



Legal
Services
Society

British Columbia
www.lss.bc.ca

News Release

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Legal aid LawLINE, Call Centre scripts now multilingual

Vancouver, BC — Recorded messages for people who phone the Legal Services Society's (LSS) Call Centre and LawLINE are now available in eight languages in addition to English.

Most callers who speak no English are given descriptions of legal aid services in their own language as soon as they call the toll-free line. The translated scripts are expected to open up LSS services to people in the multicultural community who might not otherwise call the society for assistance.

The greeting offers callers options for service in Arabic, Cantonese, Farsi, French, Mandarin, Punjabi, Spanish, and Vietnamese as well as in English. Callers are also advised that, when a staff member answers the phone, they should respond by saying what language they speak. Staff will then set up a three-way conference call so they can continue conversing with the caller through an interpreter.

LSS received strong support from multicultural agencies for translating the scripts.

To contact the LSS Call Centre and LawLINE, dial:

(604) 408-2172 (Lower Mainland) or 1-866-577-2525 (toll free)

- The **LSS Call Centre** ensures access to legal aid, particularly for people who live in rural communities where there is no legal aid office, or who live with disabilities or face other circumstances that prevent them from traveling to an office. Staff at the call centre process applications for legal representation, refer eligible clients to lawyers, and re-direct calls to legal information and/or advice services, including online and print materials, community agencies, LawLINE, and family duty counsel.
- **LawLINE** staff provide low income people with legal information, referrals to other agencies, and brief legal services in the areas of poverty, family, criminal, and immigration law that are not covered by legal representation services.

Brief legal services are those that can be delivered during or shortly after a telephone conversation. They range from legal advice or help with correspondence and documents, to phone calls or letters to third parties on a client's behalf. This assistance is available to people who cannot access alternative legal services and who meet the LSS income test for legal advice.

For further information, contact:

John Simpson, Manager
Community Services
(604) 601-6004

David Griffiths, Manager
Field Operations
(604) 601-6004

LSS is an independent, non-profit organization that has provided legal aid to people with low incomes in BC since 1979.

Legal representation is available for serious family issues (e.g., involving child apprehension matters or domestic violence) and serious criminal problems. It is also available for some immigration, mental health law, and prison law matters.

Legal advice is available through criminal duty counsel in all courts, family duty counsel in provincial courts, the Brydges Line, and several pilot projects scheduled to operate until July 29, 2005 – including an enhanced LawLINE project that provides brief legal services to people with low incomes.

Legal information is available through the province-wide toll-free LawLINE, plain language publications, and Internet services, including the Electronic Law Library, the Family Law in British Columbia, the LSS, and the LawLINK websites.

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