 69% of BC residents did not mention any suggestions for improvement which is notably more than in past years.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2018
(Total base size)	(753)	(574)	(562)	(602)	(600)	(612)	(600)	(620)	(600)
Improve / increase funding	22%	18%	18%	21%	19%	15%	14%	11%	<b>9%</b>
More advertising / promotion / public awareness	14%	14%	15%	11%	13%	9%	4%	5%	<b>7%</b>
Improved access / availability / availability for lower income	18%	9%	6%	7%	6%	11%	5%	5%	<b>6%</b>
Make system more efficient (legal / judicial / courts)	3%	2%	5%	3%	5%	5%	3%	2%	<b>2%</b>
Better government / a government that supports legal aid	–	–	1%	1%	3%	1%	3%	2%	<b>2%</b>
Expand qualifications for legal aid / raise max. income level	–	2%	2%	3%	2%	4%	5%	3%	<b>1%</b>
More lawyers doing pro bono work / who will work for lower fees	–	2%	1%	4%	2%	2%	4%	3%	<b>1%</b>
More lawyers available	8%	5%	3%	5%	3%	3%	2%	3%	<b>1%</b>
Better funding management	–	–	–	–	3%	2%	0%	3%	<b>1%</b>
Better guidelines as to who should qualify for legal aid	5%	3%	3%	5%	5%	5%	3%	2%	<b>1%</b>
Have legal seminars / more education about legal issues	–	–	–	–	–	–	1%	2%	<b>1%</b>
More qualified legal representation	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	<b>1%</b>
More help / support for family matters	–	–	–	–	2%	2%	1%	1%	<b>1%</b>
Other	10%	3%	2%	2%	5%	8%	4%	3%	<b>5%</b>
None / no improvement necessary	2%	24%	24%	36%	4%	7%	0%	0%	<b>1%</b>
Don't know / not stated	32%	26%	26%	15%	43%	37%	58%	62%	<b>69%</b>

Telephone
  Online

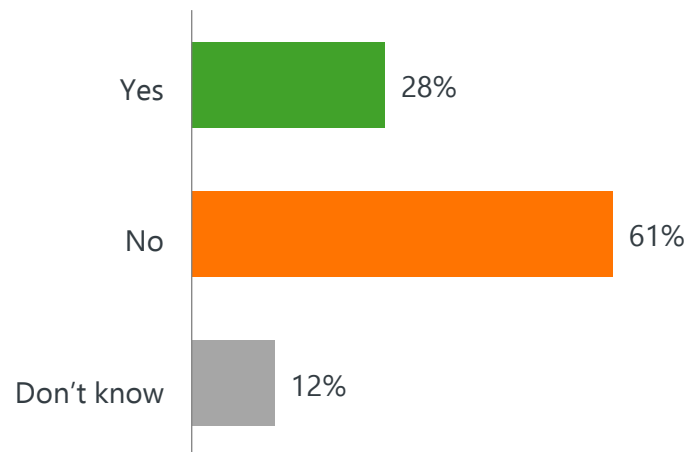
Note: 2018 main mentions only.

LS9. How do you think legal aid services in British Columbia could be improved?

# Awareness of Legal Information Services for *All* British Columbians\*

- › The majority of BC residents (61%) are not aware that legal aid provides information services to all British Columbians regardless of income level.
- › Just over one-quarter (28%) are aware that these services are available. This proportion rises to 34% among those who are aware of legal aid in general.
- › Regionally, those living on Vancouver Island are the most likely to report knowing that legal information services are available to all residents regardless of income (32% aware).
- › Those with household incomes of less than \$25,000 a year are significantly less likely to be aware than the average resident – just 11% know that legal aid services are available to all British Columbians.

## Awareness that Legal Aid Information Services are Available Regardless of Income Level



### % Aware by Region

LM/FV	Van Island	Interior / North
(371)	(103)	(126)
28%	32%	25%

\*New question added in 2018

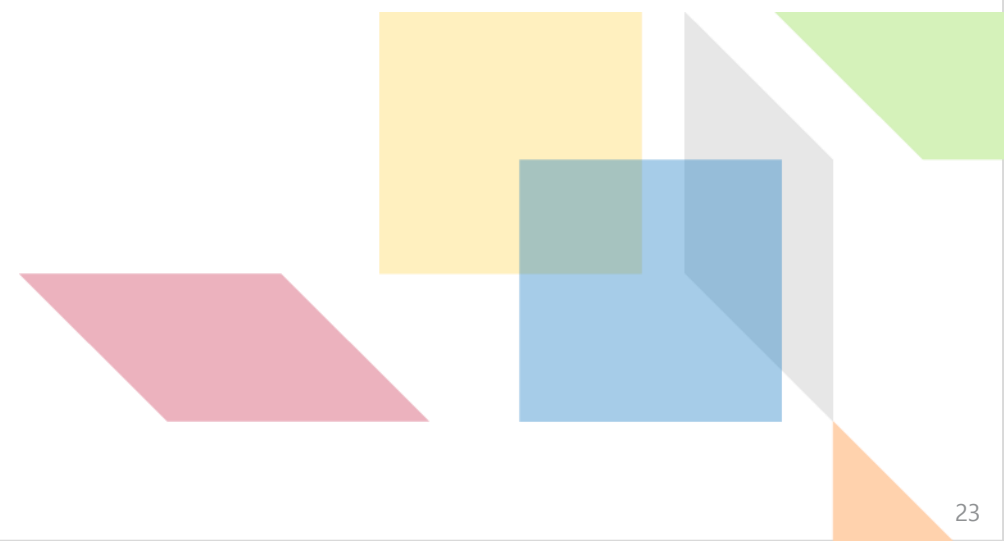
Total base 2018 (600)

