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## February 2005 tariff revision

The February 2005 tariff revisions are now posted on the LSS website at [www.lss.bc.ca](http://www.lss.bc.ca) in the "For lawyers" section. A Message to the Tariff Bar entitled "Updates to the Guide to Legal Aid Tariffs," faxed on February 4th, 2005 and available on the website, outlines the major revisions that were made.

## Service stop date on referrals

A service stop date is now printed on all referrals (below the service start date). You are entitled to provide services between the service start and stop dates. If services are required beyond the stop date, the client must reapply for legal aid so LSS can confirm continuing financial eligibility.

Service stop dates will generally be March 31, 2006 for all immigration and immigration appeal cases, and three years from the assignment date for all other cases. We may announce different stop dates for certain case types in the future as we make adjustments based upon the anticipated length of most cases.

## Eligibility guidelines

Effective February 9, 2005, LSS increased its financial eligibility limits and adopted a single cut-off level for representation services in all areas of law. These new limits are part of the society's plan to improve access to legal aid for low-income people. The new monthly income criteria are:

Household size	Net monthly income
1	\$1,304
2	1,804
3	2,112
4	2,516
5	2,862
6	3,208
7 or more	3,554

LSS also raised its financial eligibility limits for legal advice services. This test applies to many of the society's family duty counsel, LawLINE, and family advice lawyer services. For further details, see our February 9 announcement and backgrounder at [www.lss.bc.ca](http://www.lss.bc.ca) (See "What's new," then "News releases").

## Send us your accounts by year end

All accounts received and paid by March 31, 2005 are eligible to receive holdback payments (if such payments are authorized by the LSS board).

## Billing tips

- All bail review hearings in Supreme Court, including 90-day reviews, require prior authorization by the Appeals Department. The Appeals Department will authorize 90-day reviews only if it finds merit to counsel attending.
- Assistants as well as lawyers can use E-Billing to prepare accounts, but only lawyers can actually submit accounts directly to LSS. The lawyer must be set up for E-Billing before LSS can give his or her assistant E-Billing access.
- Please do not use E-Billing notes to submit requests for additional preparation or extra fees. Submit these requests in writing to the Manager of Tariff Services by fax at (604) 681-7963. Before you request extra fees, please ensure that you have submitted your final billing for all services permitted under the tariff. Your request should address the criteria concerning extra fee requests. See the "General Terms and Conditions" in the tariff guide for the criteria.

## Long distance telephone charges

During the tariff review consultations, many lawyers indicated they find tracking and billing long distance telephone charges on legal aid referrals to be demanding. LSS has determined that average long distance rates for almost all jurisdictions are \$0.10 per minute and anticipates that when lawyers are submitting claims without an invoice or log, the amount will be consistent with this average. Claim the actual amount that the service provider charges. LSS may request invoices to support long-distance charges. Most service providers offer business customers reporting services that track long distance calls. Your monthly bill would include a report that shows how much was billed per file, client, or project. For more information, please contact your service provider.