



**Evaluation of the
Expanded Family LawLINE
Summative Evaluation Report**

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Prepared for:

Legal Services Society of British Columbia

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Executive summary

This report presents the summative evaluation findings for the Legal Services Society (LSS) of British Columbia's Expanded Family LawLINE (FAM LL) pilot project (also referred to as LawLINE). The pilot expands on the original Family LawLINE services through features such as setting appointments, so that clients can work with the same lawyer throughout the service; increasing the number of available service hours per client; and providing more administrative support to roster lawyers.

The evaluation looked at the implementation and delivery of the expanded LawLINE pilot project and its success in achieving its intended outcomes during its first year of operation. This report covers the pilot project's activities from March 24, 2015 to April 4, 2016. The lines of evidence included a review of key documents and the project database; interviews with key informants (LSS personnel and external stakeholders); a survey with LawLINE clients, and a systems efficiencies analysis that considered the potential impact of LawLINE to avoid court costs through earlier and more efficient resolution of cases

Conclusions on implementation and delivery of the expanded LawLINE

The summative evaluation led to several conclusions regarding the implementation of the expanded LawLINE pilot project. These conclusions are outlined below.

Additional hours of service are not being utilized. The additional hours of service available under the expanded LawLINE project are rarely used. On average, clients are using about one hour of service and clients who had multiple meetings used an average of two hours. The evaluation could not determine the causes of or reasons for the lower than expected use of the expanded LawLINE hours

Project capacity is sufficient for current volume of intake. Staffing levels and the roster of LawLINE lawyers appear to be sufficient for the project at its current levels of service, however, it is important to keep in mind that the average number of hours of service delivered under the project is still far below the maximum six hours. As awareness and referrals to LawLINE increase, usage of additional hours may also increase, which would put additional pressure on the current intake, administrative staff, and roster lawyers.

Formal coaching not implemented. A formal coaching model has not been implemented yet. While the model remains under development, LSS has delivered training on coaching to roster and lead lawyers at the outset of the project and again in early 2016.

LawLINE roster lawyers need a way to regularly connect. Many roster lawyers expressed their desire to have more opportunities to share their experiences and learn from other LawLINE lawyers.

Conclusions on early indications of outcomes

The outcome evaluation of LawLINE occurred at early stages in the pilot's operations. Consequently, the evaluation findings should be read with the caveat that the pilot project is still in its early stages, and evidence of achievement of outcomes is preliminary and based on the best available evidence. Conclusions for outcomes are summarized briefly below.

- ▶ Project uptake is steady but lacking sustained increase. Intake is generally steady at over 200 new clients per month, though there has been a slight decline over the past six months, suggesting the project should not slacken efforts on raising awareness of the service among external organizations and other Justice Innovation and Transformation Initiatives (JITI) projects, such as the Family Mediation Referral Project.
- ▶ LawLINE has enabled continuity of service through the creation and ongoing maintenance of client files. This continuity of services is complemented by high levels of lawyer continuity per client.
- ▶ There are mixed results concerning the effectiveness of the expanded LawLINE in helping resolve family law issues. Clients appear to be largely satisfied with the service they received and found LawLINE helpful, but client assessment data from roster lawyers paint a less optimistic picture of client understanding and ability. Client assessment results are likely affected by the lack of a formal and objective client assessment criterion.
- ▶ Surveyed clients were considerably more likely to have resolved all or some of their issues out of court without a trial than through an order from a judge after a trial. The majority of these clients believed the information and assistance they received from LawLINE was helpful. This provides some preliminary evidence that LawLINE can be an effective resource for assisting clients who are resolving their matters out of court.
- ▶ The evaluation was unable to determine whether referrals to other resources are helpful to clients in resolving their family law problems.
- ▶ Screening and continuity of service through maintaining a client file are key efficiencies introduced through the pilot project.
- ▶ Net savings to the justice system are dependent on LawLINE's volume of intake and its effectiveness in diverting cases from court and/or reducing the amount of time clients are in court. The system efficiency analysis estimated the LawLINE pilot has the potential to avoid \$133,884 annually in court costs if court hours per file making a court appearance are reduced by 10%; if court hours per file were reduced by 30%, this would avoid an estimated \$401,653 in court costs annually. If the average number of court trials were reduced by 10%, this would avoid \$39,873 annually in court costs; an estimated \$119,618 in annual court costs could be avoided if court trials were reduced by 30%.

Recommendations to further enhance the expanded LawLINE

Recommendation 1: To better understand why few clients are using the additional service hours, LSS should implement a means of tracking and assessing the extent to which clients who are expected to return for service are indeed returning for further service. LSS might consider follow-up calls with a sample of clients among this population.

Recommendation 2: Consider how virtual spaces might be used to stimulate group communication, learning, and camaraderie among the roster lawyers and the lead lawyer.

Recommendation 3: Implement regular awareness-raising events among key external organizations and explore how search engine optimization might improve the likelihood of clients finding the LawLINE website through online searches. If the project intends to use LawLINE to fill legal service gaps in rural and/or remote areas of BC where populations have traditionally been underserved, it would be beneficial to target awareness-raising activities in these communities and continue to monitor rates of intake from these areas.

Recommendation 4: Implement consistent tracking of referring organizations in the pilot database.

Recommendation 5: Investigate and resolve issues that are hampering referrals between LawLINE and MED REF.

Recommendation 6: Discontinue the current subjective client assessment process in favour of a more formal and objective assessment process.

1.0 Introduction

This report presents the summative evaluation findings for the Legal Services Society (LSS) of British Columbia's Expanded Family LawLINE (FAM LL) pilot project. This evaluation is one of five evaluations being conducted of pilot projects implemented under the Justice Innovation and Transformation Initiatives (JITI).

The FAM LL evaluation involved a process evaluation, with a focus on implementation and early progress toward achieving outcomes, and the current summative evaluation, which focusses on outcomes achieved. This report presents the findings of the summative evaluation and covers the pilot project's activities from March 24, 2015 to April 4, 2016.

2.0 Methodology

The summative evaluation consists of four lines of evidence: a document and data review, interviews with key informants (LSS personnel, roster lawyers, and external partners), a client survey, and system efficiency analysis.

A FAM LL Project Working Group (WG), comprised of representatives from the LSS and the British Columbia Ministry of Justice and Attorney General (JAG), is guiding the evaluation process. PRA held consultations with the WG to refine the key evaluation documents to guide the evaluation: the logic model and evaluation matrix, which are in Appendices A and B, respectively. The WG also reviewed and approved the data collection instruments used for the summative evaluation. The data collection instruments are included in Appendix C.

Below describes the methods used for the summative evaluation component.

2.1 Document and data review

PRA reviewed relevant documents produced by the pilot project, including the project manual and charter, descriptions and diagrams of the FAM LL model, and forms used by the pilot to collect information on its clients and the types of assistance provided, as well as project financial information. The data review for the summative evaluation relies on available data in the pilot project database as of April 4, 2016.

The data review for the summative evaluation also involved data from the Court Services Branch (CSB). A series of meetings were held with CSB data analysts to discuss data availability for providing context information as well as for contributing to the efficiency analysis. The resulting data request included the numbers of initiating and subsequent family applications filed at the provincial courts or Supreme Court between January 1, 2012 and October 31, 2015 throughout the province. As approximately three months are required for court data to stabilize, October 31, 2015 was the latest time period for which data could be provided.

2.2 Key informant interviews

The summative evaluation includes interviews with key informants to obtain their perspectives on pilot project implementation and evidence of outcomes. Interviews were conducted by telephone with 14 internal key informants (the FAM LL project lead, the pilot lead lawyer, the pilot administrator, and 11 roster lawyers) and four external key informants (three Family Justice Counsellors (FJCs) and one community resource representative).¹

2.3 Client survey

To obtain feedback from FAM LL clients, PRA conducted a telephone survey of them. PRA developed a survey questionnaire in consultation with the WG. The target was to obtain 200 completes; the survey achieved 201 completes. Approximately half of the clients (53%) reported having one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer, while the other half (47%) reported having more than one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer. Most surveyed clients (72%) spoke to one lawyer during their meeting(s), while about a quarter of the surveyed clients (26%) spoke to two or more lawyers. The survey was in the field from March 7 to April 4, 2016.

Table 1: Respondent profile (n=201) (survey data)		
Q2. About how many times did you talk to a lawyer at the LawLINE about your legal issue?		
	#	%
One	106	53%
Two	52	26%
Three	20	10%
Four	13	6%
Five or more	9	4%
Don't know/no response	1	<1%
Q3. How many different LawLINE lawyers did you speak with about your legal issue?		
One	145	72%
Two	45	22%
Three	5	2%
Four	1	<1%
Five	1	<1%
Don't know/no response	4	2%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

¹ The report generally refers to interviewees as key informants. Internal key informants refer to interviewees from LSS, while external key informants refer to project collaborators or partners outside of LSS.

2.4 System efficiency analysis

The system efficiency analysis considers the potential for LawLINE to achieve system efficiency by estimating the potential impact of the project to avoid court costs through the earlier and more efficient resolution of cases. Early resolution can be demonstrated, for example, by the following:

- ▶ an increase in cases that reach agreement without court involvement
- ▶ a reduction in the number of court appearances and/or potentially more effective court appearances and therefore reduced use of court time during appearances, both of which should result in reduced court hours
- ▶ a reduction in the time to resolution
- ▶ an increase in cases resolved without a trial

Court activity data provided by CSB were used to develop the profile in Section 4.0 and were used, along with the project's administrative data, to calculate average court costs per hour in an effort to provide estimates around potential court cost avoidance as a result of reductions in court hours and court trials. Hourly court costs include the cost for a court clerk, deputy sheriff, registry staff, and provincial court judge for provincial court, as well as a court clerk, registry staff, and Supreme Court Justice for Supreme Court.

If the pilot is able to achieve its intended objectives (described in Section 3.0 below), then such reductions in court hours might be expected to occur through diversion of cases from the court system altogether (e.g., by LawLINE helping clients realize the value of out-of-court options, such as mediation), or through clients' making better use of their court appearances (e.g., better prepared court forms, better prepared to represent themselves in court) and therefore requiring fewer and shorter appearances, fewer adjournments, and fewer trials.

It should be noted that it is not possible to make any conclusive statements on efficiencies gained or costs avoided, as no data are available on the extent that the pilot has resulted in such impacts, which includes the diversion of cases from the court system or reduced appearances, adjournments, trials, or shorter court appearances. The analysis uses statistics on family court cases from provincial court and the Supreme Court in British Columbia. Estimates of potential future efficiencies are based on a hypothetical scale of success in reducing the number of court hours and trials, ranging from 10% to 50%.

2.5 Evaluation limitations

There are several methodological limitations that affect the evaluation.

- ▶ Both the process and outcome evaluations occurred at early stages. Typically, only project implementation and its success toward achieving immediate outcomes would be explored within one year of a project's inception. Evidence related to the achievement of intermediate and long-term outcomes is usually not available for at least two to three years. Consequently, the evaluation findings should be read with the caveat that the pilot project is still in its very early stages, and evidence of the achievement of outcomes is preliminary and based on the best available evidence.
- ▶ Given the early time frame of the evaluation, as well as that family law matters often require considerable time to resolve, no pilot or court data were available to make any assessments on whether the pilot has had a measurable impact on the early resolution of clients' family law matters and if they were resolved without the need for a court trial. Roster lawyers do not have ongoing interactions with clients once they have completed their services and, therefore, the pilot cannot track client outcomes past the time of their last meeting. Furthermore, the CSB data provided for the evaluation were intended to be used to illustrate the average characteristics of family law matters handled in BC courts. These averages were helpful for the system efficiency analysis for estimating potential cost avoidance if various scenarios occurred as a result of the pilot. However, no conclusions can be made as to what extent these scenarios are achievable within the current project.
- ▶ Certain limitations also exist with the information that could be obtained from the CSB data due to the complexity and volume of court data, and how various court activities are accounted for on the Civil Electronic Information System (CEIS). For example, the number of adjournments could only be provided as adjournments that occurred prior to the scheduled appearance and not those that occurred on the day of a scheduled appearance.

3.0 Brief overview of the FAM LL

Family LawLINE is a service that provides brief family law advice over the telephone for eligible clients. LawLINE lawyers give “next step” advice about issues such as parenting time, parenting contact/access, guardianship/custody, spousal support, child support, property, family agreements, family violence or protection orders, child protection, and court procedures. Clients can access the province-wide service through LSS’s call centre. Lawyers deliver the advice by accessing the telephone system from their private offices.

Through JITI funding, the program was expanded in the form of a pilot project to provide greater continuity of advice and new services. The pilot is available province-wide. The project expands on the Family LawLINE model with the following new or modified features:

- ▶ **An appointment-based approach:** FAM LL makes efforts to schedule appointments so that clients may work with the same lawyer throughout the service, ensuring greater continuity; in the old model, there were no appointments, and so clients would usually speak with a different lawyer at every call.
- ▶ **Up to six hours of service per client:** Under the old model, clients received a maximum of three hours of service, and the number of service hours was not tracked.
- ▶ **Document preparation:** LawLINE lawyers identify and provide direction on legal forms for clients to complete. In some cases, they may edit or help draft documents. Documents are shared via email. In the old model, lawyers could provide advice about documents, but they could neither review nor help draft the documents (as the documents could not be shared by email).
- ▶ **Administrative support:** A full-time pilot administrator supports the project in various ways, such as conducting client intake and screening processes, scheduling appointments, and maintaining client files; this support was not available under the old model.
- ▶ **Integration with the Mediation Referrals (MED REF) JITI pilot:** The expanded LawLINE is intended to provide support to MED REF clients located throughout the province. Mediators would be able to refer clients to LawLINE for advice before, during, and after the mediation process. Since MED REF did not exist at the time of the old LawLINE model, this is a new type of support.
- ▶ **Expanded ability for Family Justice Counsellor referrals:** FJCs, located throughout the province, are able to refer clients to LawLINE using a project referral form. Although FJCs have always been able to refer clients to LawLINE, the new referral form provides more information on the client, including contact information, a list of all other parties involved, and information on the case (such as the types of legal issues, and whether or not the client is currently in mediation). Clients are able to send an email to the pilot with documents that they prepared with their FJC (e.g., a proposed settlement arrangement), so that the roster lawyer can provide advice regarding the documents. FJC mediation clients receive priority service from LawLINE.
- ▶ **Coaching for clients to represent themselves in court:** As of the summative evaluation, the formal coaching model is still being developed. Coaching services were not available under the old model.

As stated in its Project Charter, the objectives of FAM LL are the following:

- ▶ increase the number of clients served by FAM LL
- ▶ increase the number of clients in rural and remote areas accessing FAM LL services
- ▶ increase the availability of FAM LL services for clients who cannot call during the original hours
- ▶ improve continuity of service for clients
- ▶ improve quality and consistency of FAM LL services
- ▶ improve clients' ability to prepare and submit court documents
- ▶ improve clients' ability to represent themselves effectively at all stages of their family law issue, including settlement and hearings
- ▶ improve clients' ability to achieve early resolution
- ▶ increase lawyers' ability to refer clients to local resources

The FAM LL pilot project is directly served by 15 personnel:

- ▶ a lead Family LawLINE lawyer, who leads and provides support to the roster lawyers, supervises the pilot administrator, and provides FAM LL services to clients
- ▶ a pilot administrator, who is responsible for answering phones, determining the urgency of client matters, determining the eligibility of clients for FAM LL services, creating and maintaining client files, scheduling appointments for roster lawyers, and many other assorted duties; the pilot administrator receives part-time administrative support from two other staff, who also provide administrative support to the other JITI projects
- ▶ 13–15² roster lawyers, who provide FAM LL services to clients for a typical minimum of six to eight hours (split between two shifts) per week

Clients may contact or be referred to FAM LL in a number of ways. The process is different for new clients and current LawLINE clients:

- ▶ If the client is new to LawLINE, then during the initial call, the FAM LL pilot administrator must complete a triage process³ with the client to collect information, determine if their case is appropriate for the pilot project, and check for lawyer conflicts. If the client is ready to talk to a lawyer, or if the matter is urgent, the client may be transferred to the advice line queue to wait for the next available lawyer. Otherwise, the pilot administrator will book an appointment for the client, and the lawyer will call the client at the designated date and time. When possible, the pilot administrator will ask the client to provide any relevant documents for the lawyer to review before the appointment.
- ▶ If the caller is a current LawLINE client, the client will call the LawLINE voice mailbox and leave a message indicating that they would like to book an appointment. The pilot administrator will then call the client back to schedule the appointment. The lawyer will call the client at the designated time. If the matter is urgent, the pilot administrator will

² Since the roster lawyers are all private contractors, the number of available lawyers changes over time.

³ A new client may be exempt from triage, depending on if they were already screened in as eligible via another JITI pilot.

try to arrange an appointment the same day with whichever lawyer is available, or the client may choose to wait in the phone queue.⁴

Procedures for initiating contact with LawLINE include the following:

- ▶ New clients may call LSS intake, and intake staff will assess clients to determine their appropriateness for various LSS services, including FAM LL. If a client is referred through LSS intake, they must still be triaged by the FAM LL pilot administrator.
- ▶ Current LawLINE clients may call LSS intake, and intake staff will redirect the call to LawLINE's voice mailbox, after which the pilot administrator will call the client and set up an appointment. If the client has an urgent matter, LSS intake can transfer the client directly to the pilot administrator queue.
- ▶ Current LawLINE clients are to call the LawLINE voice mailbox directly, at which point they will leave a message indicating that they would like to book an appointment; the pilot administrator will then call the client and set up an appointment.
- ▶ A community organization may refer a client to FAM LL by providing the client with contact information for LSS intake, after which the client would call intake.

