



Media Release

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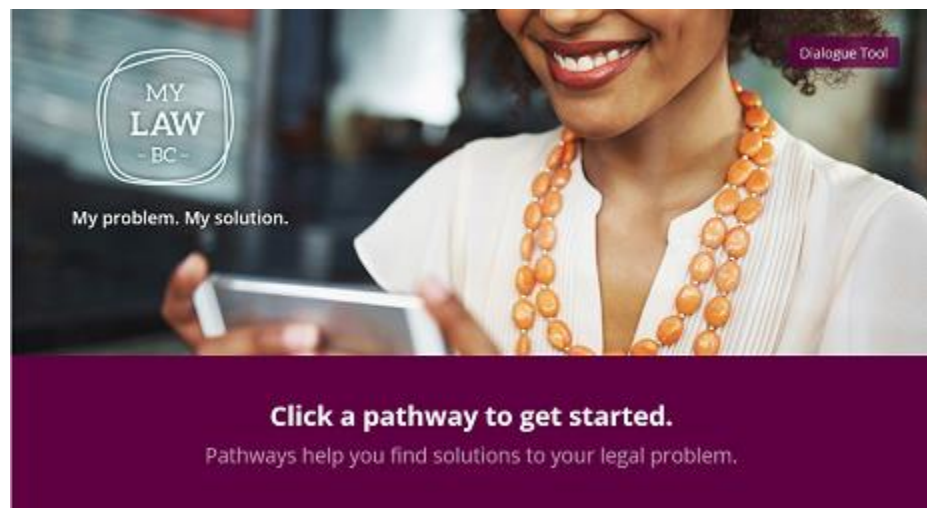
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Online help with separations, wills, missed mortgage payments and more

VANCOUVER—A new website from the Legal Services Society (LSS), BC’s legal aid provider, will help people deal with everyday legal issues ranging from family breakdown and family violence to preparing wills and powers of attorney, and what to do when mortgage payments are missed. The goal is to empower people to take action on their own and connect them to services when additional help is warranted.

“The [MyLawBC website](#) is one way we are responding to the access-to-justice crisis in BC. It provides reliable online legal

help with common legal problems. But it’s more than that, the site’s interactive tools tailor the information to the user,” said LSS CEO Mark Benton.



“Research shows people are overwhelmed by online legal information and are often uncertain how to solve their problems having read it. They are either afraid to seek out legal services or have exhausted their ability to do so,” added Benton. “MyLawBC was developed to address these needs and assist British Columbians to get timely solutions to their legal issues,” he said.

The site is part of an emerging trend that uses interactive online tools that deliver legal information. Its family law dialogue tool is the first of its kind in Canada. It enables couples to negotiate a separation agreement using something like a chat box. If the couple can agree on the terms of their separation after answering a series of questions, the site produces a separation agreement they can use.



The site also helps users identify their legal issues through a series of questions and answers on a “guided pathway.” The pathway leads users to a personalized action plan. The plans contain legal information in four areas of law: family, family violence, wills and personal planning, and foreclosure.

“MyLawBC gives ordinary people a tool they can use to resolve some common legal problems,” said Jamie Maclaren, Executive Director of the Access Pro Bono Society of BC.

“Many British Columbians can’t afford a lawyer and may not be eligible for our services or legal aid, so it fills a gap. What’s innovative about MyLawBC is that it’s interactive and produces personalized action plans, so people know what steps to take. It won’t replace lawyers in all situations, but it will definitely help people with some everyday legal matters,” he said.

You can find MyLawBC at <http://www.mylawbc.com/>.

VIDEO: Demonstration of how to use MyLawBC's interactive tools to make a will and (starting at 1:21) how to begin the process of making a separation agreement. Video available at: <https://youtu.be/s1Lf-gzfW0w>

The [Legal Services Society](http://www.legalaid.bc.ca) is the provider of legal aid services in BC. Services include legal advice, information, and legal representation for financially eligible people who are facing a family law issue involving violence, child protection and criminal matters, and some immigration, mental health and prison law issues. www.legalaid.bc.ca

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