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Provincial Court Scheduling Project update

As of December 1, 2013, the Simplified Criminal Front-End process (SCFP), including Simplified Initial Appearances, will be implemented throughout the province. The SCFP's main objective is to return the responsibility of file management to counsel by reducing the number of mandatory reports and appearances required under the Criminal Caseflow Management (CCFM) Rules.

The major changes include:

1. **Expanded Judicial Case Manager (JCM) role:** Most administrative appearances will be before a JCM, who will have the authority to deal with non-adjudicative and uncontested matters. While such courts are courts of record, there will be no audio recordings of initial appearances before JCMs.
2. **CCFM Rule changes:** The filing of both arraignment and trial readiness reports will be eliminated, as will trial confirmation hearings, where counsel is on record. New forms will be implemented to allow counsel to deal with procedural matters (including consent arraignments) without court appearances.
3. **Delayed assignment:** The delayed scheduling of cases to judges and of judges to courtrooms will enable the court to make more effective, efficient, and equitable use of judicial resources by reserving court time for those matters that actually proceed. Delayed assignment will commence, province wide, in January 2014.
4. **Assignment Courts and Summary Proceedings Courts:** Some medium and large locations will have Assignment Courts, presided over by a JCM, where matters that require one half day or longer will be scheduled via the Assignment Court list. Only matters where the participants are ready to proceed as scheduled will be moved into a Trial Court. These locations will also have Summary Proceedings Court that will generally hear trials/hearings scheduled for one half day or less for family, civil, and criminal matters.
5. **Timeliness and time guidelines:** The court will aim to have summary matters proceed from first appearance to arraignment within 60 days and indictable matters within 90 days.
6. None of the changes will affect the LSS Tariff.

The next steps in the Provincial Court Scheduling Project will be the implementation in some locations of assignment and summary proceedings courts. Assignment Court (and Summary Proceedings Court) will begin operation in Port Coquitlam in the last half of 2014. Other large courthouse locations will begin operating Assignment and Summary Proceedings Courts in a staged fashion thereafter.

You can find the Provincial Court of BC Practice Directions regarding CCFM and SCFP at www.provincialcourt.bc.ca/types-of-cases/criminal-and-youth/practice-directions.

For more information and to access project material, go to extranet.provincialcourt.bc.ca (Domain\username: PROVJUD\pcspinfo; Password: WelcomePCSP13). Note that you need to use either Internet Explorer or Chrome browsers to access this site.

Account volumes

Since May, we've experienced an unexpected increase in the number of accounts submitted, receiving over 12,200 a month when we usually receive 11,200 (see [October 2013 — Special Edition LAB](#)). We remain very committed to processing your accounts as quickly as possible. However, the sheer volume has been a challenge and has resulted in longer processing times for accounts that we need to review, about 25 percent of them. Our Lawyer Services team is working hard and is starting to get on top of the backlog!

Ways you can help include:

- checking that hours multiply by the base hourly rate correctly (don't include tier in this calculation — our system does that automatically);
- checking that your referral is still active — if you're approaching a service stop date, write to case management in advance of billing; and
- limiting your payment inquiry phone calls/emails (it takes time away from working on your accounts and those of other lawyers).



We appreciate your patience!

New Lawyer Compliance policy

Our new Lawyer Compliance policy replaces the Referral Eligibility policy, which was revised and renamed to better adhere to rules of natural justice and procedural fairness.

Features of the new policy include the following:

- Simplified processes, including a streamlined review process. (Reviews now rest with the Director of Legal Advice and Representation, and are no longer conducted by either the Director of Finance and Corporate Services or the CEO.)
- Enhanced components of natural justice to provide lawyers with:
 - notice of any decision being made and time to advance their position,
 - disclosure of the information or evidence supporting the concern, and
 - opportunity to present evidence and make arguments prior to a decision being made.
- Ability to deal with emergency situations. (LSS can decide to immediately suspend a lawyer's vendor number, but then reinstate it after a full investigation.)
- Clear reasons for a final decision so that the lawyer knows all the evidence used to make that decision.

To find out more, read the [Lawyer Compliance policy](#).

December 2013 / January 2014 payment schedule

To accommodate the upcoming holiday season, we've revised our payment schedule as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Wednesday, December 18, 2013 | No change, regular payment date |
| Wednesday, December 25, 2013 | Cancelled |
| Wednesday, January 1, 2014 | Cancelled |
| Tuesday, January 7, 2014 | Revised payment date |
| Wednesday, January 15, 2014 | No change, regular payment date |

Billing tips



For easy access to the LSS Tariff while you're billing, click "LSS Tariff" (located at the top of every billing screen) for direct access to the relevant chapter of the tariff. For example, if you're completing a criminal account, you're only one click away from the Criminal chapter of the tariff.

Upgrading a summary offence to indictable

If you have a referral for an information where the highest offence was summary but one or more offences proceed by indictment, you can upgrade the referral through e-billing. In most circumstances, you don't need to contact our Intake Department to make this change. On the first screen of a criminal account (above the offence date), simply upgrade the LSS level of offence by selecting Yes to the question "Was the maximum sentence on this information greater than 6 months jail?" On the second screen, you can then bill at the indictable rate.

Information/Indictment No. 1

Provincial Court Info #: Supreme Court Info #: 3445

| Offences | Results |
|--|------------------------|
| 1 Break and Enter: Business or residence (Summary) ▼ | Guilty Plea ▼ |
| 2 <input type="text"/> ▼ | <input type="text"/> ▼ |
| 3 <input type="text"/> ▼ | <input type="text"/> ▼ |

Was the maximum sentence on this information greater than 6 months jail?
 No Yes

Offence Date (dd/mm/yyyy) 08/07/2013 Charge Level Adult ▼ Stage Sentencing ▼

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