⁴ Alternatively, if the client's previous LawLINE lawyer will soon be available, and the client can wait until then before having an appointment, the pilot administrator may schedule the appointment for that time so that the client can meet with the same lawyer.

3.1 Profile of clients

Table 2 provides an overview of the clients accepted since the FAM LL pilot became fully operational, from March 30, 2015 to April 4, 2016. Of the 2,959 clients:

- ▶ the majority (73%) are female;
- ▶ most (76%) are over 30 years old;
- ▶ 41% are separated while 33% are single; and
- ▶ 13% self-identify as Aboriginal (about 7% were not asked or declined to answer).

Table 2: Client demographics (n=2,959) (administrative data)		
	#	%
Gender		
Male	798	27%
Female	2,160	73%
Not identified	1	<1%
Age		
Under 18	4	<1%
18 to 25	209	7%
26 to 30	367	12%
31 to 40	1,013	34%
41 to 50	723	24%
51 or over	515	17%
Not identified	128	4%
Marital status		
Separated	1,199	41%
Single	973	33%
Married	345	12%
Common law	215	7%
Divorced	217	7%
Widowed	10	<1%
Aboriginal ancestry		
Yes	375	13%
No	2,375	80%
Declined to ask/answer	209	7%
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.		

Clients' family law issues typically involve the other parent (47%) or an ex-spouse (27%).

Table 3: Other party type (n=2,959) (administrative data)		
Opposing party type	#	%
Other parent	1,377	47%
Ex-spouse	788	27%
Spouse	440	15%
Common law spouse	141	5%
Other (grandparent, sibling, cousin, aunt)	213	7%
Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.		

Over the course of the pilot project, most clients (82%) had one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer. Another 437 clients (15%) had more than one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer.

Number of client meetings	Number of lawyers involved in the case						Total*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1**	100%	<1%	-	-	-	-	2,415
2	69%	31%	-	-	-	-	277
3	44%	44%	10%	1%	-	-	86
4	57%	24%	19%	-	-	-	37
5	32%	52%	16%	-	-	-	25
6	33%	50%	17%	-	-	-	6
7	50%	50%	-	-	-	-	4
8	-	-	-	-	-	100%	1

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
 *Missing 108 clients where there are no data on the number of client meetings and/or no lawyer was reported.
 **Includes one client with half a meeting and three clients recorded as having zero meetings.

Most clients dealt with family law legal issues, such as parenting issues⁵ (55%) and/or child support (44%), during their LawLINE meeting(s). Property division and spousal support were also common matters, particularly for clients who had more than one meeting. Issues under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* (CFCSA) were uncommon among LawLINE clients.

Legal issue addressed	Clients with more than one meeting (n=437)		Clients with one meeting (n=2,416)		All cases (n=2,959)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Family law legal issues						
Parenting issues	243	56%	1,331	55%	1,625	55%
Child support	242	56%	1,010	42%	1,289	44%
Property division	157	36%	670	28%	849	29%
Spousal support	136	31%	542	22%	694	23%
Divorce	80	18%	331	14%	429	14%
Family violence	49	11%	281	12%	343	12%
Denial of parenting time	43	10%	210	9%	263	9%
Relocation	38	9%	181	7%	222	8%
Protection order (family member)	30	7%	148	6%	182	6%
Maintenance enforcement	37	9%	120	5%	162	5%
Hague convention	4	1%	7	<1%	11	<1%
CFCSA issues						
Risk of removal	6	1%	80	3%	92	3%
Access	7	2%	29	1%	40	1%
Removal	2	<1%	33	1%	38	1%
Transfer a child to a non-parent	-	-	27	1%	30	1%
Cancellation of CCO	-	-	4	<1%	4	<1%
No data	2	<1%	65	3%	74	3%

Note: Cases could include more than one legal issue; totals sum to more than 100%.

⁵ “Parenting issues” includes custody and access under the *Divorce Act* and guardianship, parenting time, allocation of parental responsibilities and contact under the *Family Law Act*.

3.2 Cost of the expanded LawLINE

The table below provides the project costs for fiscal years 2014–15 and 2015–16. During 2014–2015, costs totalled about \$118,818 and were associated with training and initial implementation activities. Year 2 of the project (2015–16) corresponds to the full implementation of LawLINE, which cost about \$375,152. Most of these costs were to cover the salaries for the project’s lead lawyer, roster lawyers, and the pilot administrators.

Table 6: Expanded LawLINE pilot costs, actuals Year 1 and 2

Item	Year 1 2014–15 Actual	Year 2 2015–16 Actual
Full-time lead lawyer	\$57,478	\$120,000
Roster lawyers – LawLINE shifts (added)	\$26,487	\$93,201
2 full-time administrators	\$14,014	\$105,996
Office expenses	\$5,244	\$2,974
Subtotal for Expanded LawLINE expenses	\$103,223	\$322,172
In-kind: Overhead on lawyer salaries	\$12,595	\$31,980
In-kind: Office space	\$3,000	\$21,000
Total	\$118,818	\$375,152
Number of expanded service clients (FY 2015–16)	-	2,845
Unit cost (375,151/2,845)	-	\$132

Sources: Calculations were made based on pilot database and LSS data.

Using the costs for Year 2 and dividing this by the number of clients served during the 2015–16 fiscal year (n=2,845), the cost per unit⁶ (clients served) would be about \$132. However, it is important to keep in mind that the reported project costs are based on a project that provided, on average, about one hour of service to each client. Based on key informant interviews, a larger volume of clients were anticipated to be using the additional hours of service. As long as costs remain relatively constant while client volumes and hours increase, cost efficiencies would reduce the cost per unit.

⁶ The Expanded LawLINE cost per unit analysis is not intended for comparison to costs of other LSS services for similar family law matters, such as the regular family duty counsel service or representation contracts. The unit cost analysis includes costs for LSS overhead, while tariff rates do not include similar LSS overhead costs (e.g., application processing, invoice processing). For the same reason, overall pilot costs are not intended for direct comparison with costs avoided through system efficiencies, which don’t include costs avoided for comparable overhead (including facilities, out-of-court activities, etc.)

4.0 Profile of general family law cases at all court locations in British Columbia

To give some context of the environment in which LawLINE is operating, this section provides a brief profile of family law cases at all court locations in British Columbia, including provincial court and the Supreme Court. As shown in the table below, courts in BC handled over 40,000 total applications annually for 2012 to 2014. A total of 35,807 applications were dealt with in 2015 up to October 31, which, if extrapolated to the end of 2015 would also be just over 40,000 applications. Subsequent applications to the provincial court account for the majority of total applications, ranging from 23,917 to 26,344 between 2012 and 2014. Annual initiating applications are considerably higher in the Supreme Court than provincial court.

Year	Provincial court		Supreme Court	Total applications
	Initiating applications	Subsequent applications*	Initiating applications	
2012	8,484	26,344	12,171	46,999
2013	7,395	23,917	11,912	43,224
2014	7,609	24,286	11,304	43,199
2015 (up to October 31)	6,199	19,736	9,872	35,807

Source: Data provided by Court Services Branch
 *Includes all subsequent applications filed annually and may be related to applications initiated in earlier years.

Family law cases can be protracted and lengthy with respect to the family’s involvement with the court system. In order to make some considerations for the characteristics of family law cases that are dealt with at courts throughout the province, after consultation with CSB it was determined that a data extract covering 2012 initiating and subsequent applications (and related court activity) would be used to provide contextual information on the use of family law courts in BC and key data for the system efficiency analysis.

Table 8 below illustrates the number of subsequent applications that can be generated from initiating applications at provincial courts throughout the province. From the 7,328 initiating applications for 2012, another 13,393 subsequent applications were filed up to October 31, 2015, with 47% (6,359) of these filed in 2012 and 25% (3,321) in 2013. On average, 1.6 subsequent applications were filed for every initiating application.

Year	Number	
2012 initiating applications	7,328	
Subsequent applications from the initiating applications	Number	Percent of total
2012	6,359	47%
2013	3,321	25%
2014	2,243	17%
2015 (up to October 31)	1,470	11%
Total	13,393	100%
Average subsequent applications per case	1.6	

Source: Data provided by Court Services Branch

As shown in Table 9 below, the most common issues in provincial court for initiating applications was for custody/guardianship followed by child support. Issues for subsequent applications varied, with 40% being related to custody/guardianship and about a quarter being related to access/contact/ parenting time, parenting issues, and child support. The most common issues for initiating applications in Supreme Court were divorce, followed by parenting issues and property division/debt division.

Issue	Provincial court			Supreme Court initiating (n=12,171)
	Initiating (n=7,325)	Subsequent (n=41,896)	All (n=49,221)	
Access/contact/parenting time	20%	24%	24%	2%
Child support	48%	23%	27%	15%
Custody/guardianship	108%	40%	50%	5%
Divorce	-	-	-	79%
Maintenance enforcement	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Parenting issues	2%	24%	21%	23%
Possession of home	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%
Property division/debt division	<1%	-	<1%	17%
Protection order	11%	7%	8%	3%
Relocation	5%	7%	7%	1%
Spousal support	11%	3%	4%	13%
Support arrears	<1%	4%	3%	<1%
Transfer a child to non-parent	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Other*	31%	69%	64%	29%

Source: Data provided by Court Services Branch
 Note: Each case may have more than one issue, so summing the number of cases when represented by issue will exceed the total number of cases.
 *Other issues are mainly administrative in nature, such as to shorten time to serve a notice or document, to transfer a file to another court registry, or to produce financial statements or other documents.

From Table 10, each initiating and subsequent application in provincial court had an average of 1.4 and 2.3 scheduled appearances, respectively, as well as 0.17 and 0.31 adjournments; however, the latter only includes those adjournments that occurred prior to the scheduled appearance. Supreme Court initiating applications had an average of 1.3 appearances and 0.38 adjournments. There was an average of 120 days between filing an application and the first appearance for initiating applications, and an average of 59 days for subsequent applications for provincial court. The Supreme Court was considerably longer, with an average of 165 days to the first appearance. The average court time required per application and including all appearances associated with an application was close to 1.0 hours for both initiating and subsequent applications for provincial court, and just over 3.0 hours for the Supreme Court. Considering each initiating application in provincial court has an average of 1.6 subsequent applications, each case requires about 3.5 hours of total court time.

Table 10: Court activity for family law cases at all courts — average activity up to October 31, 2015 for applications initiated in 2012 and their subsequent applications occurring in 2012 (CSB data)				
Element	Provincial court			Supreme Court initiating
	Initiating	Subsequent	All	
Number of applications	7,321	23,542	30,863	12,171
Average scheduled appearances	1.4	2.3	2.1	1.3
Average number of adjournments*	0.17	0.31	0.28	0.38
Average days to first appearance**	120.2	59.3	69.2	164.5
Average days to first order***	146.6	93.9	102.9	192.0
Percent of applications going to trial+	9.2%	17.6%	15.8%	3.2%
Average days to first trial appearance+	283.9	210.3	219.6	514.1
Average days to last trial appearance+	351.8	277.8	287.2	586.5
Average court hours per application++	1.3	1.4	1.4	3.2

Source: Data provided by Court Services Branch
 * Includes adjournments that occurred up to a court hearing, including those occurring the same day as the hearing but not adjournments that occurred at the court hearing.
 **Of 3,225 initiating and 16,581 subsequent applications in provincial court and 3,059 in Supreme Court that had a first appearance.
 ***Of 2,558 initiating and 12,374 subsequent applications in provincial court and 10,410 in Supreme Court that had a first order.
 +Of 673 initiating and 4,645 subsequent applications in provincial court and 390 in Supreme Court that had a trial/hearing.
 ++Court hours include time for all appearances for 3,223 initiating and 16,569 subsequent applications in provincial court and 3,039 initiating applications in Supreme Court.

5.0 Findings

The summative evaluation findings are presented based on the evaluation questions, which focus on the delivery of the pilot project and its progress toward achieving its intended outcomes.

5.1 Implementation

1. Has the FAM LL been implemented as intended in Year 1? What challenges were met in implementation? How were challenges addressed and improvements made to the model?

Internal and external key informants generally agreed that FAM LL has been implemented as planned. A few minor implementation issues were mentioned by internal key informants, including a few roster lawyers struggling with project forms and the technology involved in the project. However, most of the LawLINE lawyers interviewed indicated that they had adjusted to using the forms, with a few commenting they see why the forms are needed, but desire a more integrated system rather than using emails, zipping and unzipping attachments.

The project has also overcome more serious implementation challenges. For example, the implementation of LSS’s Client Information System (CIS) in April 2015 was reported as slowing the intake process; several roster lawyers noticed a reduced number of calls during this period. But LSS adapted by creating a triage process that would allow LawLINE calls to get through intake quicker. The result has been fairly steady levels of intake, typically above 200 clients per month.

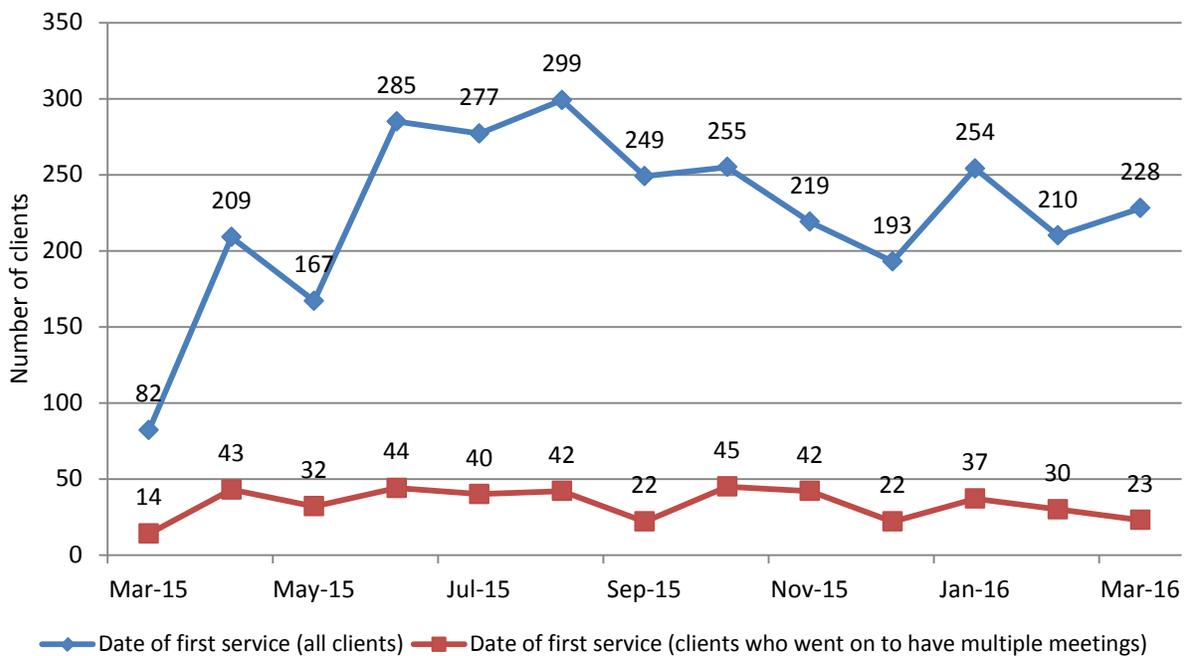


Figure 1: Intake (based on file open date)

The process evaluation found that clients were frustrated by the length of time it took to get an appointment or speak to a lawyer. Results from the client survey for the summative evaluation suggest this challenge has been resolved for most clients. When client survey respondents were asked about the first time they called the LSS call centre, most clients (83%) reported that the amount of time they waited between talking to an intake worker and speaking with a lawyer was about right. Most of these clients (64%) waited a day or less for service. A majority of clients (69%) who called LawLINE more than once indicated the longest amount of time they waited was about right; most of these clients (62%) waited less than a week before speaking to a LawLINE lawyer.

The summative evaluation found two outstanding challenges that have yet to be resolved:

- ▶ **Formal coaching not implemented:** LSS key informants reported that the formal coaching model is still under development. Training on the model was initiated at the training sessions for the roster and lead lawyers, and additional training was conducted during the Family Duty Counsel conference in February 2016.
- ▶ **Clients not utilizing additional hours:** The greatest outstanding challenge LawLINE faces is that clients are using very few hours. The model allows for a maximum of six hours of service; however, the overall average number of hours being used is one hour per client. Among clients who had more than one meeting, the average is 2.2 hours. It remains unclear why more clients are not using more service hours. This issue is discussed throughout the evaluation.

2. What external factors have influenced the implementation and success of the FAM LL?

Referrals are being made by key external organizations, but the extent of the awareness and referrals to LawLINE remains unclear

Most LawLINE clients (89% or n=2,626) do not have administrative data showing where they were referred from, but among the 333 cases with referral source data, common referral sources were LSS intake (31% or n=103), FJCs (22% or n=74), online resources (18% or n=59), family or friends (12% or n=41), and advocates and various types of community organizations (10% or n=32).

Most key informants were also able to provide observations about the following external organizations' awareness of LawLINE and referrals to LawLINE.

Community agencies and partners: Internal key informants reported that LSS continues to do outreach with community agencies and LSS's community partners, which are located throughout the province where there is no local agent. LSS indicated it communicates regularly with community partners and invites partners to regular conferences to discuss LSS services, including the province-wide JTI pilot projects FAM LL and MED REF. Some roster lawyers indicated they have taken calls from clients who received assistance from a community agency in sending and receiving documents, emails, or faxes. Several also commented on community agencies supporting clients during LawLINE calls. Roster lawyers provided several examples of the types of community agencies and partners they have worked with through LawLINE,

including Native Court Workers, family counsellors, transition houses, and immigration settlement services.

