

Legal Aid BC

2022/23 – 2024/25 Service Plan



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Board Chair's Accountability Statement



The 2022/23 – 2024/25 Legal Aid BC (LABC) Service Plan was prepared under the Board's direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. The plan is consistent with government's strategic priorities and fiscal plan. The Board is accountable for the contents of the plan, including what has been included in the plan and how it has been reported. The Board is responsible for the validity and reliability of the information included in the plan.

All significant assumptions, policy decisions, events and identified risks, as of February 01, 2022, have been considered in preparing the plan. The performance measures presented are consistent with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*, LABC's mandate and goals, and focus on aspects critical to the organization's performance. The targets in this plan have been determined based on an assessment of LABC's operating environment, forecast conditions, risk assessment and past performance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Christiansen', written in a cursive style.

Karen Christiansen, FCPA, FCA
Board Chair

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Strategic Direction and Alignment with Government Priorities

In 2022/2023, public sector organizations will continue to align with and support the Government of British Columbia efforts in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on protecting the health, social and economic well-being of British Columbians. Building on our economic, environmental, and social strengths while looking to seize opportunities to improve outcomes for all British Columbians will be an important aspect of each Crown Agency's work as we respond to COVID-19 and recover from devastating floods and wildfires. The policies, programs and projects developed over the course of this service plan period will align with the five foundational principles established by Government in 2020: putting people first, working toward lasting and meaningful reconciliation, supporting equity and anti-racism, ensuring a better future through fighting climate change and meeting our greenhouse gas reduction targets, and supporting a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone.

This 2022/23 service plan outlines how Legal Aid BC will support the government's priorities including the foundational principles listed above and selected action items identified in the most recent Crown Agency [Mandate Letter](#).

LABC will continue to work on four priority actions in 2022/23, as set out in our most recent [mandate letter](#):

1. **Indigenous Justice:** Work with the BC First Nations Justice Council (BC FNJC), the Ministry of Attorney General, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and affected ministries on the BC First Nations Justice Strategy (FNJS) and related initiatives such as the transition of Indigenous justice services.
2. **Family Law:** Work with the Ministry of Attorney General, affected ministries and stakeholders to identify the best ways and tools to improve access to justice for low income families. This includes support for the Early Resolution and Case Management Process, and new Provincial Court Family Rules; and any related strategies, initiatives or additional early resolution sites.
3. **Justice Recovery Initiative:** Align legal aid service delivery approaches with transformative changes in the justice sector focussed on efficient, timely and accessible legal services, leveraging technology and new efficiencies where possible. This includes working with Ministry of Attorney General, affected ministries and relevant stakeholders to deliver core services digitally and the development of systems to support online mobile access to legal aid services.
4. **Administration Costs:** Set a goal for reducing administration costs as an amount of funding received from LABC funding partners, where administration costs are defined as all LABC costs that are not incurred in direct legal service delivery to LABC clients or the public, and where the goal for amount of funding spent on administration costs is lower than current levels. Include in LABC's annual report or another public report LABC's administration cost actuals and progress towards administrative cost goals.

As additional priorities, LABC will continue to support the Ministry of Attorney General's consultations and negotiations with the Association of Legal Aid Lawyers (ALL) on legal aid policy and access to justice issues to improve outcomes for legal aid clients, and will continue

working with Indigenous leadership, organizations and communities to support implementation of Indigenous justice strategies.

LABC is aligned with the Government’s key priorities:

Government Priorities	LABC Aligns with These Priorities By:
Putting people first	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1.2: Increase the accessibility and quality of legal aid services for Indigenous people • Objective 2.1: Increase the accessibility of legal aid services to address people’s interrelated needs • Objective 2.2: Support more people to achieve timely and lasting resolutions to their legal problems • Objective 4.2: Promote innovations that help people resolve their legal issues
Lasting and meaningful reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1.1: Ensure the cultural competence of staff and service providers • Objective 1.2: Increase the accessibility and quality of legal aid services for Indigenous people • Objective 1.3: Increase LABC’s engagement with Indigenous people and communities to improve their access to justice
Equity and anti-racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1.1: Ensure the cultural competence of staff and service providers • Objective 1.2: Increase the accessibility and quality of legal aid services for Indigenous people • Objective 1.3: Increase LABC’s engagement with Indigenous people and communities to improve their access to justice • Objective 3.1: Increase staff’s and service providers’ ability and capacity to provide quality services • Objective 3.2: Increase the availability of qualified staff and service providers in all regions

Operating Environment

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a significant impact on the operation of the justice system and access to justice. Some court processes are already administered by video, and increased modernization of the court system is expected to continue. LABC is supporting and influencing that process, and is working with various government ministries and justice system stakeholders to continue expanding the digital delivery of services.

