

Modification of Changes to the Human Rights Tariff, Effective December 1, 2001

Further to our November 2001 Notice to Counsel, the Legal Services Society (LSS) has had further discussions with the British Columbia Human Rights Commission (the Commission). The Acting Chief Commissioner has advised LSS that it is not desirable to implement a holdback provision in mid-year. Therefore, the Commission has directed LSS to continue to pay the tariff rate of \$80 per hour for referrals with assignment dates of December 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002. This means there will be no tariff holdback for those referrals.

The following changes to referrals issued on and after December 1, 2001 will take place as previously announced:

Reduced preparation time on new referrals

The Commission has directed LSS to reduce compensation for preparation time. The current 16 hours of preparation time (8 hours general and 8 hours hearing) will be reduced to a total of 10 hours of general preparation. There will be no separate hearing preparation item.

Further limits on services prior to referral to the Tribunal

The Commission has directed LSS to eliminate reimbursement for almost all services rendered prior to a case being referred to the Tribunal. Only the following such services will be eligible for reimbursement:

- one hour of preparation time as a consultation fee for meeting with clients who wish to enter into a settlement agreement, and
- the actual time spent in mediation plus one hour of preparation time for complaints in the Commission's Early Mediation Project, if the respondent is represented by counsel.

Once the provincial government provides each agency's budget, the Commission and LSS will negotiate a new contract, to commence April 1, 2002. At that time, further changes such as the holdback provision or other restrictions on services may have to be considered. We will advise you of any further changes as soon as we are able.

Mark Benton
Director of Tariff