



The Legal Aid Fax

November 2007 — Special Edition

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Lawyer survey results; GST change; December cheque run schedule

75% of lawyers satisfied with overall LSS services and support

The 2007 survey of lawyers who take legal aid referrals found that 75% are satisfied with the overall support and services they receive from LSS.

Lawyer satisfaction is one of the society's performance measures and, to gauge these levels, a survey is conducted every three years. The 2007 results showed increased satisfaction in most areas, compared to 2004 (see sidebar).

Although a 7% increase is not considered statistically significant given the sample size of 379 lawyers (39% of all survey recipients), the overall satisfaction result exceeds the society's 2006/2007 target of 72% for this key performance measure.

As in 2004, lawyers who participated also gave LSS staff very high ratings for their courtesy and knowledge.

Two critical areas of concern continue to be the low approval rating for the authorization process, which dropped to just 59% this year, and the low percentage of the tariff bar (57%) who feel valued by the society.

Just over half (54%) of the respondents said the tariff renewal changes LSS has implemented over the past two years make it more likely that they will take legal aid referrals. However, as in 2004, tariff rates and coverage continue to be the top reasons they cite for not feeling valued.

The top suggestions for increasing overall LSS support for lawyers were to improve authorizations and tariffs.

While more lawyers than in 2004 feel LSS does a good job allocating its limited resources to meet client needs, at 59%, this number is still low. Common suggestions for improvement were to relax eligibility requirements and simplify the application process; expand coverage, services, and eligibility in family law; and expand coverage in other areas, especially civil law.

The survey, conducted online between January and March 2007, was sent to all private lawyers who took a referral or billed for legal aid work in 2006 and for whom LSS had an e-mail address. Lawyers were asked about topics ranging from the referral process, account processing, and authorizations to the society's services levels and priorities.

LSS is reviewing the results and recommendations in the report. Watch for updates in the LAF on changes we will be making to improve our services to you.

The complete survey results will be posted shortly on the LSS website at www.lss.bc.ca (choose "For Lawyers," click "Online resources," then scroll down to "Tariff resources"). For more information, contact Janice Staryk at 604-601-6148 or Janice.Staryk@lss.bc.ca.

Key survey results

Overall LSS support and services

- 75% satisfied (68% in 2004)

LSS staff

- 94% agreed staff are courteous (89% in 2004)
- 86% agreed staff are knowledgeable (80% in 2004)

Referral process

- 79% satisfied (69% in 2004)

Authorization process

- 59% satisfied (67% in 2004)

Payment process

- 82% satisfied with accounts (79% in 2004)
- 87% satisfied with payment timelines (81% in 2004)

Services valued

- 57% feel LSS values their services (49% in 2004)

Resource allocations

- 59% satisfied with how LSS allocates limited resources (42% in 2004)

GST change

The federal government will be reducing GST to 5% effective January 1, 2008. To apply the correct rate to billings submitted to LSS prior to December 31, 2007, LSS will not reduce the rate currently used to calculate the amount paid until after January 17, 2008.

This should ensure that a majority of billings prior to the change are calculated correctly. Those billings submitted after January 1, 2008, and paid on or before January 17, 2008, will be paid the 6% rate. Lawyers should ensure that the full amount of GST paid by LSS is included in their GST remittance. If you have any concerns, contact Sham Lalji at 604-601-6213 or Sham.Lalji@lss.bc.ca.

December cheque run schedule

To accommodate the upcoming holiday season, LSS has revised the cheque run schedule as follows:

- Wednesday, December 19, 2007 (moved up)
- Thursday, December 27, 2007 (cancelled)
- Thursday, January 3, 2008 (resume regular schedule)