LS10. Before today, were you aware that legal aid provides legal information services (such as websites and publications) to all British Columbians regardless of income level?



# Appendix

## Demographic Profile





		Region			
		Total	LM / FV	Van Island	Interior / North
		%	%	%	%
<b>Gender</b>	(base)	(600)	(371)	(103)	(126)
Female		51	52	51	52
Male		49	48	49	48



Age					
18-24		5	4	8	6
25-34		22	26	15	18
35-44		13	14	11	11
45-54		20	20	19	19
55-64		17	17	13	19
65+		23	18	34	26



Region					
Metro Vancouver			86	-	-
Fraser Valley			14	-	-
Vancouver Island / Coast			-	100	-
Thompson / Kootenays / Okanagan			-	-	84
North (North Coast / Nechako / Northeast)			-	-	16



# Respondent Profile



	Region			
	Total	Van Coast	Van Island	Interior / North
	%	%	%	%
<b>Educational Background</b> (base)	(600)	(371)	(103)	(126)
High school or less	12	8	9	26
Vocational / technical / college	25	21	33	28
Some university	14	15	11	13
Graduated university	32	38	31	19
Prefer not to answer	16	17	17	10



Household Income				
Less than \$25,000	5	3	7	9
\$25,000 to less than \$45,000	13	11	14	19
\$45,000 to less than \$65,000	13	13	14	13
\$65,000 to less than \$100,000	24	25	23	21
\$100,000 or more	25	28	22	17
Prefer not to answer	20	19	20	22

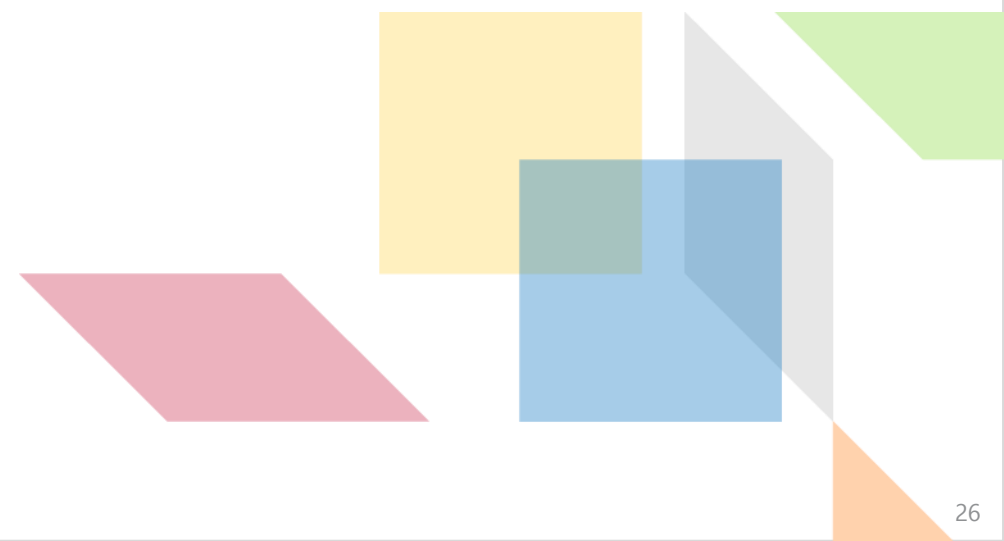


Household Composition				
Single with no children	27	25	32	23
Couple with no children	40	36	43	46
Family with children (includes single parent household)	24	26	17	21
Other	6	6	4	9
Prefer not to answer	4	5	4	2



# Appendix

## Questionnaire





LSa Are you, or is anyone in your household, closely related to a legal aid employee or a lawyer who provides legal aid services?

- 1. Yes [TERMINATE](#)
- 2. No
- 98. Don't know [TERMINATE](#)

D6 In which area of BC do you live?

- 1. Metro Vancouver
- 2. Fraser Valley
- 3. Vancouver Island / Coast
- 4. Thompson / Kootenays / Okanagan
- 5. North (North Coast / Nechako / Northeast)
- 97. Do not live in BC [TERMINATE](#)

D1 Which of the following describes your age?

- 1. 18 to 24
- 2. 25 to 34
- 3. 35 to 44
- 4. 45 to 54
- 5. 55 to 64
- 6. 65+

D5 Which of the following best describes you?