The pilot database identified about 32 clients being referred to LawLINE from community advocates or agencies. Roughly the same number of surveyed clients (n=30 or 15% of respondents) recalled finding out about LawLINE through a community organization or support service.

Local agents: Internal key informants reported that LSS continues to do outreach with local agents to raise awareness of LawLINE. Few roster lawyers provided comments on the involvement of local agents as a referral source.

Court: LSS key informants reported that communications about the JITI pilot projects and services were provided to the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the Chief Judge of the Provincial Court as part of regular LSS liaison work. Additionally, outreach was done with specific registries through various means, including the lead Family Duty Counsel (FDC) in locations where they exist, and by the lead FAM LL lawyer. Handouts were created and provided for easy distribution by the registries, judges, FDC, and others who could refer clients.

Roster lawyers also provided comments based on their experiences as LawLINE lawyers and as FDC. While a few roster lawyers reported that they assisted clients who were referred to LawLINE by the court registry or sheriff, or observed their local court registry was providing handouts with LawLINE contact information, roster lawyers more commonly reported there was a lack of advertising and awareness of LawLINE at the courthouses and court registries they have dealt with. The pilot database identified 19 clients who were referred to the project from court staff or judiciary, while about the same number of surveyed clients (n=21 or 10% of respondents) found out about LawLINE through duty counsel or other personnel at the courthouse.

Family Justice Counsellors: LSS key informants indicated that information about LawLINE and the project's priority referral form has been provided to FJCs to ensure mediation clients have access to legal information and advice. All of the interviewed FJCs reported that they are regularly using the priority referral form for clients who need legal advice, particularly in situations where there is limited access to duty counsel. These FJCs reported that although they are referring clients to LawLINE, they typically are not aware of what happens beyond making the referral. LSS reported knowledge beyond the referral is subject to solicitor-client privilege.

Although most roster lawyers reported they were aware of clients that had been referred from FJCs, most of these lawyers indicated such referrals were fairly uncommon. Pilot data show about 74 clients were recorded as being referred from FJCs. Sixteen of the surveyed clients reported hearing about LawLINE through an FJC or someone else at a Justice Access Centre (JAC).

Family duty counsel: LSS key informants reported that LSS has regularly communicated with FDC and tariff lawyers about referral resources. This has been done online and through the FDC conferences in 2015 and 2016. LSS also reported that it has contacted larger duty counsel locations about LawLINE and recognizes it would be beneficial to increase the awareness of LawLINE among duty counsel working in smaller communities, where duty counsel service is less regular. A few roster lawyers reported serving clients who had been referred from duty counsel. The pilot database has 14 clients identified as being referred by FDC to LawLINE.

It is important to note that while the above discussion provides some perspective on external organizations' awareness of LawLINE and referrals from these organizations, the referral process also depends on clients recalling and following up on the referrals they have been provided. As such, it is important to mention that based on the survey results, clients often do not recall receiving a referral to another service, and among those who reported receiving a referral, about half indicated they actually used the referral.

3. Did the FAM LL have sufficient tools, resources, and capacity to meet demand and any intended targets?

Staffing of intake is sufficient

Internal key informants commented that the project appears to have sufficient levels of intake staff because they have been able to handle the volume of calls coming in. In particular, the “floater” positions — which were implemented mid-way through the project — are credited for providing needed additional support capacity to LawLINE. Roster lawyers noted there appears to be sufficient levels of staff, because the queue is not backed up and is shorter than it was previously.

Number of roster lawyers is sufficient

Internal and external key informants commented there are enough roster lawyers, because there are enough lawyers to cover the current morning and afternoon shifts and peak times around noon. A few lawyers noted that as the service expands, the number of lawyers would also need to expand.

Desire for more opportunity to share experience

Many roster lawyers expressed their desire to have more opportunities to share their experiences and learn from other LawLINE lawyers. The desire for greater communication and the positive potential of greater communication was noticeable during the group interviews conducted with roster lawyers for the summative evaluation as lawyers appeared to enjoy sharing their experiences with each other, hearing that others had similar experiences and/or learning how other roster lawyers were handling issues.

LSS indicated that it recognizes the roster lawyers are spread across the province and communications by email do not stimulate much of a team environment. At the time of the roster lawyer interviews, LSS was planning to hold its first teleconference to help roster lawyers share their experiences under the expanded LawLINE project. Additionally, LSS key informants also reported that roster lawyers had an opportunity to meet in person and share experiences at the LSS FDC/Family LawLINE conference in February 2015 and again in February 2016, which many of the roster lawyers referred to during their interviews.

Some lawyers would benefit from a refresher

LSS indicated several training sessions were provided to roster lawyers when the project was first initiated. LSS also reported that it recognizes the importance of ongoing training for roster lawyers to ensure the services are being delivered efficiently and effectively. The interviews found a few instances that would suggest some roster lawyers would benefit from additional information or training on resources that LawLINE lawyers can use to help guide clients to geographically local and relevant resources. While many lawyers were aware of resources, such as Povnet and Clicklaw, and LSS reports that these resources were part of the training provided to roster lawyers, a few were not aware there were specific websites that could be used to locate services by type and location, though they indicated they would find such a tool very helpful.

Also related to training and support, it is worth noting that the project’s lead lawyer was praised by many roster lawyers for being supportive and helpful in addressing project technology issues, answering questions about forms, and providing guidance to roster lawyers when they encountered challenging legal issues (in terms of the scope of service) or clients.

Few clients are using additional time available through expanded LawLINE

Although the expanded LawLINE project appears to have sufficient capacity, it is important to note that the project is not encountering the level of demand for service hours that was assumed in the model and expected by key informants. Since the project launched in March 2015, about three-quarters (75%) of all LawLINE clients have used less than one hour of service. About 15% (n=437) of LawLINE clients had more than one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer, and these clients used, on average, about two hours of service. Few clients (n=16 or 4%) approached, used, or exceeded the maximum number of available service hours (6 hours).

	Cases with more than one meeting (n=437)		All cases (n=2,959)	
	#	%	#	%
One hour or less	56	13%	2217	75%
Between 1 and 2 hours	199	46%	515	17%
Between 2 and 3 hours	103	24%	114	4%
Between 3 and 4 hours	39	9%	40	1%
Between 4 and 5 hours	24	5%	24	1%
Between 5 and 6 hours	6	1%	6	<1%
Between 6 and 7 hours	5	1%	5	<1%
Between 7 and 8 hours	4	1%	4	<1%
Between 9 and 10 hours	1	<1%	1	<1%
No data	-	-	33	1%
Mean	2.2 hours		0.97 hours	
Median	1.8 hours		0.80 hours	

LSS key informants expressed surprise that clients were not using more hours. LSS key informants and roster lawyers speculated potential reasons for the lower than expected usage of the additional hours, and the evaluation attempted to use available data to test these suppositions, in an effort to determine why clients are not using more LawLINE service hours. Two overall themes emerged that

focused on clients’ need for the additional hours and/or factors inhibiting access to the service. These are explored below.

Suppositions related to client need/demand for additional service hours

- ▶ **Clients are receiving service from local Family Duty Counsel upon referral from LawLINE:** Pilot data show just over a quarter of all LawLINE clients (27% or n=787) were referred to FDCs (the second most common referral provided), but there are minimal data available on whether clients are aware of and are using these referrals. Available data suggest clients are often not aware of the referrals they received and often do not use these referrals. Specifically, the client survey found that half (49%) of the surveyed clients recalled receiving a referral and among these clients, just under half (47%) used the referral provided by LawLINE.⁷
- ▶ **Clients did not find their consultation(s) helpful:** This is not the case, as most of the surveyed clients (85%) indicated they were satisfied (29%) or very satisfied (55%) with the help and support they received through LawLINE.
- ▶ **Some clients may not need additional assistance from LawLINE:** Several roster lawyers speculated that, in some cases, clients may not need further service from LawLINE, and survey results support this reasoning. Most surveyed clients (75%) indicated they received all the help they needed. There was little difference between the responses of clients who had one LawLINE meeting and clients who had multiple LawLINE meetings.

That being said, several roster lawyers also mentioned they encountered clients who definitely should be returning to LawLINE for further assistance, but the lawyers were unaware if those clients ever returned. Among clients who indicated they did not receive all the help they needed (n=45 or 22% of respondents), these clients commonly reported they would have liked more detailed legal information or advice or believed their situation was too complex for LawLINE.

Table 12: Q12. Did you receive all the help you needed during your call(s) with the LawLINE lawyer(s)? (survey data)

	Clients who reported having more than one meeting (n=94)		Clients who reported having one meeting (n=106)		Total (n=201)	
	#	%	#	%		
Yes	73	78%	78	74%	151	75%
No	19	20%	25	24%	45	22%
Don't know	2	2%	3	3%	5	3%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

⁷ Surveyed clients were asked whether they recalled receiving a referral and whether they used this referral, but were not asked which specific referral resource they recalled and/or used. Matching survey responses with client records showed that among the 56 surveyed LawLINE clients who received a referral to FDC, 17 clients (30% of those referred to FDC) did not recall receiving a referral.

Suppositions related to access:

- ▶ **Clients don't understand that they have additional hours:** This is not the case, as available data suggest clients understand they can call LawLINE for further information or advice. Specifically, nearly all of the surveyed LawLINE clients (93%) recalled being informed about the option to call back again if they needed further assistance in their family law matter. Most of these clients mentioned that the LawLINE lawyer told them about this option, while others recalled being informed by an intake worker or a form they received from the lawyer.
- ▶ **Clients find the process too difficult:** Again, this is not the case, as available data suggest most surveyed clients do not find the process for reaching LawLINE too difficult. Specifically, 84% of surveyed clients rated the process of reaching a LawLINE lawyer as somewhat (39%) or very easy (45%).
- ▶ **Technological barriers:** A few internal and external key informants mentioned that technological barriers — such as not having access to email, a computer, a phone, or not being technologically literate — could prevent access to the expanded LawLINE because the service relies on the use of such technology. However, LSS recognized this potential limitation and attempted to address this by having LawLINE direct clients to friends or family, community partners, or other community agencies that might help facilitate the process of using the expanded features of LawLINE (e.g., assisting with scanning documents, sending and receiving emails).

As discussed above, internal and external key informants reported that various community partners and agencies have assisted clients in reaching and using LawLINE. However, the extent to which technological barriers may be preventing clients from accessing the project cannot be determined by the evaluation. Nor can the extent of community advocate awareness and participation be assessed, because the project does not track which advocates are referring to the project. Pilot data shows 23 clients have been referred to LawLINE through advocates or community agencies and another nine clients were referred by Aboriginal or immigrant community organizations. In addition, LawLINE has referred 114 clients to advocates or community agencies and an additional 21 clients to Aboriginal or immigration community organizations. However, as mentioned above, the client survey found that half (49%) of the surveyed clients recalled receiving a referral, and among these clients, just under half (47%) reported using the referral provided by LawLINE.

4. To what extent do the current processes and structure of the FAM LL support its efficient and effective delivery?

Intake perceived as efficient

Key informants from LSS believe the efficiency of the intake process has improved over the previous model, as well as from the launch of the expanded LawLINE. Several reasons were provided for this increased efficiency. First, the intake process captures people who are not eligible for full representation and directs those to the LawLINE intake, which has additional processing capacity through two cross-trained floaters (project staff who work between LawLINE and the other JITI projects). Another reason for the increased efficiency of intake is that, as time passes, the pilot administrator and other support staff are perceived by most roster lawyers to have become better at screening calls for appropriateness. The advice given form was also credited for improving the efficiency of LawLINE, specifically for return callers because roster lawyers can review the client’s information from the previous meeting.

Other evidence that supports the idea that intake is operating efficiently is that surveyed clients were largely content with wait times, even though some of these clients (n=20), when they called for an additional appointment, reported waiting a week or longer before speaking to a LawLINE lawyer. About 83% of clients reported the wait time they experienced the first time they called LawLINE was about right. The majority of these clients (64%) waited a day or less to speak to a lawyer.

The table below summarizes wait times reported by LawLINE clients. Clients who called LawLINE more than once (n=94 or 47% of all respondents) were asked what was the longest they waited before talking to a LawLINE lawyer. About half of these clients (48%) reported the longest they waited was a day or less. The remainder reported waiting several days but less than a week (n=13 or 14%), waiting a week or more (n=20 or 21%), or did not know how long they waited (n=16 or 17%). The majority of clients who called LawLINE more than once (69%) reported that the longest amount of time they waited was about right.

	Q4A. How long did you wait before you talked with a lawyer (n=201)		Q7A. What is the longest you waited before talking with a lawyer? (n=94)*	
	#	%	#	%
Waited a day or less	128	64%	45	48%
Waited several days, but less than a week	24	12%	13	14%
Waited a week or more	20	10%	20	21%
Don't know	29	14%	16	17%
Percentage of clients who felt the wait time was about right	83%		69%	

* Only asked of clients who reported talking to a lawyer at LawLINE more than once.

Some areas for improvement

While roster lawyers were consistent in their opinion that the expanded LawLINE was a major improvement from the old LawLINE model and the expanded model continued to improve over time, there were two issues that surfaced often while discussing the efficiency and appropriateness of referrals to LawLINE.

- ▶ **Clients come to roster lawyers looking for legal aid:** Many roster lawyers commented they often get calls from clients who want to apply for legal aid. Several expressed frustration about having to clarify to these clients the role of LawLINE lawyers, which is to provide legal advice and information and not take legal aid applications. A few other lawyers noted these clients might be transferred to LawLINE because intake believes these clients may or may not qualify for legal aid but also need immediate advice. Several roster lawyers also noted that often these clients do not seem to understand why they were transferred to LawLINE, which would be frustrating for the client because they think they might get legal aid, but LawLINE lawyers cannot make these decisions.

Regardless of how or why this is happening, LawLINE lawyers want clients to be better informed of why they are being transferred to LawLINE and want roster lawyers to be better informed of why these calls are coming to LawLINE and how they should be assisting these clients. An additional frustration is that LawLINE lawyers aren't able to transfer calls directly back to an intake worker, without having the client wait in the queue again.

- ▶ **Clients repeating basic information:** Several roster lawyers were frustrated by having to ask questions that clients were already asked by the pilot administrator and LSS intake. They suggested this information be provided to LawLINE lawyers before taking the call, which would save time and save the client from having to repeat themselves. LSS reports that their current system does not permit this sort of transfer of information to the roster lawyers.

It is worth noting that most surveyed clients (84%) found that the process of reaching a LawLINE lawyer was easy. A few survey respondents (n=10) indicated they talked to too many people before talking to a lawyer and/or had to repeat the same information numerous times.

LawLINE queue/appointment system working well

LSS key informants reported that the appointment system is working efficiently. They observed that roster lawyers appear to be adjusting to the software and know how to monitor the queue and indicate whether they are ready for another call. A few roster lawyers commented that wait times in the LawLINE queue have been reduced since the process evaluation. The client survey collected estimates on how long clients waited before speaking with a LawLINE lawyer, but there is not such data from the process evaluation, making it difficult to confirm reduced wait times. As mentioned above, wait times do not appear to be a major issue among survey respondents, although some clients who called more than once reported waiting relatively long periods of time (a week or more) before receiving service.

A few roster lawyers noted it is difficult transitioning between the advice line and client appointments. In these situations, the lawyers tell their advice line clients how much time they have before they must attend to an appointment, which is particularly difficult if there is minimal time to complete the advice call and prepare for the appointment.

Conflicting views on the client file

During the process evaluation, key informants noted several technical challenges related to the clients' file where minor process improvements could make the project more effective or efficient. During the summative evaluation, LSS key informants reported that client files are currently organized chronologically and attached to emails. In situations where a client sends a single PDF that contains multiple documents, one of the project assistants will separate the documents into individual files and label each file according to the type of document and date. Several roster lawyers commented that the practice of chronologically organizing and labelling files is a fairly recent change, although LSS reports this has been standard procedure since the outset of the project.

Regardless, this approach to organizing client documents is much appreciated by roster lawyers because it makes it easier to go through batches of client documents. That said, several other roster lawyers reported having challenges with the organization of the client file (file naming, dating). Several other lawyers expressed concern over the growing size of client files, in terms how large of attachments the email system can handle and the sheer volume of documents accumulating in some client files.

5.2 Early indications of outcomes

The following sections discuss findings related to the expanded LawLINE’s outcomes.

5. Did more clients access the FAM LL services, including clients from rural and remote areas and Aboriginal clients, after its expansion?

Intake is steady, lacking sustained increase

Over a 12-month period, LawLINE has consistently exceeded 200 clients per month. This does not count the return calls by existing LawLINE clients (which is not tracked in an analyzable format). The table below shows that the first six months of full operation (April 2015 to September 2015) saw a slightly larger volume of clients and a higher monthly average than the six months between October 2015 and March 2016.

Table 14: Uptake of expanded LawLINE (administrative data)

	Clients with more than one meeting (n=422)*		All intake (n=2,845)	
	Apr 2015 to Sept 2015 (six months)	Oct 2015 to Mar 2016 (six months)**	Apr 2015 to Sept 2015 (six months)	Oct 2015 to Mar 2016 (six months)
Average number of clients	37	33	248	227
Volume (%)	223 (53%)	199 (47%)	1,486 (52%)	1,359 (48%)

* Excludes one client from January 2015 and 14 clients from March 2015.
 **Data in the latter period are possibly lower due to recent clients (particularly those in March 2016) not yet having additional meetings.

As the chart below illustrates, the project peaked at nearly 300 clients per month in August 2015, and has since generally trended downward. Overall, the project has lacked a sustained increase in intake, as demonstrated by the fact that for almost every month that intake increased there was a month where intake decreased. The evaluation was unable to determine the causes of or reasons for this trend.

