



Lead Family Duty Counsel

LSS has contracted with family lawyers in several new locations to assume the responsibilities of Lead Family Duty Counsel. On October 1, 2010, the following lawyers began serving as Lead FDC in their communities:

- Susanna Hughes (New Westminster)
- Carole Oleniuk (Kelowna)
- Sandra Sarsfield (Nanaimo)
- Debbie O'Leary (Prince George)
- Kathleen Kendall (Kamloops)

Advice hours have also been added in each location. The program will continue as before (with services provided by the lead and roster lawyers) but with the added advantage of a dedicated liaison for clients, LSS, and the court registry offering greater efficiency.

Billing tips

Disbursement block payment — simple!

Did you know there is an option that simplifies billing standard low-cost disbursements? Instead of tracking and billing your actual amounts, you can choose to bill the “disbursement block payment” for your referral. This block fee includes:

- Courier services
- Long distance charges for telephone and fax transmissions
- Photocopying and receiving faxes (in-house and third party)
- Postage

The block fee payments are as follows:

- Criminal referrals — \$10
- CFCSA referrals — \$18
- Family referrals — \$28
- Immigration referrals — \$28

You will continue to bill all other disbursements in the usual way. Note that if you choose to bill the block fee you can't also bill for actual costs, or reverse the block payment at a later date.

Accommodation

LSS is authorized to use the hotel accommodation rates set for BC government personnel at:
pss.gov.bc.ca/csa/categories/accommodation/search

We expect you to choose the most reasonable accommodation at these rates for each location.

Meals

Meals are billable only when travel is authorized, and when you are staying overnight and out-of-town for court hearings.

Taxes

Reminder: don't include any taxes (GST/HST) on any disbursements. Always bill net of taxes. LSS will automatically calculate the amount of tax payable for all disbursements when processing your account.

Payment inquiries

When calling the Tariff Helpdesk about an unpaid account, please have the LSS case/file numbers ready so we can locate your account quickly. Please only call if your account is more than 30 days old. We often get calls on accounts that are less than a week old! The time used to respond to these calls is time taken from processing accounts. With your help, we can continue to achieve average turnaround times of about one week.

Tariff simplification — CFCSA

As you may have read in the recent *Message to the Tariff Bar* (October 21), we are planning to implement the simplified CFCSA tariff on November 17, 2010. To read a summary, check out the Message on our website (in [Lawyers — Notices to Counsel](#)).

Just prior to the implementation date, we will post the new CFCSA tariff guide and other information to assist with billing under the new tariff. Keep in mind that the new simplified tariff only applies to referrals issued after November 17, 2010. Existing referrals will continue under the current tariff until their stop date (or to a maximum of two years).

Telephone Advice Line

The Telephone Advice Line (TAL) will begin Monday, November 1, 2010. Every weekday, family lawyers will give brief “next step” advice on the telephone between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Two TAL lawyers (from a roster of eight) will log onto the LSS phone system remotely from locations throughout the province each day. Callers to the LSS Call Centre will be screened by an intake legal assistant for area of law and financial eligibility before being transferred to the TAL. The service is only for callers who do not qualify for legal representation and is intended to meet a broader range of legal needs in a more accessible and innovative way. Intake will continue to direct callers to in-person Family Duty Counsel services where appropriate.