- 1. Male
- 2. Female

LS1 Now we would like to ask you a few questions about legal aid.

First of all, are you aware that there are legal aid services in BC for people with low incomes?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No [\[SKIP TO LS2d\]](#)
- 98. Don't know [\[SKIP TO LS2d\]](#)

LS2 Did you know that legal aid services are available for people who are facing...

- a. Criminal law matters
- b. Family law matters
- c. Immigration / refugee matters

**SCALE:** 1. Yes / 2. No / 98. Don't know

SAVE & RESUME LATER

NEXT



LS2b. Do you happen to know the **name of the organization** in BC that provides legal aid services for people with low incomes?

1. Yes

**IF YES, POP IN LS2c:** LS2c. What is the organization's name? (*please specify*) **TEXT BOX**

2. No

3. Not sure

LS2d. As you may or may not already know, the name of the organization in BC that provides legal aid services for people with low incomes is the **Legal Services Society**. Before today, had you heard of this organization?

1. Yes, definitely heard of the Legal Services Society

2. Maybe, name sounds familiar

3. No, never heard that name before

4. Not sure

LS3 As you may or may not already know, legal aid services provide low income people with legal information, advice, and/or representation in court.

This can include providing them with self-help materials, giving them a few hours of legal advice, or paying a lawyer to represent them in court for serious family, criminal, or immigration/refugee problems.

*What is low income?* (Button that opens up the explanation)

*Low income refers to those people who do not have enough money each month to buy basic goods. This amount of money is estimated by the federal and provincial governments and is based on the community in which a person lives.*

Knowing this, to what extent do you support or oppose legal aid services?

1. Strongly support

2. Moderately support

3. Moderately oppose

4. Strongly oppose

98. No opinion / don't know

LS3a To what extent do you agree or disagree that... Legal Aid should support their clients in addressing problems that are related to their legal issues (such as housing problems, debt, health problems, etc.)?

1. Strongly agree

2. Agree

3. Partly agree / partly disagree

4. Disagree

5. Strongly disagree

98. No opinion / don't know

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LS4 In your opinion, how important is it to fairness in the justice system for BC to provide low income people with legal aid

**[RANDOMIZE LIST]**

- a. In family court
- b. In immigration / refugee hearings
- c. In other civil legal proceedings (such as foreclosures, bankruptcies, employment insurance collection, disability benefits collection, or other poverty law proceedings)
- d. In criminal court

- 1. Very important
- 2. Somewhat important
- 3. Not very important
- 4. Not at all important
- 98. No opinion / don't know

LS5 Based on anything you may have read, heard or seen, would you say that legal aid services in British Columbia are

- 1. More than adequately funded
- 2. Adequately funded
- 3. Not adequately funded
- 98. No opinion / don't know

**ROTATE ORDER OF LS6 AND LS7**

LS6 Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Everyone should have the right to access the justice system even if that means the provincial government, which provides most of the funding for legal aid, has to spend more money on it.

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Moderately agree
- 3. Moderately disagree
- 4. Strongly disagree
- 98. No opinion / don't know

LS7 Most of the funding for legal aid comes from the provincial government.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Governments should give funding for legal aid the same priority as they give to funding for other social services such as health care, education, welfare, and child protection.

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Moderately agree
- 3. Moderately disagree
- 4. Strongly disagree
- 98. No opinion/don't know



LS8 In the past few months, did you hear about (get information about) legal aid from any of the following sources? **[RANDOMIZE LIST]**

- a. Courthouses
- b. Libraries
- c. Stories in the media (newspaper, tv and / or radio)
- d. Internet/website/online searches
- e. Community service agencies (This includes women's centres, transition houses, the John Howard and Elizabeth Fry Societies, Native Courtworker offices, Native Friendship Centres, community centres, multicultural and immigrant associations, seniors centres and youth clinics as examples.)
- f. Word-of-mouth (e.g. friends, family, acquaintances)
- g. Any other sources (specify)

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

LS9. How do you think legal aid services in British Columbia could be improved?

*Enter your comments into the space below*

**[OPEN END]**

99. No Comment

LS10. Before today, were you aware that legal aid provides legal information services (such as websites and publications) to all British Columbians regardless of income level?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 98. Don't know

## Wrap Up

D2 Which of the following categories best describes your educational background?

- 1. High school or less
- 2. Vocational / technical / college
- 3. Some university
- 4. Graduated university
- 5. Post-graduate degree
- 99. Prefer not to answer



D3 Which of the following best describes your total annual household income before taxes?

1. Less than \$25,000
2. \$25,000 to less than \$45,000
3. \$45,000 to less than \$65,000
4. \$65,000 to less than \$100,000
5. \$100,000 or more
99. Prefer not to answer

D4 Which of the following best describes your current household composition?

1. Single with no children
2. Couple with no children
3. Family with children (includes single parent household)
4. Other
99. Prefer not to answer

**Those are all of our questions!**  
**Thank you very much for completing our survey.**

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NEXT