

## **EXPANDED FAMILY DUTY COUNSEL SERVICE**

### **VICTORIA JUSTICE ACCESS CENTRE**

#### **ROSTER LAWYER**

The Legal Services Society is seeking applications from qualified family lawyers situated in Victoria for addition to the Victoria Family Duty Counsel roster. The roster lawyers provide next step legal advice to clients at the Victoria Justice Access Centre and at the Victoria Courthouse, including coaching them through negotiations, mediation and litigation. The roster of lawyers is guided by and works closely with the two co-Lead Family Duty Counsel at Victoria.

Interested applicants should be experienced family counsel with significant practice experience in both the Provincial Court and Supreme Court in Victoria.

The purpose of the Family Duty Counsel service is to provide assistance to low income family clients who do not qualify for representation under LSS' family coverage guidelines. The service provides:

- Information and advice about the client's specific family problem;
- Help in preparing court documents such as financial statements;
- Representation for adjournments, interlocutory applications, and uncontested matters on family and child protection list days, including attendance at Family Management Conferences;
- Assistance with urgent applications such as Protection Orders, if necessary;
- Assistance at a Family Case Conference or Judicial Case Conference for eligible clients;
- Bridging services provided by the Justice Access Centre and other existing programs, and
- Providing self-represented litigants with legal coaching to help them represent themselves more effectively.

The service does not include providing representation at trial or other contested hearings.

Expanded Family Duty Counsel offers a higher level of family duty counsel services with lead lawyers, administrative support and fully-equipped office facilities.

#### **Responsibilities**

The roster lawyers will:

- Commit to availability for regularly scheduled 3 – 7 hour shifts (approximately 1 every other week);
- Provide advice and limited representation to Family Duty Counsel clients on family and child protection law matters; and
- Follow LSS policies and procedures.

## Criteria for selection

The successful applicant will:

- Be a member in good standing with the Law Society with at least five years' experience primarily in Family Law;
- Have an LSS vendor number;
- Have demonstrated expertise in assisting clients with family law issues, including using DivorceMate for support issues;
- Have experience and ability in providing unbundled services or willingness to do so, including the ability to coach clients in advocating for themselves and presenting their case at court;
- Knowledge of the challenges of providing legal services to persons representing themselves and available local resources including those available by internet;
- Have the ability to work with all family justice resources, including the Family Justice Counsellors and Court Services Branch;
- Have practiced at the Victoria Courthouse in both the Supreme Court and Provincial Court for at least the past two years; and
- Have a demonstrated knowledge of family law, particularly:
  - Practice and procedure in Supreme Court under the *Divorce Act* and *Family Law Act*;
  - Practice and procedure in the Provincial Court under the *Family Law Act*, the *Child, Family and Community Services Act* and the *Family Maintenance Enforcement Act*;
  - Practice and procedure under the *Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act*;
  - Excellent knowledge of *Provincial Court (Family) Rules* (including the Victoria Early Resolution prototype) and *Supreme Court Family Rules*, including prescribed forms;

In addition, the following factors will be considered in the selection of the successful candidate:

- Awareness of cultural diversity issues in and around Victoria and of the social and economic circumstances associated with the special needs of low income individuals;
- Training in mediation, arbitration or collaborative processes;
- Proven oral and written communication skills;
- Knowledge of a second language;
- Proven ability to function independently and under pressure and ability to perform a variety of diverse tasks at the same time; and
- A satisfactory history with the LSS Audit and Investigation Department and satisfactory feedback from stakeholders contacted by LSS.

Qualified lawyers may not necessarily be added to the roster, as evaluation of the service has shown that smaller rosters provide the best client service. Exceptions to the criteria may be made at LSS discretion, depending on the need for lawyers in a particular location. Presence on or removal from a roster is at the discretion of LSS.

**Compensation:** Tariff rates for Family Duty Counsel

**Closing Date for Applications:** June 4, 2019

Telephone interviews of short-listed candidates will be conducted in June. We would like to thank all applicants for their interest, but regret that only those short-listed will be contacted.

To apply, please send your resume and cover letter outlining qualifications to:

**Legal Services Society**

Susanna Hughes

Barrister & Solicitor

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