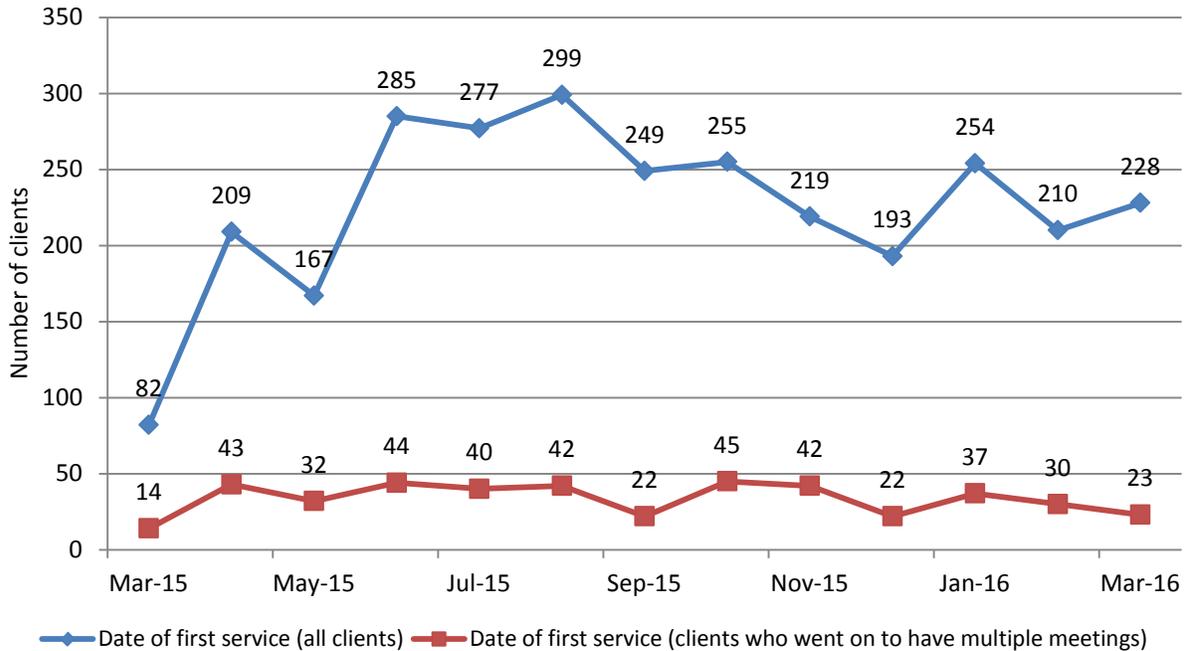


Figure 2: Intake (based on file open date)

About 1 in 10 LawLINE clients self-identify as Aboriginal

Statistics Canada reports that BC has about 232,290 residents reporting an Aboriginal identity,⁸ which represents about 5% of the province’s population. Just over one-tenth (13%) of LawLINE clients identified themselves as having Aboriginal ancestry. Similar proportions of Aboriginal clients (11%) and non-Aboriginal clients (13%) had more than one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer.

	Cases with more than one meeting (n=437)		All cases (n=2,959)	
	#	%	#	%
Yes	48	11%	375	13%
No	371	85%	2,375	80%
Declined to ask/answer	18	4%	209	7%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

⁸ <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-011-x/99-011-x2011001-eng.cfm>



LawLINE clients are mostly urban

For the purposes of this evaluation, urban was defined by LSS as communities with a population of 2,500 or more that are located within 50 kilometers of a legal aid office. Based on this definition, three-quarters (76%) of all LawLINE clients are from urban areas.

While most Aboriginal⁹ and non-Aboriginal¹⁰ clients are from urban areas, this tendency was less common among Aboriginal clients, particularly those who had more than one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer. Given the small number of clients within this subset, caution is urged in interpreting this particular trend. However, if the project intends to use LawLINE to fill legal service gaps in rural and/or remote areas of British Columbia where populations have traditionally been underserved, it would be beneficial to continue monitoring this particular subset — that is, Aboriginal clients from rural and/or remote areas who may lack access to in-person legal services.

Aboriginal clients using the same amount of service as non-Aboriginal clients

Among clients who had one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal clients used about the same number of service hours (median .70 hours). There was also a negligible difference among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal clients who had more than one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer (between 1.80 and 1.85 hours). The mean averages among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal clients who had more than one meeting are affected by a relatively small¹¹ number of clients who had a larger number of service hours.

		Aboriginal clients				Non-Aboriginal clients				All cases (n=2,959)	
		>1 meeting (n=48)*		1 meeting (n=315)*		>1 meeting (n=371)**		1 meeting (n=1,955)**			
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Geography	Urban Pop. ≥ 2,500 LSS office ≤ 50 km	25	52%	210	67%	291	78%	1529	78%	2,246	76%
	Remote/island LSS office > 50 km	11	23%	43	14%	40	11%	201	10%	321	11%
	Rural and remote Pop. < 2,500 LSS office > 50 km	5	10%	35	11%	19	5%	103	5%	179	6%
	Out of province	-	-	13	4%	13	4%	70	4%	109	4%
	Rural Pop. < 2,500	7	15%	14	4%	8	2%	51	3%	89	3%
	Missing data	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	<1%	15	1%
Average hours of service	Mean	2.40		0.72		2.17		0.76		0.97	
	Median	1.85		0.70		1.80		0.70		0.80	

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
 * Missing number of meetings or hours of service data for 12 cases.
 ** Missing number of meetings or hours of service data for 49 cases.

⁹ The top 10 communities of residence for Aboriginal clients include Surrey, Prince George, Kamloops, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Chilliwack, Victoria, Williams Lake, Cranbrook, and Mission.

¹⁰ The top 10 communities of residence for non-Aboriginal clients include Surrey, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Kamloops, Chilliwack, Prince George, Burnaby, Abbotsford, Maple Ridge, and Victoria.

¹¹ Among Aboriginal clients, six clients (13% of Aboriginal clients with more than one meeting) used more than four hours of service; among non-Aboriginal clients, 33 clients (9% of non-Aboriginal clients with more than one meeting) used more than four hours of service.

Awareness and use of LawLINE by ethnic minority groups

Administrative data shows nine LawLINE clients were identified as having a language other than English, and five clients were identified as requiring an interpreter. Both counts represent less than 1% of total intake as of the end of March 2016. Yet, the top two places of residence for LawLINE clients (Surrey, n=211 and Vancouver, n=160) have substantial populations whose mother tongue is a language other than English or French: 44% in Surrey and 45% in Vancouver, and 40% within the Vancouver Census metropolitan agglomeration (CMA).¹² While the majority of the populations in these areas have knowledge of English and/or French, many do not speak either official language within their households (30% in Surrey and 25% in Vancouver).

LSS reports that LawLINE provides access to free interpreters via a remote telephone interpreter service, although as stated above, very few clients (n=5) have utilized this service. A few roster lawyers noted that providing LawLINE services in additional languages and expanding outreach to immigrant and minority community organizations might be one way to ensure LawLINE services are available and are being fully utilized by ethnic minority groups in BC.

Geographic mapping exercise

During the course of the evaluation, LSS undertook an exercise to map over 300 LawLINE client communities into regional categories (see the client geography table above). This exercise has enabled LSS to examine service delivery on a regional basis, which for LawLINE can be a particularly useful measure if the service is intended to fill legal service gaps in rural and/or remote areas of British Columbia where populations have traditionally been underserved.

¹² The Vancouver CMA includes Richmond, West and North Vancouver, Delta, Langley, Maple Ridge, and Coquitlam. See language under Statistics Canada's [Census profile for Surrey \(Census division\)](#), [Census profile for Vancouver \(Census district\)](#), and [Census profile for Vancouver \(Census metropolitan area\)](#)

6. Did the pilot project improve the continuity and consistency of the FAM LL services?

Continuity of counsel is helpful, but continuity of service through client file is considered most important

LSS key informants reported that the project aimed to have as much continuity of counsel as possible and the pilot intake has been instructed to try and set clients’ appointments with the same roster lawyer. Roster lawyers had varying experiences with client continuity, with some reporting seeing the same client multiple times and a few reporting they had never seen a client more than once. A few roster lawyers noted that having continuity of counsel promotes the development of client’s trust and the lawyers’ understanding of the client. LSS key informants and roster lawyers were consistent in believing continuity of service — that is, roster lawyers having access to an up-to-date client file — was generally more important than ensuring clients meet with the same lawyer.

These observations are in line with responses from the client survey, which shows most clients found the service they received was helpful regardless of whether they had the same lawyer or different lawyers during their LawLINE meetings; though it is worth noting that clients who worked with the same LawLINE lawyer each appointment had more favourable ratings for this approach. Specifically, among clients who reported having multiple meetings and multiple LawLINE lawyers (n=51), three-quarters (76%) indicated having multiple lawyers was helpful or made no difference. Most commonly, these clients reported that this approach was helpful because clients got to hear different opinions from the lawyers or said it made no difference because the lawyers were all helpful in providing assistance. Among clients who reported having multiple meetings with a single LawLINE lawyer (n=39), most clients (90%) indicated it was helpful (26%) or very helpful (64%). Most commonly these clients reported this approach was helpful because the client did not need to re-explain their situation to different lawyers each time and the lawyer involved was familiar with their case.

Table 17: Client opinions on continuity of service and continuity of counsel (survey data)		
Q15. How helpful or unhelpful was it to you to work with different LawLINE lawyers rather than just one LawLINE lawyer? (n=51)		
	#	%
Very helpful	5	10%
Helpful	11	22%
Made no difference	23	45%
Not helpful	8	16%
Not at all helpful	4	8%
Q18. How helpful was it to you to work with the same LawLINE lawyer compared to if you had different lawyers each time you called? (n=39)		
Very helpful	25	64%
Helpful	10	26%
Made no difference	1	3%
Not at all helpful	1	3%
Don't know/no response	2	5%
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Totals for Q15 and Q18 do not sum to 94 (total number of clients who had more than one meeting) because these questions were only asked to respondents who recalled the number of lawyers and number of meetings involved in their LawLINE service (n=90).		

About two-thirds of clients with more than one meeting have high level of counsel continuity

The project’s administrative data was also analyzed to determine the level of counsel continuity among clients who have had more than one meeting. The analysis found that nearly two-thirds (64%) of LawLINE clients who had more than one meeting had high continuity of counsel, meaning there was either one lawyer involved in all their meetings or the total number of lawyers involved in their meetings was less than half the total number of meetings (e.g., clients who saw two lawyers but had between five and seven meetings). This represents an increase in continuity of counsel since the process evaluation for clients who had more than one LawLINE meeting. At that time, about half (51%) the clients with more than one meeting had a higher level of counsel continuity.¹³

Another 14% of files at the time of the summative evaluation had some level of counsel continuity, meaning the total number of lawyers involved in their case was equal to or greater than half their total number of meetings (e.g., clients who saw two lawyers over three or four meetings, clients who saw three lawyers over four to six meetings). Finally, about one-fifth of clients (22%) who had more than one LawLINE meeting had no continuity of counsel, meaning they had a different lawyer each time they called. This proportion has also decreased since this process evaluation, where one-third (33%) of clients with more than one meeting had no continuity of counsel.

Table 18: Continuity of counsel — summative evaluation (administrative data)

Summative evaluation	Cases with more than one meeting (n=436)*		Total (n=2,851)**	
	#	%	#	%
No continuity	97	22%	2,512	88%
Some continuity	60	14%	60	2%
Higher continuity	279	64%	279	10%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
 * Excludes one case missing the number of lawyers.
 **Excludes 108 cases missing data on number of meetings and/or number of lawyers.

Table 19: Continuity of counsel — process evaluation (administrative data)

Process evaluation	Cases with more than one meeting (n=39)		Total (n=242)*	
	#	%	#	%
No continuity	13	33%	216	89%
Some continuity	6	15%	6	2%
Higher continuity	20	51%	20	8%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
 * Excludes three cases missing the number of lawyers and 258 cases missing number of client meetings.

¹³ Caution is warranted in comparing continuity of counsel between the process and summative evaluation. The available data from the process evaluation shows just over half of all clients (258 out of 500) have no data on the number of meetings, which means they are excluded from the continuity of counsel analysis for the process evaluation dataset. Also, very few clients (n=39) at the time of the process evaluation had multiple meetings.

7. Have the FAM LL services improved clients’ knowledge of the process, family law, and their legal options?

Improved client understanding of legal process, family law, and legal options

LSS key informants and roster lawyers reported that the client’s knowledge varies based on a clients’ ability to understand the information provided and willingness to follow through with the instructions provided. A few roster lawyers indicated clients appear to have some level of understanding, or at least a better understanding of their legal issues and options than when they first called. Signs that a client understands the information include the client asking relevant questions, using correct terminology, and having expectations that were within their legal rights.

An analysis of roster lawyer assessments¹⁴ of the clients’ understanding of family law issues suggests there is some difference in the level of understanding among clients who had one LawLINE meeting and clients who had more than one meeting. However, the overall results suggest many clients are perceived as having no improvement in understanding their family law issues. Specifically, among clients who had more than one meeting, about 51% were rated as having a moderate change in their level of understanding while a similar proportion (47%) were rated as having no change. Clients who had a single meeting had lower overall ratings, with most clients (58%) being rated as having no change in understanding.

	Clients with more than one meeting (n=396)*		Clients with one meeting (n=2,038)**	
	#	%	#	%
Large change (low to able)	5	1%	6	<1%
Moderate change (low to some; some to able)	203	51%	858	42%
No change	188	47%	1,174	58%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
 * 41 cases missing lawyer assessment data.
 ** 378 cases missing lawyer assessment data.

Roster lawyers gave similar ratings based on their client’s understanding of the legal processes related to their cases, although there was a larger difference in results for clients who had more than one meeting and clients who had a single meeting. Specifically, half of all clients who had more than one meeting were rated as having a moderate change in understanding, while the other half (49%) were rated as having no change in understanding. Clients who had a single meeting had lower overall ratings, with most clients (62%) being rated as having no change in understanding.

¹⁴ Clients’ level of understanding is assessed by the roster lawyer at the beginning of a call and is assessed again at the end of a call. Each time a client calls the LawLINE, their end-of-call assessment from the previous appointment is overwritten by the end-of-call assessment from the current appointment. The rating scale includes: Low, Some, and Able. LSS reports that while the assessment was discussed during roster lawyer training, the assessment process does not take into account variations in lawyers’ perception of client ability. There is currently no formal guideline or criteria for assessing client understanding or ability. Therefore, results should be interpreted with caution.

Table 21: Client understands the legal processes that relate to their case (administrative data)				
	Cases with more than one meeting (n=394)*		Cases with one meeting (n=1,972)**	
	#	%	#	%
Large change (low to able)	5	1%	6	<1%
Moderate change (low to some; some to able)	197	50%	750	38%
No change	192	49%	1,216	62%
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.				
* 43 cases missing data				
** 444 cases missing data				

Results from the client survey offered a somewhat different perspective. Among clients who reported that their LawLINE lawyer(s) explained and provided them with information about their family law matter (87%) and explained the legal process (80%), the vast majority of clients (86%) reported this information was helpful or very helpful. Similarly, most clients (87%) found the information and assistance for understanding and making decisions on their various legal options was helpful or very helpful.

Table 22: Client opinions on helpfulness of LawLINE information (survey data)		
Q22. How helpful was this information and assistance for understanding the legal process and your family law matter? (n=189)		
	#	%
Very helpful	94	50%
Helpful	68	36%
Not helpful	20	11%
Not at all helpful	5	3%
Don't know/no response	2	1%
Q24. How helpful was this information and assistance for understanding and making decisions on your various options for handling your family law matter? (n=187)		
Very helpful	88	47%
Helpful	74	40%
Not helpful	14	7%
Not at all helpful	6	3%
Don't know/no response	5	3%
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.		

Fewer clients received help with forms and documents, and clients who did receive this assistance found it helpful, but LawLINE lawyers reported largely no change in client ability

A smaller proportion of clients (39%) reported receiving help with forms or documents needed for their legal matter. Most commonly, this assistance involved identifying the type of forms needed, where the forms could be found, and providing information on how to fill the forms out on their own and how to submit the forms. The majority of clients (75%) who received assistance on forms and documents found this assistance to be helpful (21%) or very helpful (54%). Notably, among clients who submitted documents to the court registry (n=75 or 37% of all clients), the majority (79%) reported their documents were accepted the first time they tried to submit them.

Table 23: Client opinions on helpfulness of LawLINE assistance with forms and documents (survey data)		
Q27. Overall, how helpful was this assistance to you for preparing your own forms and documents? (n=76)		
	#	%
Very helpful	41	54%
Helpful	16	21%
Not helpful	2	3%
Not at all helpful	2	3%
Not applicable, did not prepare own documents	14	18%
Don't know/no response	1	1%
Q29. Were your documents accepted the first time you tried to submit them? (n=75)		
No	12	16%
Yes	59	79%
Don't know/no response	4	5%
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.		

Roster lawyer assessments of clients' ability to prepare and submit provincial court and Supreme Court documents show a notable difference between clients who had more than one meeting and clients who had a single meeting. However, in both cases, a majority of clients were rated as having no change in ability to prepare and submit provincial and Supreme Court documents.

Table 24: Client is able to prepare and submit provincial court documents (administrative data)				
	Cases with more than one meeting (n=179)*		Cases with one meeting (n=889)**	
	#	%	#	%
Large change (low to able)	5	3%	-	-
Moderate change (low to some; some to able)	52	29%	162	18%
No change	122	68%	727	82%
* 258 cases missing data. ** 1,527 cases missing data.				