Many of the changes LABC has made to services in response to the pandemic will become a new way of doing business. To ease the transition, LABC is supporting clients who have trouble accessing legal services online, and legal aid lawyers who need assistance adapting to online processes, thus ensuring our services remain accessible and meet client needs.

Enactment of further sections of the new Provincial Court Family Rules is pending and, once implemented, LABC expects that it will be participating in related strategies and initiatives. We continue to work with the Ministry and stakeholders to address capacity and resource challenges that arise from service delivery changes required by the pandemic, the Justice Recovery Initiative, and the new Provincial Court Family Rules.

Another priority for LABC is working with Indigenous leadership and organizations to support implementation of Indigenous justice initiatives and strategies. This includes prioritizing the implementation of the First Nations Justice Strategy, and the Métis Justice Strategy once it is finalized. These strategies aim to reduce the substantial overrepresentation of Indigenous people involved in and impacted by the justice system, affirm Indigenous self-determination and enable the restoration of traditional Indigenous justice systems and structures.

In addition to navigating the ongoing changes within the justice system, LABC is undergoing significant change internally, including a project to modernize our technology platforms and implementation and evaluation of our flexible workplace model, under the leadership of a new Chief Executive Officer. The goal of these initiatives is to increase LABC's efficiency and effectiveness, and enhance our ability to provide services to clients.

Although the scope of change we are experiencing is extensive, it also provides us with many new opportunities to improve access to justice and support more people to achieve timely and lasting resolutions to their legal problems.

Performance Planning

The 2022/23 Service Plan continues the four goals that were included in the 2021/22 Service Plan. They are intended to guide LABC through the three-year period of this plan and help us achieve our vision to provide client-focused legal aid that ensures access to justice for all. An important, continuing focus for LABC is simplifying our systems and processes to optimize operations and services for clients.

Achieving the targets we have set within our Service Plan would demonstrate the reach and impact of LABC services to our clients, employees, and service providers. We set survey targets by considering benchmark data and evaluating the level of improvement possible given the strategies and activities planned in the coming period. For operational and financial measures, we set targets based on a reasonable expectation of performance based on historical results.

Goal 1: LABC advances reconciliation with Indigenous people by improving access to justice

This goal articulates our aim to advance reconciliation with Indigenous people by improving access to justice and supporting Indigenous people to exercise their rights to self-determination and self-government, including developing, maintaining and implementing their own institutions, laws, and governing bodies. We can achieve this through working with Indigenous leadership and organizations to implement Indigenous justice initiatives, which includes:

- the [First Nations Justice Strategy](#);
- the [Métis Justice Strategy](#) (upon finalization);
- advancing the justice provisions of the [Truth and Reconciliation \(TRC\) Calls to Action](#);
- the [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#);
- the [recommendations in Indigenous Resilience, Connectedness and Reunification – From Root Causes to Root Solutions: A Report on Indigenous Child Welfare in British Columbia](#); and
- the [Calls for Justice in the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#).

In 2018, LABC began implementation of a five-year [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) (RAP) that identifies specific strategies and actions to advance reconciliation.

Objective 1.1: Ensure the cultural competence of staff and service providers

Key Strategies

- Develop and deliver cultural competency training for staff and service providers.

Performance Measure(s)	2017/18 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
1.1a Percent of Indigenous clients who say they received culturally appropriate legal aid services	67%	54% ¹	—	60%	—	60%

Data source: Biennial LABC Client Survey

¹ Biennial client survey was supposed to be conducted in 2019/20, but due to COVID-19 lockdown, LABC postponed survey to 2020/21. Due to COVID-19 changes in service delivery, LABC was unable to sample family duty counsel clients; this may affect comparability of results from 2020/21 with results from previous years.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

1.1a This outcome measure assesses the impact of training for LABC staff and service providers on Indigenous clients’ experiences of legal aid services as culturally appropriate.

Discussion

LABC identifies specialized training of staff and service providers as a key strategy to ensuring legal aid staff and service providers are culturally competent, and ultimately advancing the goal. Training on Indigenous cultural competency is developed and led by Indigenous people. Our RAP includes a strategy to increase Indigenous representation and retention at all levels within LABC. This is to help ensure legal aid services are culturally appropriate, Indigenous perspectives are integrated throughout the organization from service delivery to decision making, and that our staff represent the diversity of the communities in which we live and work.

LABC believes that Indigenous clients can provide the most meaningful assessment of whether our services are culturally appropriate.

Objective 1.2: Increase the accessibility and quality of legal aid services for Indigenous people

Key Strategies

- Continue to deliver Indigenous legal aid services.
- Work with the Attorney General, and with Indigenous leadership, organizations and communities to support implementation of Indigenous justice strategies.

