

LSS introduces tiered rates for duty counsel and circuit counsel, effective April 1, 2008

Effective April 1, 2008, the Legal Services Society (LSS) will increase compensation for criminal, immigration, and family duty counsel and circuit counsel by extending tiered rates to services provided under the Duty Counsel tariff. Tiered rates provide differential rates of compensation for tariff lawyers based on experience. The tiered rates will apply to accounts received on or after April 1, 2008, where the service date authorized is April 1, 2007 or later.

LSS introduced tiered rates for most fee items in the *Guide to Legal Aid Tariffs* in February 2006 (for further details, see [Notice to Counsel #48](#) and the [tiered rates backgrounder](#) in the “For Lawyers” section of the LSS website). Increased funding from the Notary Foundation is enabling LSS to extend tiered rates to duty and circuit counsel services.

The following tiered rates, announced in [Notice to Counsel #48](#), apply to duty and circuit counsel services:

<u>Tier</u>	<u>Years of call</u>	<u>Compensation rate</u>
1	Less than 4 years	Published tariff rate
2	4 or more years and less than 10 years	Tier 1 rate plus 5 percent
3	10 or more years	Tier 1 rate plus 10 percent

Calculating your rate

When processing your accounts, LSS will automatically calculate the tiered rate for each tariff item you claim on your billing form. The applicable rate will be based on your call date and the service date(s) listed on the referral form. If the referral authorizes more than one service date, the applicable tiered rate will be calculated using the first service date listed on the referral form.

For call date, LSS will use the first day of the month and year you were called to the bar in British Columbia as reported on your original application for an LSS vendor number. (Thus, if your actual call date is May 25, 1990, your call date for billing purposes would be May 1, 1990.) If you notice that our record of your call date is inaccurate, or if you had an earlier call date in another Canadian jurisdiction, you should notify LSS by e-mail (lssvendorinfo@lss.bc.ca).

Preparing your accounts

When preparing your accounts, please continue to use the published tariff rates (the Tier 1 rates). LSS will automatically calculate and apply the applicable increase, if any, to the amount approved when processing your account.

As always, LSS welcomes your feedback about its legal aid renewal initiatives and other legal aid matters, and you may direct any comments to lawyersresources@lss.bc.ca.

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