Table 25: Client is able to prepare and submit Supreme Court documents (administrative data)				
	Cases with more than one meeting (n=157)*		Cases with one meeting (n=480)**	
	#	%	#	%
Large change (low to able)	5	3%	-	-
Moderate change (low to some; some to able)	45	29%	63	14%
No change	107	68%	397	86%
* 280 cases missing data. ** 1,956 cases missing data.				

8. Have the FAM LL services increased client’s ability to manage and resolve their current legal issue? Future legal issues?

Majority of clients were rated as having no change in their organization and preparation

Several roster lawyers explained that they help clients manage their legal issues by breaking processes down into smaller tasks and that most clients seem to be able to complete these tasks. A few roster lawyers commented they know their clients are managing their legal issues, because the clients are getting through the process and clients have gone to court, received orders, and told their LawLINE lawyer the lawyer’s assistance was helpful.

Roster lawyer assessments of clients’ organization and preparation to address their legal issue were less positive. Although there is a notable difference between clients who had more than one meeting and clients who had a single meeting, the majority of clients were rated as having no change in their organization and preparation to address their legal issue.

	Cases with more than one meeting (n=334)*		Cases with one meeting (n=1,470)**	
	#	%	#	%
Large change (low to able)	13	4%	4	<1%
Moderate change (low to some; some to able)	102	31%	305	21%
No change	219	66%	1,161	79%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
 * 103 cases missing data.
 ** 946 cases missing data.

9. Are clients accessing FAM LL services early in the process of dealing with their legal situation?

Clients are generally accessing service early enough

LSS key informants and roster lawyers reported that clients are engaging LawLINE early enough in the family law matters, although this varies from client to client. Based on roster lawyer descriptions, clients are contacting LawLINE at a wide variety of stages, ranging from the outset of a separation, after separation papers have been served, or they may have already been to court and/or have an order in place. Roster lawyers reported that clients also varied in whether they engaged LawLINE early enough to prepare for self-representation.

The project administrative data shows that over half of all clients (59%) came to LawLINE at an early stage of their family law matters, which includes before court proceedings/written agreement or before a case conference. Cases with one meeting were somewhat more likely (60%) to engage with LawLINE early in their family law matter compared to cases with more than one meeting (53%).

Few clients were identified as having CFCSA-related matters (n=95), but among those cases about half (50 out of 95, or 53%) engaged with LawLINE at an early stage of their case, while the remainder engaged LawLINE at a later stage in their CFCSA matter.

Table 27: Stage of client case when file opened (n=2,959) (administrative data)

Stage of case			Cases with more than one meeting (n=437)*		Cases with one meeting (n=2,416)*		Total (n=2,959)	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
FAMILY LAW	EARLY STAGE	Before court proceedings or written agreement	167	38%	1,193	49%	1,407	48%
		Court action commenced - before case conference	66	15%	260	11%	342	12%
	LATER STAGE	After final order or agreement	80	18%	378	16%	469	16%
		Change final order or agreement	50	11%	199	8%	258	9%
		After case conference - before interim orders	12	3%	33	1%	48	2%
		Before final order	52	12%	179	7%	235	8%
CFCSA	EARLY STAGE	Risk of removal	3	1%	42	2%	50	2%
	LATER STAGE	New removal/presentation	1	<1%	21	1%	25	1%
		Protection	1	<1%	6	<1%	8	<1%
		Continuing custody order (CCO)	-	-	5	<1%	5	<1%
		Cancellation of CCO	-	-	4	<1%	4	<1%
		Director no longer involved	-	-	1	<1%	1	<1%
		Extension	-	-	1	<1%	1	<1%
		Transfer of child to a non-parent	-	-	1	<1%	1	<1%
No data	5	1%	93	4%	105	4%		

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
 *Excludes cases where there is no data on the number of meetings.

10. Are the FAM LL services helping clients achieve resolutions to their legal problems?

As mentioned in the process evaluation, the LawLINE project has no formal way of tracking client resolutions, so the evaluation is unable to definitively determine whether LawLINE clients are resolving their legal problems, nor can the evaluation determine with confidence the extent to which LawLINE is assisting clients in resolving their problems. That said, client survey results suggest LawLINE is helping at least some clients resolve their family law matters out of court.

Half of surveyed clients resolved some or all their family law issues

Survey results show that half of the surveyed clients (50%) resolved all or some of their issues at the time of the survey, while the other half (48%) had not resolved any of their issues. Survey results show that clients who resolved all or some of their issues were considerably more likely to do so out of court.

Table 28: Current status of family law issues (Q33 and Q34) by number of meetings with LawLINE (Q2) (n=201) (survey data)

Status	Clients who reported having more than one meeting (n=94)		Clients who reported having one meeting (n=106)		Total (n=200)*	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
No issues are yet resolved	47	50%	49	46%	96	48%
All or some issues resolved/settled out of court without a trial	32	34%	45	42%	77	38%
All or some issues resolved/settled through an order from a judge after a trial	9	10%	6	6%	16*	8%
All or some issues resolved/settled with some being settled out of court and some being settled through an order from a judge after a trial	3	3%	3	3%	6	3%
Don't know/no response	3	3%	3	3%	6	3%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
 *Includes one respondent who did not know how many meetings they had with a LawLINE lawyer

Clients who reported having a single meeting with a LawLINE lawyer were somewhat more likely to have resolved all or some of their issues out of court without a trial than those clients who had multiple meetings. Further analysis shows that clients who reported resolving some or all of their legal issues (whether that was in court or out of court) tended to have fewer legal issues addressed¹⁵ (one or two), while those with three or more legal issues addressed through LawLINE were somewhat more likely to have no issues resolved.

¹⁵ According to LawLINE administrative data.

Status	One or two issues addressed (n=122)		Three or four issues addressed (n=77)		Total (n=201)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
No issues are yet resolved	52	43%	42	55%	96*	48%
All or some issues resolved/settled out of court without a trial	50	41%	27	35%	77	38%
All or some issues resolved/settled through an order from a judge after a trial	11	9%	5	6%	16	8%
All or some issues resolved/settled with some being settled out of court and some being settled through an order from a judge after a trial	4	3%	2	3%	6	3%
Don't know/no response	5	4%	1	1%	6	3%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
 *Includes two cases where there is no data on legal issues addressed.

Clients credit LawLINE for assisting them in resolving their family law issues out of court

Among surveyed clients who reported resolving some or all of their family law issues out of court (n=72), most clients (71%) reported the information or assistance they received from LawLINE was helpful (29%) or very helpful (42%). Clients commonly commented that the assistance they received was helpful because they received advice and guidance, and processes were explained; some of these clients also believe LawLINE helped minimize conflict and move the process along without having to go to court.

	#	%
Very helpful	30	42%
Helpful	21	29%
Not helpful	5	7%
Not at all helpful	4	6%
Not applicable, did not get information or assistance from the LawLINE for this	10	14%
Don't know/no response	2	3%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Among the few clients who went to a court trial (n=22 or 11% of total) to settle all or some of their issues, nearly two-thirds (n=14 or 64%) indicated they self-represented; over half of these clients (n=8) said they received no information or advice on self-representation. Clients were split on whether they were prepared to handle the trial, with six saying they weren't prepared and eight saying they were prepared. For clients who appeared before a judge for reasons other than a trial (n=39, or 19% of total), just over a quarter (n=11 or 28%) said they received information from LawLINE about the court appearance and instruction on how to prepare for court.

**11. Are clients satisfied with their experience using the added FAM LL services?
What, if anything, can be done to improve clients' experience?**

Most clients are satisfied with LawLINE

Nearly all clients reported they were treated with respect (94%) and felt the LawLINE lawyer(s) listened to them and took the time to understand their legal issue (90%). Overall, most clients (85%) were satisfied with the help and support they received through LawLINE, and most of these clients reported being very satisfied (55%).

Most common suggestion among clients was more advertising for LawLINE services

Most commonly (40%), clients indicated they had no suggested changes to make LawLINE services better. One in 10 clients (n=21 or 10%) recommended there be more communication/advertising to let people know about the availability of LawLINE.

A few clients (n=17 or 8%) suggested allowing more time with the lawyer. Further analysis showed that seven of these clients had one LawLINE meeting, while the remaining 10 clients had more than one LawLINE meeting. Most of these clients (n=14) were aware they could call LawLINE again for further assistance, but they were evenly split on whether they received all the help they needed. Those who reported that they did not receive all the help they needed (n=8) reported that they would have liked more detailed legal information, wanted easier to understand information, more time with the lawyer per session, or believed their situation was too complex for LawLINE.

In the absence of LawLINE, clients reported they would have tried to find another service to help (27%), hired their own lawyer (27%), represented themselves in court with no help (15%), or relied on duty counsel (12%).

12. Are the FAM LL referrals to other resources helpful to clients in resolving their family law issues?

Most LawLINE clients received a referral

Most LawLINE clients are receiving referrals and the most common referral resources are online resources (44%), FDC (27%), and legal aid intake (24%), followed by FJCs (17%), private lawyers (16%), and court staff or judiciary (11%). Notably, no clients were recorded as being referred to LSS’s other province-wide JITI project, the Family Mediation Referrals Project (MED REF), although some clients were referred to private mediators.

Table 31: LawLINE referrals to other resources (survey data)

	Referrals to other resources (n=2,959)	
Online/internet	1,298	44%
LSS Family Duty Counsel	787	27%
Legal aid/LSS intake	713	24%
Family Justice Counsellor	511	17%
Private lawyer	476	16%
Court staff or judiciary	317	11%
JAC resource room/self-help	126	4%
Other government agency	120	4%
Advocate or community agency	114	4%
Private mediator	111	4%
FMEP	74	3%
Social worker	56	2%
Health professionals	48	2%
Police/victim services	47	2%
Courthouse library	28	1%
Access Pro Bono	19	1%
Aboriginal community agency	16	1%
Income assistance	12	<1%
Child Support Officer (CSO)	7	<1%
Crown counsel/prosecutor	7	<1%
Immigrant settlement or multicultural organization	5	<1%
Law students’ clinic or program	3	<1%
No data	363	12%

Note: Clients might receive multiple referrals to other resources.

Client satisfaction with referrals is unknown; many clients do not recall receiving a referral

The LawLINE project and the evaluation did not collect information on client satisfaction with referrals to other resources. Half of the surveyed clients (49%) recalled receiving a referral. Among those who reported receiving a referral (n=98), about half (47%) indicated they used the referral. The other half of surveyed clients (46%) did not recall receiving a referral, even though the majority of these clients (87% or 80 out of 92) had a referral recorded in the administrative data.

13. How well does the FAM LL integrate into the suite of services available for clients with family law matters?

Referrals to LawLINE: external and internal service integration with LawLINE remains largely unknown

Other services integrate with LawLINE by sending persons with family law matters to LawLINE. As indicated earlier, most clients (89%) do not have a record of where they were referred from. Among clients with administrative data showing where they were referred from (n=333), these clients often came to LawLINE through LSS intake (n=103 or 31%), FJCs (n=74 or 22%), and online resources (n=59 or 18%). Few clients were recorded as being referred to the project from a private mediator (n=3) or Mediate BC (n=3).

Results from the client survey show clients most often recalled finding out about LawLINE through the internet (39%), suggesting the internet is playing an important role in raising awareness of LawLINE’s services. Other sources included community organizations/support services (15%), friends or relatives (14%), counsel or staff at the courthouse (10%), legal aid (8%), and FJCs (8%). Notably, four of the surveyed clients found out about LawLINE through MED REF, LSS’s other province-wide JITI project.

Table 32: Q1. How did you first find out about the LawLINE? (n=201) (survey data)

	#	%
Saw it online/through internet	78	39%
Through another community organizations/support service	30	15%
Friend/relative	29	14%
At the courthouse (e.g., the duty counsel, someone else at the courthouse)	21	10%
Someone at legal aid (this includes intake workers at the legal aid call centre)	17	8%
Family Justice Counsellors or someone else at the Justice Access Centre (JAC)	16	8%
Poster/brochure/booklet	5	2%
Someone at the Family Mediation Referral Pilot	4	2%
Through work/school	3	1%
Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP)	2	1%
Other	3	1%
Don't know/no response	8	4%

Note: Clients might receive multiple referrals to other resources.

An analysis of administrative data from the four family law JITI projects (Expanded Family LawLINE, Expanded Family Duty Counsel, Family Mediation Referral Project, and the Parents Legal Centre) shows a total of 52 clients used another JITI service prior to using LawLINE, while another seven clients came to LawLINE the same day they came to MED REF. This accounts for about 2% of all LawLINE intake. Most of these clients came from the Expanded Duty Counsel project in Victoria.¹⁶ This analysis suggests the other family law JITI projects are not well integrated with LawLINE.

¹⁶ It is worth noting that none of the 34 clients who came to LawLINE after using the Expanded Family Duty Counsel are recorded as being referred to LawLINE from the EXP FDC project. Although 55 clients were referred to LawLINE from the EXP FDC project, none of these 55 clients are among the 34 clients reported in the table above.

This finding is particularly relevant for MED REF, which is a province-wide service and, according to LawLINE project documentation, was supposed to be utilizing LawLINE for advice before, during, and after clients' mediation process. Adding the clients who went from MED REF to LawLINE (n=17 + n=1) and the clients who went to these services on the same day (n=7) provides a total of 25 MED REF clients who are known to have used LawLINE. This accounts for 12% of all MED REF clients.

MED REF records show nine of these clients actually proceeded to mediation, including four clients who completed their mediation, three clients who ended their mediation, and two clients whose mediation was still in process at the time of the evaluation. This accounts for 17% of all MED REF clients who proceeded to mediation, suggesting LawLINE is not a major resource for legal advice and information among MED REF clients who proceed to mediation.

It is also notable that few MED REF clients who did not proceed to mediation utilized LawLINE. Specifically, among the 117 MED REF clients who did not proceed to mediation, 12 are recorded as using LawLINE, accounting for 10% of these clients.

Expanded FDC to Family LawLINE	34	58%
MED REF to Family LawLINE	17	29%
Same-day contact (Family LawLINE & MED REF)	7	12%
Expanded FDC to MED REF to Family LawLINE	1	2%
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.		

Referrals from LawLINE to other services

LawLINE integrates with other services by referring clients to other services that can assist them further with family law matters. As discussed above, according to the project's administrative data, most clients (88%) received a referral to another resource and the most common referrals were to online resources (44%), FDC (27%), and legal aid intake (24%). As mentioned above, the client survey shows that clients often do not recall receiving referrals, even though several roster lawyers indicated they record their referrals on the advice given form.

Notably, there is no record in the LawLINE pilot data of any clients being referred to the province-wide MED REF project (although there were 111 referrals to private mediators). In fact, MED REF is not listed as a referral option on the LawLINE's current case summary form. However, an analysis of administrative data from the four family law JITI projects shows that 11 LawLINE clients went to the MED REF project after using LawLINE; another seven clients went to LawLINE and MED REF on the same day, making it difficult to determine which service was accessed first. Again, this suggests there is little integration between LawLINE and the MED REF project.

It was more common for LawLINE clients to utilize the Expanded FDC in Victoria.

	#	%
Family LawLINE to Expanded FDC	30	58%
Family LawLINE to MED REF	11	21%
Same-day contact (Family LawLINE and MED REF)	7	13%
Family LawLINE to PLC	2	4%
Family LawLINE to MED REF to Expanded FDC	1	2%
Family LawLINE and Expanded FDC to MED REF	1	2%

14. Have the enhancements to the FAM LL project increased internal efficiency and cost-effectiveness?

Screening and continuity of service (through client file) are key components of LawLINE's efficiencies

As with the process evaluation, the most common observations among key informants was that efficiency was gained through the implementation of a client screening process, which reduced the volume of inappropriate client referrals to the service. Previously, lawyers spent more time dealing with inappropriate clients, either by redirecting them to another service, or otherwise providing whatever assistance they could. The reduction in these referrals allowed the lawyers to focus their time on assisting other clients, and on completing data entry during their downtime.

The other key efficiency of the expanded LawLINE model is continuity of service via client file. Key informants reported that availability of a client file increases the efficiency of appointments, whether those appointments are with the same lawyer or a different lawyer from the previous appointments. Having access to the client file allows roster lawyers to prepare for the appointment, which leads to clients spending less time re-explaining their case at each meeting. The results of each meeting are added to the client file, so there is an ongoing history of what has been done and what is still to be accomplished. After each appointment, part of the client file — the advice given form — is provided to the client, so they have access to the written advice and referrals to other resources that they will need to complete the next steps in their matter.

The ability to screen clients prior to referring calls to LawLINE and to provide returning clients continuity of service are perhaps LawLINE's most crucial and successful innovations. However, the evaluation is unable to quantify the extent to which these innovations have increased internal efficiency or cost-effectiveness.

15. To what extent has the FAM LL pilot led to net system savings due to efficiencies gained for LSS and/or other areas of the justice system?

This section¹⁷ looks at potential efficiencies gained for LSS and/or other areas of the justice system as a result of the pilot. As noted in the methodology section, it is not possible to make any conclusive statements on efficiencies gained or costs avoided, as there are no data available on the extent to which the pilot diverted its cases from the court system or reduced the number and length of appearances, or the number of adjournments and trials. Furthermore, outside of court costs, no other information was available to attach monetary estimates to other potential savings to the justice system outside of court costs (e.g., reduced demands on court registry from people looking for assistance or direction). Therefore, this section uses statistics on family court cases from across BC, as presented in Section 4.0, along with pilot data to make some estimates of potential cost avoided if LawLINE achieved its outcomes. Hypothetical scenarios are used to illustrate different levels of costs avoided, based on the level of impact the project might have on the court system.

