Changes at Legal Services Society

As a result of the reduced government funding, Legal Services Society has cut its management and administration expenditures by $1.9 million. In the Tariff Department, we have had to reduce by 2.6 staff positions. In order to maintain our abilities to process accounts in a timely and accurate way, we have been forced to reduce our availability on the Tariff Helpdesk.

The Tariff Helpdesk will now only be available from 10:30am to 4pm daily to answer your tariff questions. We regret that we are unable to accept calls outside of these hours. We have amended our voice mail system to allow you to access different messages with regularly updated information on the cash flow situation and cheque issuing, disbursement authorizations, and other common questions put to the Helpdesk.

The Helpdesk number is **(604) 601-6155**.

Please note that some questions, including anything involving a list of file numbers, are more efficiently dealt with by faxing the Helpdesk at (604) 681-5796.

Nancy Henderson
Director of Tariff

Tariff Committees

The Society meets regularly with the three Tariff Committee on matters of the tariff and its administration.

***The Criminal Tariff Committee current members*:**
Peter Wilson, Gregory Rideout, Richard Gibbs, Chair: David Crossin.

Rob Farvolden, unfortunately recently resigned from the committee and a letter seeking a further appointment from the Canadian Bar Association -BC Branch has been sent.

The Family Tariff Committee current members:
Patricia Bond, Melissa Boshier, Gregory J. Lanning, Ian Lawson, Mary E. Mouat, Irene Peters

The Immigration Tariff Committee current members:
Alison Sawyer, Alistair Boulton, Gordon Maynard, Christopher Elgin, Anthony Norfolk

Holdbacks

Please note that the increase in holdbacks announced in the last notice to counsel dated April '97 is effective by date of assignment, not by date of referral. The date of assignment is the date on which the client is interviewed for legal aid and assigns the tariff on which the case is paid. Once the date of assignment is established for the case, it does not change, regardless of change of counsel or additional referrals. Generally, all tariff changes are effective by date of assignment.

Reciprocals

Effective June 23rd, 1997, the receiving and processing of reciprocal applications currently handled by the Reciprocals Department at head office will be devolved to the field offices.

Outgoing reciprocals will be the responsibility of each intake office. The office taking the application will assess the client for financial eligibility, gather all relevant documentation and refer the matter to the appropriate provincial plan. Reciprocal files incoming from other provinces will be directed to and handled by the Vancouver Intake Clinic. The Vancouver Intake Clinic will assess coverage and make the appropriate referrals to counsel in the community where the court action is to take place.

If you have any questions about a specific outgoing referral, contact the legal aid office nearest to the client's residence. If you have a question regarding an incoming reciprocals file, contact Annette Taylor at (604)601-6349. General coverage questions please contact Heidi Mason, Reciprocals Supervisor, at (604)601-6014.

Nancy Henderson
Director of Tariff