

Expanded Diversity: Lawyer Portal

Frequently Asked Questions - *Updated 09/11/2025*

Why is LABC expanding the data it collects?

Legal Aid BC (LABC) is collecting this information in an effort to identify and eliminate systemic racism, advance racial equity, and advance its obligations to tackle systemic discrimination in all its forms in alignment with LABC's commitment to [Truth and Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility](#), as well as BC's [Anti-Racism Data Act](#). Indigenous identity data and gender identity support this in part, however, more categories are being added to align with best practice.

The BC Human Rights Commissioner [identified collecting disaggregated demographic data](#) as a key method of advancing human rights. This builds on LABC's expansion of demographic data collected from clients, employees, board members and job candidates, and advances LABC's Strategic Framework Goal 5: to embed a culture of Truth and Reconciliation and equity, diversity and inclusion in everything that we do.

What additional data is being collected?

LABC will invite private bar legal aid lawyers to expand their demographic data in LABC's Lawyer Portal, which will include options to share information about Indigenous identity, gender, race, sexuality and disabilities.

Is sharing demographic data mandatory?

No. Sharing your demographic information is voluntary. Each person has the option to indicate that they "prefer not to say" anything about any or all demographic options in the Lawyer Portal. The form requires an option to be selected for each category of identity, and should you wish not to share, you may select "I prefer not to share" to save your selected options and exit the screen.

If you previously shared demographic data with LABC and provided consent, you will need to reshare that information and provide that consent again in the new demographics tab in the Lawyer Portal.

How will lawyers' privacy be protected?

The collection, access to, disclosure and use of lawyer data is governed by LABC's [Privacy Policy \(PDF\)](#), Diversity Data Management Policy, the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), and the [Anti-Racism Data Act](#). Lawyer data is confidential and only accessed and referenced for the above-stated purposes, and only by those whose role requires that access. The information is stored securely in our existing data management systems.

Unless lawyers consent to their data being used to support appropriate choice of counsel requests, the data itself is never presented or reported in a way that could identify the lawyer. If you wish to contact Legal Aid BC about how lawyers' personal information is managed or accessed, please reach out to our Privacy Officer at privacy@legalaid.bc.ca.

What will LABC do with the demographic data?

LABC will use demographic data in the aggregate to analyze the performance of LABC's programs and activities. The data is used to identify any barriers and inequitable impacts of our programs, policies and processes. Where inequities and systemic barriers exist, LABC will develop measures to address them and monitor for improved outcomes. For example, analysis of the representation of racial identities among LABC private bar lawyers could identify gaps in representation and inform the lawyer retention and recruitment priorities, to address possible biases in the recruitment and retention of racialized lawyers.

Will LABC be changing its practices regarding offering contracts to lawyers?

If you provide specific consent for LABC to do so, your information may be used to enhance the client's choice of counsel. When clients apply for legal aid, they may request a lawyer with a particular demographic identity. Where LABC determines that such a request is appropriate, it may use your reported demographic information to make decisions in the interest of meeting the cultural or emotional safety needs of the client. This additional use of information will only take place where you provide specific consent for us to do so, and only in relation to the specific identity or identities where you provide consent. Where you do not consent, your information will not be used in this manner.

How will LABC collect expanded demographic data from private bar lawyers?

For lawyers, expanded demographic data will be gathered through the Lawyer Portal by offering more inclusive choices for people to voluntarily self-identify their Indigenous identity, gender, race, sexual orientation and disabilities. It is not mandatory to share this information.

What are the reasons to consider when deciding whether or not to share one's demographic data with LABC?

- The data will help improve our understanding of the diversity of legal aid lawyers and ensure we reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.
- It informs the recruitment and retention of legal aid lawyers.
- It improves LABC policy and programs.
- It helps LABC advance our obligations to tackle systemic discrimination in all its forms.