As was shown in Table 10, provincial court applications and Supreme Court applications that involve a court appearance are not equal in their time requirements. Therefore, it is useful to look at the levels of court for the 2,845 LawLINE clients served in 2015–16. The levels of court for clients during this period are as follows:

- ▶ 1,037 provincial court
- ▶ 618 Supreme Court
- ▶ 127 both provincial court and Supreme Court
- ▶ 124 files identified as “not applicable”
- ▶ 104 files identified as “other”
- ▶ 835 files that have no data

The 104 files identified as “other” and the 124 files identified as “not applicable” are not included in the estimates.

There are 127 files with both provincial and Supreme Court identified, which were added to the existing totals for provincial (1,037+127) and Supreme Court (618+127). Next, some assumptions were needed to include the 835 files that have no level of court identified.¹⁸ While it is possible that some of these files may never go on to make a court application or appearance, it is also possible that those whose court level is identified may not go on to make a court appearance. For the purposes of the analysis, it is assumed that those files with no identified court level would be distributed in a similar portion to those files whose court level was identified. Therefore, these files were redistributed between provincial court and Supreme Court

¹⁷ We understand that any efficiency created in the system will be backfilled by cases waiting for a hearing. Thus, any court savings are at best costs avoided by these cases. The language above has not been changed as it was approved during consultations for development of the summative evaluation matrix provided in Appendix B.

¹⁸ Further analysis of these files shows 393 cases had not gone to court prior to their file being closed, 25 cases involved risk of removal, which is considered an early stage for CFCSA cases. Another 111 cases had some sort of court activity prior to their file being closed. Finally, 343 cases had no information on the stage of the file when it was closed (50 of these files were still open).

according to the relative distribution of files with identified court levels (61% provincial court, 39% Supreme Court).¹⁹

The revised total number of files for each court level is as follows:

- ▶ 1,673 provincial court
- ▶ 1,071 Supreme Court

Potential cost avoidance from reduced court hours

Many family law cases do not go to court and therefore the analysis needs to take this into consideration. According to CSB data, approximately 59% of provincial court and 25% of Supreme Court applications result in a court appearance. For the purposes of these estimates, each LawLINE file is treated as an application. As was shown in Table 10, provincial court applications that make a court appearance require an average of approximately 1.36 hours of court time and Supreme Court applications that make a court appearance require an average of approximately 3.2 hours. These include court appearances for any reason. In addition, from data provided by CSB, courts costs per hour are approximately \$581 for provincial court and \$653 for Supreme Court.

From the above information, the following estimates can be made in Table 35.

Table 35: LawLINE files and estimated court costs for court appearances			
Row #	Item	Provincial court	Supreme Court
1	Number of LawLINE files (applications)	1,673	1,071
2	Percent of applications that make a court appearance	59%	25%
3	Number of LawLINE files with an appearance (row 1 * row 2)	987	268
4	Average court hours per application that makes a court appearance	1.36	3.2
5	Total court hours (row 3 * row 4)	1,343	857
6	Court costs per hour	\$581	\$653
7	Total court costs (row 5 * row 6)	\$779,406	\$559,437
Sources: Calculations made based on pilot database and CSB data. Court cost data were provided by LSS, working with George McCauley, an independent consultant, and are based on Ministry of Justice data. Note: Numbers may not calculate exactly due to rounding.			

While we do not have any pilot data to indicate what happens to these cases once they have completed the pilot services, we can make some estimates based on scenarios. Below we provide some potential impacts of the pilot, based on what might be considered low to very high impacts if the services from LawLINE were able to reduce the number of court hours per file by anywhere from 10% to 50%. These estimates are provided in Table 36.

¹⁹ Provincial court is given a weighting of (1,037+127)/1,909 (n=1,164, or 61%) and Supreme Court a weighting of (618+127)/1,909 (n=745 or 39%).

Item	Provincial court	Supreme Court	Total
Total annual court costs for all files	\$779,406	\$559,437	\$1,338,843
Reduce court hours by:	Total annual court costs avoided (all files)		
10%	\$77,941	\$55,944	\$133,884
20%	\$155,881	\$111,887	\$267,769
30%	\$233,822	\$167,831	\$401,653
40%	\$311,762	\$223,775	\$535,537
50%	\$389,703	\$279,718	\$669,421

Sources: Calculations made based on pilot database and CSB data.
 Note: Numbers may not calculate exactly due to rounding.

Therefore, based on these estimates, the LawLINE pilot has the potential to avoid \$133,884 in court costs annually if court hours per files making a court appearance are reduced by 10%, and up to \$669,421 if court hours are reduced by 50%; this is assuming a similar number of client files are handled annually by LawLINE as in 2015–16. The estimates would be the same if, instead of reducing court hours, the scenarios considered diverting these same percentages from court altogether. Note that these estimates are highly dependent on the volume of LawLINE clients and effectiveness of LawLINE services; as intake increases and more clients have improved knowledge of family law, are aware of their legal options, and have an increased ability to manage and resolve their legal issues, there would be greater potential for court costs to be avoided.

Potential cost avoidance from reducing court trials

Another set of scenarios (which would be a subset of the above) can be estimated considering a reduction in the number of applications that end in a court trial. From CSB data, approximately 15.8% of provincial court and 3.2% of Supreme Court applications go to a trial in the end. Trial durations are an average of 1.32 hours in provincial court and 2.44 hours in Supreme Court. Given that, prior to going to trials, most cases first have to go to a family/judicial case conference to try to resolve matters, it can be assumed if they go to trial they have also had a case conference. These conferences are an average of 0.78 hours in provincial court and 0.99 hours in Supreme Court.

From this information, the following estimates can be made in Table 37, keeping in mind that these only include average costs for the trial and any associated family/judicial case conference. As well, it is assumed that the average court costs per hour can also be applied to case conferences.

Row #	Item	Provincial court	Supreme Court
1	Number of LawLINE files (applications)	1,673	1,071
2	Percent of applications that go to trial	15.8%	3.2%
3	Number of LawLINE files that go to trial (row 1 * row 2)	264	34
4	Average family/judicial case conference duration (hours)	0.78	0.99
5	Average trial duration (hours)	1.32	2.44
6	Total average court hours per trial (row 4 + row 5)	2.10	3.43
7	Court costs per hour	\$581	\$653
8	Total cost/trial (row 6 * row 7)	\$1,218	\$2,238
9	Total court costs for those going to trial (row 3 * row 8)	\$321,959	\$76,768

Sources: Calculations made based on pilot database and CSB data. Court cost data were provided by LSS, working with George McCauley, an independent consultant, and are based on Ministry of Justice data.
 Note: Numbers may not calculate exactly due to rounding.

As with court appearances, we can make some estimates based on various scenarios for court trials. We provide some potential impacts of the pilot, based on what might be considered low to very high impacts if the services from LawLINE were able to reduce the number of trials and their associated case conferences by anywhere from 10% to 50%. These estimates are provided in the table below. This scenario assumes that with the assistance of LawLINE, these clients are able to resolve their matters without the involvement of the judiciary through a trial and the associated case conference. Case conferences themselves are valuable for resolving matters and avoiding trials, or for narrowing the issues that need to be addressed at trials. This scenario does not include those files that might have a case conference only and do not need to go on to a trial. It considers only the reduction in the number of court trials and associated case conferences.

Table 38: Estimated court costs avoided based on several scenarios of reduced court trials

Item	Provincial court	Supreme Court	Total
Total annual court costs for all files	\$321,959	\$76,768	\$398,727
Reduce # of trials by:	Total annual court costs avoided (all files)		
10%	\$32,196	\$7,677	\$39,873
20%	\$64,392	\$15,354	\$79,745
30%	\$96,588	\$23,031	\$119,618
40%	\$128,784	\$30,707	\$159,491
50%	\$160,979	\$38,384	\$199,364

Sources: Calculations made based on pilot database and CSB data.
 Note: Numbers may not calculate exactly due to rounding.

Based on these estimates, the LawLINE pilot has the potential to avoid \$39,873 in court costs annually if the average court trials that might be expected from the files handled by LawLINE are reduced by 10%, and up to \$199,364 if trials are reduced by 50%; this is assuming a similar number of client files are handled annually by LawLINE as in 2015–16. Note, these estimates are highly dependent on the volume of LawLINE clients and effectiveness of LawLINE services; as intake increases and more clients have improved knowledge of family law, are aware of their legal options, and have an increased ability to manage and resolve their legal issue, there would be greater potential court costs to be avoided.

16. Were there any unintended consequences or outcomes of the FAM LL project identified in Year 1?

The evaluation did not identify any unintended consequences or outcomes as a result of the FAM LL project.

6.0 Conclusions

This section presents some brief conclusions of the summative evaluation, based on the data collection and analysis performed to date.

6.1 Conclusions on implementation of the FAM LL

Additional hours of service not being utilized

The evaluation found that the additional hours of service available under the expanded LawLINE project are rarely being used. Since the project launched in March 2015, about three-quarters (76%) of all LawLINE clients have used less than one hour of service. On average, clients are using about one hour of service; even clients who had multiple meetings have a relatively low number of hours (2.2 hours).

Based on survey findings, clients appear to understand that they have additional hours to use and do not find the process of reaching a LawLINE lawyer to be difficult. Furthermore, most of the surveyed clients were satisfied with the help they received and indicated they received all the help they needed.

The evaluation could not definitively determine the causes or reasons for the lower than expected use of the expanded LawLINE hours (see Recommendation 1 in the section below).

Project capacity is sufficient for current volume of intake

The staffing levels and roster of LawLINE lawyers appears to be sufficient. The floater positions are credited with providing the additional support capacity the project needs. The queue is observed by key informants to be shorter than in the past, and most clients believe their wait times are “about right.” Intake is perceived as efficient. Currently, there are enough lawyers to cover morning and afternoon shifts; however, it is important to keep in mind that the average hours of service delivered under the project are still far below the maximum six hours. As awareness and referrals to LawLINE increase, usage of additional hours may also increase, which would put additional strain on the current intake, administrative staff, and roster lawyers.

Formal coaching not implemented

A formal coaching model has not been implemented yet. The model is still under development. LSS reported that it delivered training on the coaching model to roster and lead lawyers at the outset of the project and provided additional training during the Family Duty Counsel conference in February 2016.

LawLINE rosters lawyers need a way to regularly connect

Many roster lawyers expressed their desire to have more opportunities to share their experiences and learn from other LawLINE lawyers. The desire to be connected is not an uncommon problem among virtual workforces, who might feel a lack of connection to colleagues and/or the project given there is no common space (physical or virtual) through which roster lawyers might build camaraderie and stimulate development of common workplace culture (beyond following project policy). At the time of the interviews, LSS was planning to hold its first teleconference to help roster lawyers share their experiences under the expanded LawLINE project, which is a positive step toward helping roster lawyers engage with each another in an organized fashion. The ability to regularly communicate and connect can be a way to help reinforce established project knowledge and practices and also introduce new project learnings, which could contribute to greater efficiency and effectiveness among roster lawyers (see Recommendation 2).

6.2 Conclusions on outcomes

Project uptake is steady but lacking sustained increase (Q5, Q13)

Intake is generally steady at over 200 new clients per month, though there has been a slight decline over the past six months, suggesting the project should not slacken efforts on raising awareness of the service. Targeting external organizations that can help enable clients to utilize the expanded LawLINE is particularly important, as the expanded model's reliance on technology is an inherent barrier, which is supposed to be overcome through the assistance of community partners and other organizations. Based on the available key informant data, this approach appears to work, but it is not clear as to what extent it is being used.

While referrals are being made to LawLINE by key external organizations, the extent of these referrals is unclear because most client records do not have data on how they came to LawLINE. Without more consistent tracking of who is referring to the project, it will be difficult to determine potential gaps in awareness and referrals among external organizations (see recommendations 3 and 4 in the next section).

Notably, relatively few clients came to LawLINE from the other JITI pilot projects. In particular, it is concerning that there is no record that LawLINE made referrals to MED REF (a JITI project which happens to be lacking uptake). Administrative data show few clients have come to LawLINE from the MED REF project, which is concerning because project documentation indicates clients from MED REF should be using LawLINE for legal advice throughout their mediation process. This finding suggests these two complementary and province-wide JITI projects are not well integrated (see Recommendation 5).

LSS's efforts to further understand potential geographic service gaps through its geographic mapping exercise are a positive step toward more strategic service delivery (see Recommendation 3).

Client file enables continuity of service (Q6)

Key informant interviews and the client survey results suggest that while continuity of counsel is helpful, continuity of service through the client file is more important. Even though the client file is believed to be the key component in continuity of service, the project has also achieved notably high levels of lawyer continuity, with 64% of cases involving more than one meeting having a high level of continuity of counsel (i.e., there was either a single lawyer involved in all the client's meetings or the total number of lawyers involved in the client's meetings was less than half the total number of meetings).

Mixed results on effectiveness of expanded LawLINE in helping resolve family law issues (Q7–Q10)

While surveyed clients were largely satisfied with the service they received and found LawLINE helpful in understanding their legal matter and in making decisions on how to handle their legal matters, client assessment data from roster lawyers paints a less optimistic picture of client understanding and ability. While roster lawyers' client assessments consistently showed there was a notable difference in understanding and ability among clients who had multiple LawLINE meetings compared to clients with only one meeting, the current assessments are overly subjective, lacking a formal and objective assessment criteria, and therefore prone to variations in lawyers' perceptions (see Recommendation 6).

Survey results show that half of the surveyed clients (50%) resolved all or some of their issues at the time of the survey, while the other half (48%) had not resolved any of their issues. Clients were considerably more likely to have resolved or settled all or some of their issues out of court without a trial (n=77 or 77% of clients who resolve all or some of their issues) than through an order from a judge after a trial (n=16 or 8%). Additionally, many clients who resolved all or some of their matters out of court believe the information and assistance they received from LawLINE was helpful. This provides some preliminary evidence that LawLINE can be an effective resource for assisting clients who are resolving their matters out of court. Few of the surveyed clients (n=22) reported that they went to a court trial to settle all or some of their issues, and it is less clear how helpful LawLINE was for these clients.

Most surveyed clients are satisfied with LawLINE (Q11)

Nearly all clients reported they were treated with respect (94%) and felt the LawLINE lawyer(s) listened to them and took the time to understand their legal issue (90%). Overall, most clients (85%) were satisfied with the help and support they received through LawLINE, and most of these clients reported being very satisfied (55%).

Helpfulness of referrals remains unknown (Q12)

The evaluation was unable to determine whether referrals to other resources are helpful to clients in resolving their family law problems. Although most clients are receiving referrals to other services, based on survey results, many clients may not be aware of the referrals they received, even though — according to several roster lawyers — this information is included on the advice given form. Of the surveyed clients who recalled receiving referrals, only half reported they used the referral.

Screening and continuity of service through client files are key efficiencies (Q14)

Screening and continuity of service through the client file are seen by key informants as key components of the expanded LawLINE's efficiencies. Given the lower than expected uptake of additional hours of service, client screening and continuity of client files can also be seen as the most successfully implemented components of the expanded model.

LawLINE's ability to contribute to court cost avoidance depends on the volume of intake and effectiveness of services (Q15)

Net savings to the system are dependent on LawLINE's volume of intake and its effectiveness in diverting cases from court and/or reducing the amount of time clients are in court. The evaluation found that while intake is steady at around 200 new clients per month, there has been a lack of sustained growth in intake. The evaluation also found mixed evidence concerning the extent to which LawLINE is improving clients' understanding of and ability to address their legal issues, although there is some preliminary evidence that LawLINE is considered helpful by clients who resolved all or some of their issues out of court. Overall, LawLINE's effectiveness has yet to be clearly established.

With these two key points in mind, the system efficiency analysis estimated the LawLINE pilot has the potential to avoid court costs as follows:

- ▶ \$133,884 annually, if court hours per file making a court appearance are reduced by 10%; if court hours per file were reduced by 30%, this would avoid an estimated \$401,653 in court costs annually
- ▶ \$39,873 annually, if the average court trials that might be expected from the files handled by LawLINE are reduced by 10%; if court trials were reduced by 30%, this would avoid an estimated \$119,618 in court costs annually

7.0 Recommendations to further enhance the expanded LawLINE

Below provides a few recommendations for LSS's consideration.

Recommendation 1: The advice given form includes fields indicating whether another appointment should be set or whether there should be no more appointments for the client. These fields are not currently entered in the pilot database, but if entered, could provide the project with a means of assessing the extent to which clients who are expected to return for service are indeed returning for further service. LSS might consider follow-up calls with a sample of clients who — after a certain period of time — did not return for further service, yet were expected to need further service.

Recommendation 2: Consider how virtual spaces (e.g., an online roster lawyer forum, hosted by LSS) might be used to stimulate group communication, learning, and camaraderie among the roster lawyers and the lead lawyer.

Recommendation 3: Implement regular awareness-raising events among key external organizations, including community agencies and community partners, local agents, courthouses, FJCs, and FDCs. If the project intends to use LawLINE to fill legal service gaps in rural and/or remote areas of BC where populations have traditionally been underserved, it would be beneficial to target (through regular awareness-raising activities) and continue to monitor rates of intake from these communities to better understand the extent to which rural and remote populations (including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal clients) are using LawLINE and to measure the effectiveness of targeted awareness-raising activities.

Also, consider that many of the surveyed clients learned about LawLINE through the internet. LSS is encouraged to explore how search engine optimization might improve the likelihood of clients finding the LawLINE website through online searches.

Recommendation 4: Implement consistent tracking of referring organizations in the pilot database.

Recommendation 5: Investigate and resolve issues that are hampering referrals between LawLINE and MED REF.

Recommendation 6: Discontinue the current subjective client assessment process in favour of a more formal and objective assessment process.

