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New brochure for lawyers



Our Community and Publishing Services Department and the Ending Violence Association of BC have co-produced a new resource titled *Is Your Client Safe? A Lawyer's Guide to Relationship Violence*. Developed through consultation with family law lawyers, the brochure informs you of the signs of abuse, whether your client may be at risk, and what to do if she has been victimized. The brochure also includes links to a series of online fact sheets that provide more information and resources for you, your staff, and your clients. Topics include safety planning and encouraging disclosure.

You can order free copies of the brochure, or read it and the fact sheets on the [LSS website](#). We encourage you to access these resources — you can help to save a life.

E-authorizations — pilot project opportunity

Before officially launching e-authorizations (for disbursement requests), we are offering an initial release of this new e-tool to a limited number of lawyers. This pilot period of a few months will give us an opportunity to test both the new functionality and new technology. We apologize for the delay of the full launch, but we know this will ensure that you will ultimately receive the best possible product. If you are interested in participating in the pilot, please email us at: lawyersresources@lss.bc.ca.

Scope of the family referral

When we simplified the Family Tariff in 2010, we changed our expectations of what services are covered by an emergency referral. LSS relies on counsel to manage the priorities of each case to address the primary issue(s) identified on the referral. Please [read more](#).

CFCSA tariff — collateral issues evaluation

We recently evaluated the collateral issues item in the CFCSA Tariff. The results suggest that this under-used tariff item is very helpful in resolving issues that underlie child protection problems. Please [read more](#).

Upcoming on CLE-TV: Residential Tenancy

Access Pro Bono and the Continuing Legal Education Society of BC are co-presenting an online session on the Residential Tenancy Act as part of their "Pro Bono Practice in BC" series. The hour-long course (cost just \$25) runs June 5th at 12:00 p.m. Please [read more](#).

Increased BCMA rates

We have updated the online [Disbursements Tariff](#) to reflect BCMA rate increases effective April 1, 2012. LSS fees are based on the current rates in the BCMA Guide to Fees, found on the BCMA website in the [Fee Guide](#) section.



Duty counsel billings must be submitted within *two* months of each service date. All other case types can be billed within six months of the last date of service provided to the client (although you can also interim bill these accounts).

Family LawLINE expansion

We have extended the Family LawLINE hours of service. Lawyers are now available to provide advice to self-represented litigants on family law matters **weekdays from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** (except Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to noon). Two experienced family lawyers (from a roster) are available at these times to provide brief, "next step" legal advice over the telephone. Family LawLINE is part of the family duty counsel program and the same criteria apply regarding [financial eligibility](#) for clients. Calls are screened by LSS Call Centre staff and then placed in a queue that is accessed remotely by lawyers in their own offices around the province. Callers wait on average about 12 minutes for their calls to be answered. The lawyers have immediate access to an interpretation service if necessary.

This important service is part of our continued efforts to provide a broader and more effective range of legal advice to families in British Columbia. Many self-represented litigants have been able to use the Family LawLINE to advance their cases and resolve their issues.

Law Society conduct requirements

The Law Society of BC recently released a discipline advisory regarding quality of service requirements for pro bono and legal aid work. The advisory points out that there is no difference in the professional standards required by lawyers when they are acting pro bono or on a legal aid referral. Specifically:

"The Professional Conduct Handbook requires that a lawyer provide a quality of service to clients that is at least equal to what would be expected of a competent lawyer in a similar situation.

More information on this and other advisories is available on the [Law Society website](#).

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