

## Expanded Diversity Data Coming to Lawyer Portal

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Why is LABC expanding the data it collects?

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, as required by LABC's [Mandate Letter from the Attorney General](#). 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?

Starting in 2025, Legal Aid BC (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. [Please review this document](#) for the expanded options.

#### 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.

#### How will lawyers' privacy be protected?

The collection, access to, disclosure and use of lawyer data is governed by LABC's [Privacy Policy](#), 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.

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](mailto:privacy@legalaid.bc.ca).

### **What will LABC do with the demographic data?**

The data will be anonymized and 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 the assignment of lawyers?**

At this time, we will not be changing any practices relating to the assignment of lawyers.

### **Will the roster allocation be adjusted so some lawyers will get fewer (or more) referrals?**

We already adjust roster allocation to accommodate choice of counsel requests, and we don't expect this work to impact roster allocation so that some lawyers will get fewer (or more) referrals. We will monitor whether or not counsel are impacted and if we notice impacts, we'll take corrective action.

### **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

Feedback about the changes coming to Lawyer Portal? Have your voice heard by signing up for a **Lawyer Engagement Session** by filling out the registration form [here](#).