Performance Measure(s)	2017/18 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
1.2a Percent of Indigenous clients who say legal aid met their needs overall	63%	67% ¹	— ²	69%	—	69%

Data source: Biennial LABC Client Survey

¹ Due to COVID-19 changes in service delivery, LABC was unable to sample family duty counsel clients; this may affect comparability of results from 2020/21 with results from previous years.

² Biennial client survey was supposed to be conducted in 2019/20, but due to COVID-19 lockdown, LABC postponed survey to 2020/21. Next client survey will be conducted in 2022/23.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

1.2a This outcome measure assesses whether Indigenous clients believe they received services that met their needs. The degree to which clients think that services met their needs is an indicator of both accessibility and the quality of the services.

Discussion

LABC identifies Indigenous people’s access to high quality legal aid services as an essential component of access to justice. We believe Indigenous clients can provide the most meaningful assessment of whether our services are accessible to them and meet their legal needs. We will continue to refine our methods and approaches to ensure we collect the most accurate data possible from Indigenous clients.

Objective 1.3: Increase LABC’s engagement with Indigenous people and communities to improve their access to justice

Key Strategies

- Engage with Indigenous people and communities to set priorities and design services.
- Facilitate understanding and build relationships between Indigenous people and communities and the justice system.

Performance Measure(s)	2018/19 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
1.3a Number of people reached through engagement activities LABC held with Indigenous people and communities	1,786	2,185	3,255	TBD ¹	TBD ¹	TBD ¹

Data source: LABC operational data (annual measure)

¹ No targets have been set for future periods because the impacts of COVID-19 on engagement activities are persisting, and there is a high degree of uncertainty as to how long they will continue.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

1.3a Increased engagement is an important step toward advancing reconciliation. This output measure will track the Indigenous people reached through LABC’s engagement activities, and ensure these efforts are sustained over time.

Discussion

LABC introduced this output measure and tracked engagement activities throughout 2018/19 to establish a baseline. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a significant impact on LABC engagement activities with Indigenous people and communities. Additionally, with the expected future transition of Indigenous justice services, LABC is shifting some of its activities away from individuals and communities to focus on engagement with Indigenous organizations in the justice system.

Goal 2: LABC delivers services tailored to people’s needs

This service-focused goal is based on evidence that legal aid services tailored to people’s needs will be more likely to help clients achieve early and lasting resolutions to their legal problems. LABC continues to adapt current services to better ensure that our clients’ unique needs — such as mental health, domestic violence, or poverty issues, as well as ability to engage in virtual services — are understood and addressed.

Objective 2.1: Increase the accessibility of legal aid services to address people’s interrelated needs

Key Strategies

- Provide training to staff and service providers to help them better address people’s interrelated needs.
- Develop and implement services for people with interrelated needs.

Performance Measure(s)	2018/19 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
2.1a Number of clients provided legal aid services or referred to other services for interrelated needs ¹	7,656	7,073	7,730	7,750	TBD ²	TBD ²

Data source: LABC client information system and other operational data (annual measure)

¹ LABC developed a more reliable method for capturing data on this performance measure in 2020/21, and it now includes results for all services where client information is recorded for referrals made or support for interrelated needs is provided.

² No targets have been set past 2022/23 due to uncertainty in future demand for certain services as COVID conditions change .

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

2.1a This outcome measure counts the number of clients who received direct services from LABC for interrelated issues, or LABC referred to outside services for help with these issues. An increased number indicates that more clients are getting access to the services they need.

Discussion

Clients’ legal problems often arise from, or lead to, interrelated needs such as health, housing or debt. By working with service providers to help clients get support for these issues, LABC can improve client outcomes as well as reduce clients’ use of justice, health, and social services over the long term. This performance measure reports the number of referrals given to applicants and clients for LABC representation services, Parents Legal Centres (PLCs), expanded family duty counsel services, and [Family LawLINE](#).

Objective 2.2: Support more people to achieve timely and lasting resolutions to their legal problems

Key Strategies

- Enhance family and criminal law services.
- Enhance online access to legal aid services.

Performance Measure(s)	2017/18 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
2.2a Percent of clients who say legal aid met their needs overall	55% ¹	60% ²	—	62%	—	64%

Data source: Biennial LABC Client Survey

¹ 2017/18 was the first time “Percent of clients who say legal aid met their needs overall” was measured by client survey.

² Biennial client survey was supposed to be conducted in 2019/20, but due to COVID-19 lockdown, LABC postponed survey to 2020/21. Due to COVID-19 changes in service delivery, LABC was unable to sample family duty counsel clients; this may affect comparability of results from 2020/21 with results from previous years.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

2.2a This measure assesses whether clients believe their needs were met overall by LABC. An increase in the proportion of clients who say their needs were met overall is a strong indicator that we are providing them with the appropriate services to meet their needs and achieve a resolution to their legal problems.

