



Legal
Services
Society

British Columbia
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News Release

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For Immediate Release:

LSS Local Agent Retires

Legal aid services to continue in Williams Lake

Vancouver, BC — Lawyer Ken Grant, the local agent providing legal aid services in Williams Lake, retired effective December 31, 2004.

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 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.

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

The Legal Services Society plans to retain its local agent service in Williams Lake and is currently negotiating for Grant's replacement. Until this is in place – likely sometime in January or February – people can apply for legal aid by calling the society's toll-free call centre at 1-866-577-2525.

"We're sorry to see Ken leave," said LSS Executive Director Mark Benton. "He is a genuinely caring person with a great love for the law. He is one of those lawyers who always went the extra mile on behalf of his clients."

Grant had close to 20 years' experience in private practice in Kitimat, Terrace, and Williams Lake when he joined LSS as a poverty law staff lawyer in 1995. The following year he became the managing lawyer at the former Williams Lake branch office. He took on the role of local agent for LSS in September 2002, when the society restructured its service delivery system.

Participants at the society's Williams Lake regional advocacy conference last May warmly received Grant's heartfelt presentation, given from the perspective of a lawyer delivering legal aid services, about the impact of the changes to legal aid on access to justice in the community.

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