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Tariff simplification

Criminal tariff model revised

We are making significant changes to the simplified criminal tariff model based on our analysis and your feedback. These changes will make tariff compensation more equitable in guilty plea situations, while maintaining a reduced number of tariff items, the balance between cases, and overall cost neutrality.

The revised criminal tariff is now posted to our website (Lawyers → Request for feedback on new tariff), with an update paper that provides more detail on this revision. Changes include:

- sentencing made payable each half day consistent with the current tariff,
- increases to multiple information resolution,
- increases to subsequent half days of trial,
- reductions to the Provincial Court fee, and
- reductions to the non-trial resolution fee.

These changes will re-establish the current balance between summary and indictable proceedings. The original published model created an unintended benefit for indictable cases, to the detriment of summary cases. The changes will more evenly distribute tariff payments between lawyers when compared to the current tariff. A simplified tariff will inevitably create some “winners” and “losers,” but we have worked to keep shifts for individual lawyers to acceptable levels. We encourage you to review the revision and provide your feedback to lawyersresources@lss.bc.ca.

Family model implementation date

We are continuing to work on implementing the simplified family tariff. Consultations on the model are nearly complete; we don't anticipate any changes to the model. The target date for implementation of the new family tariff remains **July 2010**. Referrals issued after the implementation date will be subject to the new simplified tariff. Referrals issued prior to that date will continue to be billed on the older tariff.

CFCSA tariff

Discussions and analysis of the CFCSA tariff continue. We anticipate further work this summer, with implementation of a new, simplified CFCSA tariff in the fall.

Tariff updates

BCMA rates

The online *Guide to Legal Aid Tariffs* has been updated to reflect increases to BCMA fees, effective **April 1, 2010**.

Parking rates

Due to the recent change to PST by Translink (from 7% to 21%), parking rates have been increased to \$16.

Harmonized Sales Tax (HST)

HST of 12% will be applied to all accounts approved by LSS for payment after **June 30, 2010**, in the same way GST was applied. More details will follow in next month's *LAF*. E-mail questions to helpdesk.finance@lss.bc.ca.

Check out the Family Law in BC website!

Did you know that the Family Law in BC website (www.familylaw.lss.bc.ca) has been revamped? It now has improved navigation that makes information easier to find. You can now navigate the site using the top-of-the-page tabs: Your legal issue, Your community, Your FAQ, Your language, and About us. Each tab has sub-categories, where information is grouped into: The basics (fact sheets, publications, audio-visuals), Do it yourself (court forms, self-help guides), FAQ, Who can help, Links, and Legislation/Court rules. These sub-categories provide contextual information that's specific to the selected tab. The website is a great resource that can increase your clients' knowledge and save you time spent explaining basic family law or court processes. The website can also provide next-step support for clients acting with limited assistance from a lawyer. Check it out and send any feedback to FamilyLawWebsiteProject@lss.bc.ca.

Have you checked out LSS on Twitter yet?

The LSS Twitter feed is a great way to get up-to-the-minute LSS news and stay up-to-date on the latest resources and information available. Not only do we provide links to new publications and updates to our websites, we keep counsel informed of Notices to Counsel, Messages to the Bar, the latest newsletters, and updates to the tariff. Check us out at twitter.com/legalaidbc! (Remember, you can follow our tweets even if you don't have a Twitter account.)