Appendix A – FAM LL logic model

	Program activities	Program outputs	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes
ACCESS	Deliver a stakeholders engagement and marketing/recruitment plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of clients accessing Family LawLINE service from rural and remote areas of BC # of non-English speaking clients # of clients referred from Family Justice Services Division attending their scheduled LawLINE appointment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clients are accessing the Family LawLINE service early in the process of dealing with their legal situation Clients in rural and remote areas of BC 	
SERVICES TO SUPPORT CLIENTS IN RESOLVING LEGAL PROBLEMS	Provide legal advice and information to qualifying low-income individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of clients accessing Family LawLINE service # of Family LawLINE clients receiving summary legal advice # and type of different Family Law issues Amount of time (service hours) per client 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clients' knowledge of the legal process is increased Clients are more informed about family law and their legal options Clients are better prepared for their legal process Clients are more effective at representing themselves at all stages of dealing with their legal problem Clients are satisfied with the level of support received from FAM LL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAM LL clients achieve a resolution to their legal problem The client's overall ability to manage and resolve their legal problems is improved Efficiency of the LSS Family Law Services is improved
	Provide document preparation services to Family LawLINE clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of Family LawLINE clients receiving document preparation assistance for Supreme Court matters # of Family LawLINE clients receiving document preparation assistance for Provincial Court matters Amount of time (service hours) spent on document prep/client 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The client's ability to prepare and submit court documents is improved 	
	Provide support for the development and finalization of agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of full agreements reached # of partial agreements reached # of consent or orders filed # of agreements filed # of FJC clients provided summary advice on agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The client's ability to prepare and finalize agreements is improved 	
	Provide a continuous and consistent service to Family LawLINE clients <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduling appointments/follow-up with clients Provide a standard set of processes for each client Lawyers spend less time gathering repeat information on clients who call multiple times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of cases with full continuity of service (with a focus on file continuity: smooth case progression, even if the client sees different lawyers) # of referrals to FAM LL from Family Justice Counsellors # of referrals from FAM LL to other connected services (qualitative assessment only) # of hours spent per client 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuity of the FAM LL service is improved 	

Appendix B – FAM LL evaluation matrix

Framework for the Evaluation of the Family LawLINE pilot project		
Questions	Indicators	Data sources
Delivery questions		
1. Has the FAM LL been delivered as intended in Year 1? What challenges were met in delivery? How were challenges addressed and improvements made to the model?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder opinion on challenges/improvements Decision-records of changes made to improve model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key informant interviews Document review
2. What external factors have influenced the delivery and success of the FAM LL?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder opinion FAM LL WG meeting minutes documenting external factors Evidence that decisions, actions, policies of external organizations/stakeholders affect the FAM LL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key informant interviews Document review
3. Did the FAM LL have sufficient tools, resources, and capacity to meet demand and any intended targets?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder opinion that the FAM LL has sufficient tools and resources to satisfactorily meet demand Client opinion on the level of assistance provided by the FAM LL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAM LL database LSS CIS database Key informant interviews Client survey
4. To what extent do the current processes and structure of the FAM LL support its efficient and effective delivery?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder opinion on the current processes and structure to support the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key informant interviews
Outcome questions		
5. Did more clients access the Family LawLINE services, including clients from rural and remote areas and Aboriginal clients, after its expansion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of clients accessing FAM LL services from rural and remote areas of BC Stakeholder assessment of extent to which more clients from rural and remote areas and Aboriginal clients used the services after its expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAM LL database Key informant interviews
6. Did the pilot project improve the continuity and consistency of the Family LawLINE services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # and % of FAM LL clients who have continuous contact with a single lawyer Stakeholder perceptions on case file continuity Extent to which FAM LL clients felt it was helpful to work with the same FAM LL lawyer Extent to which clients who saw different lawyers felt there was still file continuity in their case Extent to which FAM LL clients felt they benefited from being referred from FAM LL to another service Lawyer perspective on the effectiveness/continuity of the new service model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAM LL database Client survey Key informant interviews
7. Have the Family LawLINE services improved clients' knowledge of the process, family law, and their legal options?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which clients feel their knowledge of family law and the legal process is increased Extent to which FAM LL clients feel more informed about their legal options Key informant opinions on the extent to which clients increased their knowledge of the legal process Feedback from FJCs/JAC staff regarding clients' level of preparedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client survey Key informant interviews
8. Have the Family LawLINE services increased client's ability to manage and resolve their legal issue?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which clients felt prepared for their legal process (e.g., readiness for self-representation in court) Key informant feedback on the improved ability of clients to represent themselves Proportion of FAM LL clients who believe they could prepare/submit court documents on their own Proportion of clients who reported documents they prepared and submitted themselves were refused by court as incomplete/inaccurate Extent to which clients were able to resolve their issues outside of court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client survey (PRA and LSS) Key informant interviews FAM LL database

Framework for the Evaluation of the Family LawLINE pilot project		
Questions	Indicators	Data sources
9. Are clients accessing Family LawLINE services early in the process of dealing with their legal situation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and % of FAM LL clients who accessed the service before filing a court application • Key informant assessment of the extent to which clients are accessing FAM LL services early in their legal process (especially whether they access FAM LL with enough time to prepare for self-representation in court) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAM LL database • Key informant interviews
10. Are the FAM LL services helping clients achieve resolutions to their legal problems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and type of family law services provided to clients • Extent to which clients believe the FAM LL helped them resolve their issues • Key informant assessment of FAM LL impact on case resolutions • # and % of FAM LL clients who had fewer legal issues (resolved or unresolved) after FAM LL support than they did upon first engaging with FAM LL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAM LL database • Client survey • Key informant interviews
11. Are clients satisfied with their experience using the added Family LawLINE services? What, if anything, can be done to improve clients' experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which FAM LL clients are satisfied with the level of support received from FAM LL • Key informant opinions on the quality of FAM LL services and improvements needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client survey • Key informant interviews
12. Are the FAM LL referrals to other resources helpful to clients in resolving their family law issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and type of services connected to FAM LL • # and type of referrals from FAM LL to other services • Extent to which clients feel that the FAM LL referral to a support resource got them closer to a resolution of their legal issue • Stakeholder input on extent to which referrals are helping clients • Key informant opinions on the effectiveness of referrals from FAM LL services to other services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAM LL database • Client survey • Key informant interviews
13. How well does the Family LawLINE integrate into the suite of services available for clients with family law matters?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease or "seamlessness" of client movement between services • Key informant assessment of the level of integration between FAM LL and Family Justice Counsellors (or other services) • Key informant assessment of the benefits to clients from integration with Family Justice Counsellors (or other services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client survey • Key informant interviews
14. Have the enhancements related to the expansion of FAM LL increased LSS efficiency?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant assessment of the efficiency and appropriateness of referrals to FAM LL • Decreased time spent by lawyers gathering repeat information from clients who call multiple times (anecdotal only; this was not tracked before the evaluation) • Extent that clients are provided continuous assistance from one lawyer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAM LL database • Key informant interviews
15. To what extent has the FAM LL pilot led to net system savings due to efficiencies gained for LSS and/or other areas of the justice system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAM LL average cost per case • Cost implications of estimates of avoided court costs based on costs of actual court activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAM LL database • CSB data • Key informant interviews
16. Were there any unintended consequences or outcomes of the FAM LL project identified in Year 1?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant opinion on unintended consequences or outcomes of the FAM LL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews

Appendix C – Interview guides

**Legal Services Society of British Columbia
Family LawLINE Pilot Project Evaluation**

**Interview guide for internal stakeholders
(Project Lead, Lead Lawyer, Administrator, LSS intake, roster lawyers)**

The Legal Services Society (LSS) of British Columbia requires an evaluation of the Family LawLINE (FAM LL) additions pilot project which has been implemented under the Justice Innovation and Transformation Initiative (JITI). LSS hired PRA Inc., an independent research company, to assist in the evaluation. One component of the evaluation is to conduct telephone interviews with stakeholders who are familiar with FAM LL.

The interview should take no more than one hour. The information we gather through the interviews will be summarized in aggregate form. With your permission, we will audio-record the interview. Although we will take notes throughout the interview, no one outside of PRA will see these notes or listen to the recordings.

The current evaluation focusses on the project's success toward meeting its intended outcomes. The evaluation will also assess project delivery since mid-2015.

We realize that you may not be able to answer all of the questions; please let us know, and we will skip to the next question.

Delivery of FAM LL

1. Please briefly describe your role in the delivery and/or delivery of the FAM LL pilot project. Were you involved in the LawLINE prior to the pilot project? If so, in what capacity?
2. Based on your observations, has the project been delivered as planned? If not, why not?
3. Have any factors or stakeholders external to FAM LL affected, either positively or negatively, the delivery and success of the model? If yes, how has the project responded to mitigate problems or use opportunities?
4. In your opinion, does FAM LL have sufficient resources and capacity for providing the expected level of services? Please explain why or why not. What steps has FAM LL taken to overcome any resource challenges?
5. How efficient is the current intake and screening process? In your opinion, are appropriate clients/matters (*i.e., financially eligible, and/or those with legal issues appropriate for LawLINE*) being streamed into FAM LL services?
6. In your opinion, do the current structures and processes of FAM LL support its effective and efficient delivery? In your response, please consider structures and processes for handling the queue, establishing and maintaining a client file, setting appointment times, managing continuity of counsel (including the scheduling calendar), enabling timekeeping, and working online with clients. Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the model?
7. Have lawyers handling FAM LL calls and relevant LSS staff been appropriately prepared for their role in the project? Have they found tools developed for the project to be helpful?

8. Are there any other challenges not already discussed that were encountered during the delivery of FAM LL? How were these challenges addressed?

Progress toward achieving objectives

9. Are all relevant stakeholders aware of FAM LL and referring potential clients? (*Probe: Family Justice Counsellors, Mediate BC*) What more, if anything, is needed to increase awareness and referrals? (*Probe: effectiveness of communication activities? Who is referring to FAM LL?*)
10. Based on your experience, are clients accessing FAM LL services early in their family law process? Are they engaging the service with enough time to prepare for self-representation in court? If not, what needs to change for the clients to access the services sooner?
11. From your perspective, is FAM LL able to give clients a good understanding of the family law and the legal process? Of the options available to them for resolving their family law issue (*e.g., collaborative processes versus court*)? Please explain what services FAM LL provides that achieve this result for clients, and on what basis you believe client understanding improves after using FAM LL.
12. In your opinion, how do FAM LL services influence the client's ability to manage and resolve their own legal issue? What supports/information/tools does FAM LL provide clients that will result in increasing client capacity in this way? (*Probe: follow-up appointment.*) In your experience, are clients able/willing to handle the tasks expected of them?
13. What do you consider to be the key improvements made by the expanded FAM LL? How has the expanded FAM LL affected, positively or negatively, the efficiency of the LawLINE service? In what ways, if at all, do you think the expanded FAM LL will affect the efficiency of LSS's family law services more generally?
14. Please describe the FAM LL approach to referring clients to other legal and non-legal resources. For example, how does FAM LL determine when and to what other resources to refer clients? What activities has FAM LL undertaken to network with and connect to other resources across the province? Do you think there are any gaps in types of referral resources available to FAM LL?
15. Please describe how FAM LL works with the Family Justice Counsellors. How well integrated do you believe these two services are? Do you have any suggestions for improvement? Based on your experience, what are the benefits to clients and the family justice system of the relationship between FAM LL and the Family Justice Counsellors?
16. Have there been any unintended consequences or outcomes of the project, either positive or negative? If so, what were they?
17. Do you have any other suggested improvements for FAM LL that have not already been mentioned? Do you have any other comments?

Thank you for your time.

**Legal Services Society of British Columbia
Family LawLINE Pilot Project Evaluation**

**Interview guide for external stakeholders
(Family Justice Counsellors, Community Resources)**

The Legal Services Society (LSS) of British Columbia requires an evaluation of the Family LawLINE (FAM LL) additions pilot project, which has been implemented under the Justice Innovation and Transformation Initiative (JITI). LSS hired PRA Inc., an independent research company, to assist in the evaluation. One component of the evaluation is to conduct telephone interviews with stakeholders who are familiar with the FAM LL project.

The interview should take no more than one hour. The information we gather through the interviews will be summarized in aggregate form. With your permission, we will audio-record the interview. Although we will take notes throughout the interview, no one outside of PRA will see these notes or listen to the recordings.

The current evaluation focusses on the project's success toward meeting its intended outcomes. The evaluation will also assess project delivery since mid-2015.

We realize that you may not be able to answer all of the questions; please let us know, and we will skip to the next question.

Delivery of the FAM LL pilot

1. Please briefly describe your involvement with the FAM LL pilot project (e.g., how your organization works with or interacts with FAM LL) or with clients of the FAM LL pilot project.
2. In your opinion, does the FAM LL have sufficient resources and capacity for providing the expected level of services? Please explain why or why not. To your knowledge, what steps has the FAM LL taken to overcome any resource challenges?
3. Have you encountered any challenges in your interactions with the FAM LL? If yes, what are they, and have these challenges been addressed?

Progress toward achieving objectives

4. How would you rate your knowledge of the services available to clients at the expanded FAM LL? Are there particular aspects of the services of the FAM LL that you wish you better understood?
5. Do you refer your clients to the FAM LL? In what circumstances/for what issues do you refer to the FAM LL? In what circumstances would you not refer a potentially eligible client? Overall, how would you describe your experience of referring clients to the FAM LL?
6. Based on your experience, do your clients referred to FAM LL makes contact with FAM LL (either phone the FAM LL for one-time advice or attend their appointments)? What do you believe are the reasons for clients not following through with the FAM LL at all or through follow up appointments? (*Probe: accessibility issues, such as hours of service, language,*

comfort level, concerns with cultural sensitivity, lack of access to telephone) Do you have any suggestions for how to encourage/support clients to follow through?

7. Based on your experience, are clients accessing FAM LL services early in their family law process? Are they engaging the service with enough time to prepare for self-representation in court? If not, what needs to change for the clients to access the services sooner?
8. From your perspective, is the FAM LL able to give clients a good understanding of the family law and the legal process? Of the options available to them for resolving their family law issue (*e.g., collaborative processes versus court*)? Please explain what services FAM LL provides that achieve this result for clients, and on what basis you believe client understanding improves after using the FAM LL.
9. In your opinion, how do the FAM LL services influence the client's ability to manage and resolve their own legal issue? What supports/information/tools does the FAM LL provide clients that will result in increasing client capacity in this way? In your experience, are clients able/willing to handle the tasks expected of them?
10. In your opinion, how well integrated is FAM LL with other legal services, such as Family Justice Counsellors? Do you have any suggestions for improvement? Based on your experience, what are the benefits to clients and the family justice system of the relationship between FAM LL and other legal services, such as Family Justice Counsellors?
11. Have there been any unintended consequences or outcomes of the project, either positive or negative? If so, what were they?
12. Do you have any other suggested improvements for FAM LL that have not already been mentioned?
13. Do you have any other comments?

Thank you for your time

**Legal Services Society of British Columbia
Family LawLINE Additions Evaluation**

Survey questionnaire for clients

Hello, is this _____?

Hello, my name is _____ with PRA Inc. We are an independent research company that the Legal Services Society, you may know them as legal aid, has hired to help them on a study of one of their services, the Family LawLINE. You may know this as ‘the LawLINE’. The LawLINE is a telephone service that offers legal advice to eligible clients with family law issues. Over the telephone, lawyers provide advice on legal processes and on possible options for resolving family law issues, including out-of-court settlements. They may also help with drafting documents. In March of 2015 some improvements were made to the LawLINE, which are intended to expand the available services and make them more accessible to clients.

Legal aid wants to know how well the LawLINE is working for clients. We understand you were or still are a client of the LawLINE. That is why I am calling today, to invite you to participate in a short survey about the help you got from the LawLINE. Please be assured that I will not ask you anything personal about your family law matter, only about the services you received and how helpful these were to you. This information will help the Legal Services Society in identifying how the project has helped people and how it can be improved.

Your information will be combined with the responses of others and reported all together, so your name will not be mentioned in any report. No one outside of PRA will see your answers.

The survey should take up to 15 minutes. Would you be willing to participate in the survey?
RECORD RESPONSE (Yes/No). [Thank them and either proceed or end call].

Before we begin, for all the questions in this survey, please only think about the services you received from Family LawLINE since [enter MONTH/YEAR FROM **Date of first service variable**]

1. How did you first find out about the LawLINE? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY – DON’T READ UNLESS REQUIRE PROBING)
 - Family Justice Counsellors or someone else at the Justice Access Centre (JAC)
 - At the courthouse (e.g. the duty counsel, someone else at the courthouse)
 - A private lawyer
 - Saw it online/through internet
 - Someone at legal aid (this includes intake workers at the Legal Aid call centre)
 - Someone at the Family Mediation Referral Pilot
 - A friend/relative
 - Other (specify)
 - Don’t know/can’t recall

2. About how many times did you talk to a lawyer at the LawLINE about your legal issue?
Insert number _____
Don't know/can't recall

[if Q2=1, then Q3-1, so respondent can skip to Q4]

3. How many different LawLINE lawyers did you speak with about your legal issue?
Insert number _____ (If same lawyer each time, enter 1)
Don't know/can't recall

4. [if Q2=1, then ask] After speaking to the intake worker at the legal aid call centre, how long did you wait before you talked with a LawLINE lawyer?

[if Q2>1, then ask] Thinking of the first time you called the legal aid call centre and the intake worker referred you to LawLINE, how long did you wait before you talked with a LawLINE lawyer?

[ENTER TIME UNDER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING]

_____ MINUTES

_____ HOURS

_____ DAYS

_____ WEEKS

Don't know/can't recall

5. Did you feel the wait time was...?
Too long
About right
Don't know/can't recall

6. ~~[IF Q5=TOO LONG] Why do you think it was too long and how did this affect your family law matter?~~

~~Specify~~

~~Don't know~~

[NOTE TO INTERVIEWER ABOUT Q7: *if clients called LawLINE to book a follow-up appointment or seek further advice or information about their family law matter, they typically need to leave a message on the LawLINE Voice Mailbox, after which they would receive a callback from the a LawLINE intake worker, who would assess the client's readiness for the next appointment or assess the urgency of the matter. If urgent, the client would typically be put in the queue to wait to talk to a LawLINE lawyer.*

We want to measure the amount of time from the client leaving their voice mail to the time they got to speak to the lawyer (not the LawLINE intake worker).

7. [if Q2 is more than 1] You indicated that you spoke to a LawLINE lawyer more than once. Thinking of all the other times you contacted the LawLINE to book an appointment or seek further advice or information from a LawLINE lawyer, what was the **longest** you waited before talking with a lawyer?

[ENTER TIME UNDER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING]

_____ MINUTES

_____ HOURS

_____ DAYS

_____ WEEKS

Don't know/can't recall

8. [if Q2 is more than 1] Did you feel the wait time was...?

Too long

About right

Don't know

9. Thinking of all the times you contacted the LawLINE, how would you rate the process of reaching a LawLINE lawyer? [READ RESPONSES]

Very easy

Somewhat easy

Somewhat difficult

Very difficult

Don't know

10. [IF Q9 IS 'somewhat or very difficult'] Can you tell me what made the process difficult?

Specify

Don't know

11. Were you informed about the option to call back again if you required further assistance in your family law matter?

If Yes, how were you informed of the option to call back? [DON'T READ, CAN SELECT MORE THAN 1 'YES']

Yes, the LawLINE lawyer told me.

Yes, I saw it on a form I received from the lawyer

Yes, the intake worker told me about this option

Yes (some other way / can't recall how)

No

Don't know/can't recall [SKIP TO NOTE A BELOW]

12. Did you receive all the help you needed during your call/calls with the LawLINE lawyer(s)?

Yes [SKIP TO NOTE A BELOW]

No

Don't know [SKIP TO NOTE A BELOW]

13. [IF Q12=NO] What additional help would you have liked to receive from the LawLINE lawyer?

Other (specify)

Don't know

NOTE A

[Skip to Q21 if Q2 = 1 or Don't know/can't recall]

[Skip to Q18 if Q3 = 1 or Don't know/can't recall]

Otherwise, continue...

Respondents who called multiple times and talked to more than 1 lawyer

14. Do you know why you did not get to speak to the same LawLINE lawyer every time you called? [READ ONLY IF NECESSARY; CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

The lawyer(s) you previously spoke to were not available when you called

The lawyer(s) you previously spoke to were not available at the time of your next scheduled appointment

Other (specify)

Don't know/can't recall

15. How helpful or unhelpful was it to you to work with different LawLINE lawyers rather than just one LawLINE lawyer? Was it....?

Very helpful

Helpful

Made no difference

Not helpful

[SKIP TO Q17]

Not at all helpful

[SKIP TO Q17]

Don't know

[SKIP TO Q21]

16. Why did you find it helpful or very helpful or made no difference? [DON'T READ UNLESS NECESSARY TO PROBE. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

You got to hear different opinions from the lawyers

The lawyers had reviewed your file and/or were familiar with your case

Other (specify)

Don't know

[SKIP TO Q21]

17. Why did you find it not helpful or not at all helpful? [DON'T READ UNLESS NECESSARY TO PROBE. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

You had to repeat your story each time

The lawyer(s) were not all familiar with your case

You got different opinions/legal advice from the lawyer(s)

There was no continuum of service

Other (specify)

Don't know

[SKIP TO Q21]

Clients who called the LawLINE multiple times, but talked to same lawyer each time

18. How helpful was it to you to work with the same LawLINE lawyer compared to if you had different lawyers each time you called? Was it....?

Very helpful

Helpful

Made no difference

Not helpful [SKIP TO Q20]

Not at all helpful [SKIP TO Q20]

Don't know [SKIP TO Q21]

19. Why did you find it helpful or very helpful or made no difference? [DON'T READ UNLESS NECESSARY TO PROBE. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

The lawyer was familiar with your case

Didn't have to re-explain situation to different lawyers/keeping explaining each time

You got to know the lawyer and were comfortable with them

You got consistent advice/opinions throughout the process

Other (specify)

Don't know

[SKIP TO Q21]

20. Why did you find it not helpful or not at all helpful? [DON'T READ UNLESS NECESSARY TO PROBE. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

You weren't satisfied with the advice the lawyer gave you

You weren't satisfied with the amount of help the lawyer gave you

You didn't get to work with the lawyer you had wanted to work with

Other (specify)

Don't know

LEGAL INFORMATION/ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

Next I'd like to ask you about the type of legal information and legal assistance you received from the LawLINE and how helpful this information was to you.

21. Which of the following types of information and assistance did the LawLINE provide you? Did they...

[Yes, No, Don't know/can't recall for each]

Explain and provide you with information about your family law matter?

Explain the legal process to you?

Tell you about your different options for handling and resolving your legal matter?

Specifically talk to you about ways you could resolve your matter without going to court?

Help with forms or documents needed for your legal matter?

22. **[If yes to any of Q21]** How helpful was this information and assistance for understanding the legal process and your family law matter? Was it....?

Very helpful [SKIP TO Q24]

Helpful [SKIP TO Q24]

Not helpful

Not at all helpful

Don't know [SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q25]

23. Why do you believe this information and assistance was either not helpful or not at all helpful to you for understanding the legal process and your family law matter?

Specify

Don't know

24. **[If yes to any of Q21]** How helpful was this information and assistance to you for understanding and making decisions on your various options for handling your family law matter? Was it....?

Very helpful [SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q25]

Helpful [SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q25]

Not helpful

Not at all helpful

Don't know [SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q25]

25. Why do you believe this information and assistance was either not helpful or not at all helpful to you for understanding and making decisions on your various options for handling your family law matter?

Specify

Don't know

[NOTE: IF THEY DID NOT INDICATE THEY GOT HELP WITH FORMS IN Q21 SKIP TO Q28]

26. **[If yes to forms/documents in Q21]** Which of following types of help did the LawLINE give you on forms and documents needed for your legal matter? READ RESPONSES; CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

The type of forms or documents you needed to complete

Where to find the forms or documents

Information and advice on how to fill out the forms or documents yourself

They checked over your completed forms to ensure they were completed properly

How to submit the forms or documents to the court or wherever else they needed to be submitted

They actually helped you fill out some or all of the forms or documents

Anything else (please specify) (INTERVIEWER: IF THEY SAID NO TO ALL OF THE ABOVE ASK THEM HERE WHAT THE LAWYER DID HELP THEM WITH ON THE FORMS OR DOCUMENTS)

Don't know/can't recall

[SKIP TO Q28]

27. Overall, how helpful was this assistance to you for preparing your own forms and documents?

Was it....?

Very helpful

Helpful

Not helpful

Not at all helpful

Or is it not applicable, you did not prepare own documents

Don't know

28. Did you submit any documents to the court registry or court services?

Yes

No

[SKIP TO Q31]

Their lawyer submitted the documents

[SKIP TO Q31]

Don't know/can't recall

[SKIP TO Q31]

29. **[If yes to Q28]** Were they accepted the first time you tried to submit them?

Yes

[SKIP TO Q31]

No

Don't know/can't recall

[SKIP TO Q31]

30. **[If No to Q29]** Why were they not accepted the first time you tried to submit them? Was it because you were told that.... [READ AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

there was information missing

the forms were not completed correctly

Other (specify)

Don't know/can't recall

31. Did your LawLINE lawyer(s) refer you to other services, including other agencies that could help you with your legal issues? (if respondent is unsure, some examples include Family Duty Counsel, Family Justice Counsellors (FJCs), Justice Access Centre (JAC), court-based resources (incl. registry), Family Mediation Referral Pilot, private lawyer or mediator)

Yes

No

[SKIP TO STATUS OF THEIR FAMILY LAW MATTER]

Don't know/can't recall

[SKIP TO STATUS OF THEIR FAMILY LAW MATTER]

32. Did you use any of the services referred to you by your LawLINE lawyer(s)?

Yes

No

Don't know/can't recall

STATUS OF THEIR FAMILY LAW MATTER

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about what has happened with your family law matter since you first called the LawLINE . I will not ask you anything personal about your family law matter. We understand you first got help from the LawLINE around [ENTER MONTH AND YEAR FROM DATABASE; DATE OF FIRST SERVICE -]. For the rest of the questions please answer based on what happened since then and not anything that took place regarding your family law matter before that time.

33. Which of the following best describes the current status of your family law issues that you called the LawLINE about? [CHECK ONE ONLY]

All issues have been resolved or settled either through agreement or an order from a judge

Some issues have been resolved or settled, but

some are still unresolved

No issues are yet resolved

[SKIP TO Q44]

Don't know

[SKIP TO Q44]

34. (Q33=All or some issues resolved or settled) For your issues that are resolved, were you able to resolve them out of court without a trial, after a trial, or some issues were resolved out of court and some issues after a trial?

They were all settled out of court without a trial

They were all settled through an order from a judge after a trial

[SKIP TO Q38]

Some settled out of court and some through an order from a judge after a trial

Don't know/can't recall

[SKIP TO Q44]

(INTERVIEWER EXPLAIN THE FOLLOWING FOR OUT OF COURT IF THEY SEEM UNCERTAIN WHAT THIS MEANS: *By out of court, we mean sometimes people are able to resolve some or all of their issues without the need of a court trial with a judge. This could be, for example, by coming to an agreement on their own with the other party, or by going to something called mediation, or by going to a Family Case Conference or Judicial Case Conference – a case conference is an informal meeting with a judge or Master to try to help people resolve their matter without a trial.*)

35. How were you able to resolve all or some of your matters out of court without a trial? Was it through...[CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

Worked out an agreement on your own with the other party

Taking part in mediation with a mediator

Taking part in a Family Case Conference or Judicial Case Conference

Other (specify)

Don't know/Can't recall

[INTERVIEWER PROVIDE THE BELOW DESCRIPTION IF THEY ARE STILL UNSURE OF WHAT THE CASE CONFERENCES ARE. ALSO, THEY MIGHT HAVE GONE TO ONE OF THESE EVEN IF THEY HAVE RESOLVED ALL THEIR ISSUES WITHOUT A TRIAL.]

Family Case Conference in Provincial Court: A Family Case Conference is a private, informal one-hour meeting between you, the other party, and a Provincial Court judge (and your lawyers if you have them). At a Family Case Conference, the judge will help you try to settle some or all of your issues. The judge can also make court orders.

Judicial Case Conference in Supreme Court: A Judicial Case Conference is a private, informal one-hour meeting with a Supreme Court judge or master and the other party (and your lawyers if you have them). At a Judicial Case Conference the judge or master will help you try to settle some or all of your issues.

HELPFULNESS OF THE LAWLINE IF RESOLVED ON THEIR OWN, THROUGH MEDIATION, OTHER OR SAID DON'T KNOW

36. How helpful was the information or assistance you received from the LawLINE in resolving all or some of your matters out of court? Was it....?

Very helpful

Helpful

Not helpful

Not at all helpful

Or is it not applicable, you did not get information or assistance from the LawLINE for this

Don't know

[SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q37]

[SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q37]

37. Please explain why you believe the assistance from the LawLINE was [INSERT RESPONSE FROM Q36] to you in resolving all or some of your matters out of court.

Specify

Don't know

No response

IF SAID IN Q34 THAT ALL ISSUES RESOLVED WITHOUT A TRIAL SKIP TO Q44]

38. **(If said in Q34 that all or some issues resolved at trial)** You indicated in an earlier question that some or all of the matters that you called the LawLINE about were resolved through a trial with a judge. Did you first attend a trial preparation conference for your matter? *(This is a meeting with the judge to ensure you and the other party are prepared for trial.)*
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know/can't recall
39. Which of the following best describes the number of days, in total, that were required for the trial before a judge?
- Half a day or less
 - A full day
 - One and a half days
 - Two days
 - Other (specify)
 - Don't know/can't recall
40. Did you represent yourself at the trial or did you hire a private lawyer?
- Represented self
 - Hired a lawyer [SKIP TO Q44]
41. **[If self-represented]** Did the LawLINE help you prepare for representing yourself in court? For example, did the LawLINE lawyer give you information or advice about..... [READ RESPONSES; CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
- What to expect in court
 - How the court process works
 - What to bring to court
 - What to wear to court
 - How to address the judge
 - How to present your case
 - Other information/advice about representing yourself in court (specify)
 - No, no information or advice was given
 - Don't know/can't recall
42. How prepared did you feel to handle the trial by yourself?
- Very prepared
 - Prepared
 - Not prepared
 - Not at all prepared
 - Don't know [SKIP TO Q44]
43. Please explain why you felt (insert response from Q42)?

44. Have you appeared before a judge on your family law matter for any other reasons other than for a trial since you first called the LawLINE in [enter MONTH/YEAR FROM **Date of first service variable** included in sample file]

Yes

No [SKIP TO NOTE BEFORE Q55]

Don't know/can't recall [SKIP TO NOTE BEFORE Q55]

45. About how many times in total?

Response

Don't know/can't recall

46. What was the appearance or appearances before a judge for? [READ; CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

To ask for an adjournment

To obtain an order where either the other side has agreed to the order (called a consent order) or the other party is not opposing the order

To obtain some type of emergency order

To attend a Family Case Conference or Judicial Case Conference

Other (specify)

Don't know/can't recall

Family Case Conference in Provincial Court: A Family Case Conference is a private, informal one-hour meeting between you, the other party, and a Provincial Court judge (and your lawyers if you have them). At a Family Case Conference, the judge will help you try to settle some or all of your issues. The judge can also make court orders.

Judicial Case Conference in Supreme Court: A Judicial Case Conference is a private, informal one-hour meeting with a Supreme Court judge or master and the other party (and your lawyers if you have them). At a Judicial Case Conference the judge or master will help you try to settle some or all of your issues.

Trial Preparation Conference: This is a meeting with the judge to ensure you and the other party are prepared for trial

47. Did the LawLINE give you any information about the court appearance and how to prepare for it?

Yes

No [SKIP TO Q49]

Don't know/can't recall [SKIP TO Q49]

48. [If yes to Q47] Was the information and assistance from the LawLINE helpful to you for understanding any of the following about the court appearance?[CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
- What would happen in court
 - What you need to do get ready
 - What information you should bring
 - What you should say
 - Other (specify)
 - None of the above, the assistance was not helpful
 - Don't know

49. DELETED – SKIP TO Q50

50. DELETED

51. DELETED

52. DELETED

53. DELETED

54. DELETED

[NOTE: IF SAID IN Q33 THAT THEY HAVE RESOLVED SOME OR NO ISSUES, OR SAID DON'T KNOW GO TO Q55, OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q61]

55. What are your next steps for trying to resolve your family matter? Do you primarily plan to....[CHECK ONE ONLY]
- Try to resolve your matter without a court trial before a judge?
 - Have a court trial with a judge? [SKIP TO Q58]
 - Other (specify) [SKIP TO Q61]
 - Unsure of next steps

56. If you try to resolve you matters out of court, how helpful do you think the assistance and information you received from the LawLINE will be in this process? Will it be....?
- Very helpful
 - Helpful
 - Not helpful
 - Not at all helpful
 - Or is it not applicable, you have not yet received this type of help from the LawLINE [SKIP TO Q61]
 - Don't know [SKIP TO Q61]

57. Please explain why you believe the assistance from the LawLINE will be [INSERT RESPONSE FROM Q56]

Specify
Don't know

[SKIP TO Q61]

58. [If they said they would go to court in Q55] If you do go to court, do you plan on representing yourself or hiring a private lawyer?

Hiring a private lawyer [SKIP TO Q61]
Representing self
Don't know

59. If you do represent yourself in court how helpful do you think the assistance and information you received from the LawLINE will be in this process? Will it be....?

Very helpful
Helpful
Not helpful
Not at all helpful
Or is it not applicable, you have not yet received this type of help from the LawLINE [SKIP TO Q61]
Don't know [SKIP TO Q61]

60. Could you explain why you think this information or advice will be [INSERT RESPONSE TO Q59] to you in representing yourself in court.

FOR ALL

61. What would you have done if the LawLINE service was not available? For example, would you have.....[CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

Hired your own lawyer
Relied on the Duty Counsel available in the court
Represented yourself in court on your own without help
Tried to resolve the matter out of court
Dropped the matter entirely/done nothing
Tried to find another service to help
Other (specify)
Don't know

62. DELETED

63. DELETED

The last few questions are about your overall experience with the LawLINE

64. Did you feel treated with respect?

Yes

No

Don't know

65. Did you feel they listened to you and took the time to understand your legal issue?

Yes

No

Don't know

66. Overall, how satisfied were you with the help and support you received through the LawLINE?

Were you....?

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Unsatisfied

Very unsatisfied

Don't know

67. What, if anything, would you change about the LawLINE to make the services better? [DON'T READ; CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

No suggestions, services were good

Have more lawyers available

Allow more time with the lawyer

Make sure the client works with the same lawyer all the time

Less wait time for appointments

Allow the lawyer to represent you in court

More communication/advertising to let people know it is available

Expand the types of issues they can cover

Other (specify)

Don't know

68. Do you have any other comments?

Yes (specify)

No

**THAT IS THE END OF THE SURVEY.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.**