Discussion

A key objective of delivering services tailored to people’s needs is to help them find early and stable resolutions to their legal problems. LABC is utilizing digital technologies to extend current support and service offerings, and enhancing online access by designing our digital services to match our clients’ diverse range of abilities to use online services. LABC uses survey responses to determine whether clients believe their issues have been resolved through the use of legal aid services.

Goal 3: LABC operates a cost-effective, quality-assured legal aid plan

Operating a cost-effective, quality-assured legal aid plan will help us achieve optimum benefit for the people we serve within our funding envelope.

Objective 3.1: Increase staff’s and service providers’ ability and capacity to provide quality services

Key Strategies

- Develop and implement a quality assurance program.
- Implement and evaluate the flexible workplace model.

Performance Measure(s)	2018/19 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
3.1a Number of staff and service providers who participated in an LABC-sponsored training program to increase their ability to provide quality services ¹	356	521	530	540	565	590

Data source: Operational data (annual measure)

¹ The 2018/19 baseline includes only one category of LABC service provider (tariff lawyers). The 2020/21 actuals, 2021/22 forecast and future years’ targets include two additional LABC service provider categories (Community Partners and Local Agents).

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

3.1a Our strategies of implementing a quality assurance program and a flexible workplace model are intended to increase staff’s and service providers’ ability and capacity to deliver quality services, which is a step toward the goal. This measure assesses the reach of our training, a key component of both the quality assurance program and the flexible workplace model. The latter strategy, developed in response to COVID-19, is intended to have positive effects on service quality, efficiency and productivity.

Discussion

To assess progress against this objective, LABC tracks the number of staff and service providers who undertake training to increase their ability to provide quality services to clients. LABC also tracks the number of unique training programs offered to staff and to service providers to increase their ability to provide quality services, and reports out on those in the Annual Service Plan Report. LABC will determine a more direct measure as part of the development and implementation of the quality assurance program. The quality assurance program is currently focused on identifying and developing the legal and technical skills and competencies, including cultural competency, required for tariff and staff lawyers to address the needs of clients.

Objective 3.2: Increase the availability of qualified staff and service providers in all regions

Key Strategies

- Attract and retain qualified staff in all regions.
- Work with the Attorney General to find mechanisms that will support attraction and retention of qualified tariff bar lawyers in all regions.

Performance Measure(s)	2005 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
3.2a Percent of lawyers satisfied with the overall support provided by LABC	68%	—	N/A ¹	75%	—	76%

Data source: Biennial Tariff Lawyer Survey

¹ Survey postponed to 2022/23 due to Association of Legal Aid Lawyers (ALL) negotiations in fourth quarter of 2021/22.

Performance Measure(s)	2008 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
3.2b Overall employee engagement	70	—	—	70	—	—

Data source: Triennial LABC Workplace Environment Survey, which uses a 5-point survey scale and produces “average score” results.

Linking Performance Measures to Objective

- 3.2a An increasing level of satisfaction would indicate that LABC’s attraction and retention activities are having a positive impact, and provide a qualitative measure of the sustainability of this key resource.
- 3.2b High employee engagement in the public sector is linked to increased staff retention and improved service for clients.

Discussion

LABC is currently using two long-standing performance measures to track our progress against this objective. While these are proxy measures, lawyer satisfaction and employee engagement are strong indicators of our ability to attract and retain staff and service providers. As we implement quality assurance and attraction/retention initiatives in the coming years, we will establish measures that more directly assess our supply of qualified staff and service providers.

Objective 3.3: Reduce indirect costs

Key Strategies

- Review business processes and indirect expenditures to optimize service delivery to clients in the context of the flexible workplace model.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
3.3a Total indirect costs (\$000)	\$8,678	\$8,987	\$7,851	\$7,957	TBD	TBD

Data source: LABC audited financial statements

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

3.3a A reduction in indirect costs would indicate LABC is allocating more of its funding towards direct services to clients.

Discussion

This objective and performance measure were added in 2020/21, and revised in our [2021/22 mandate letter](#). Measuring indirect costs presents the best method to demonstrate LABC’s success in allocating more funding to direct services to clients. Indirect costs are defined as the costs that are not incurred in direct legal service delivery to LABC clients or the public, and include head office costs such as executive office, human resources, policy and planning, facilities, finance, and information technology support services.

Goal 4: LABC influences systemic changes that improve the outcomes of people who use our services

This goal articulates our intention to bring about the justice system changes required to improve outcomes for our clients. LABC needs to influence and innovate to achieve these fundamental changes.

Objective 4.1: Increase LABC’s influence on changes that improve access to justice

Key Strategies

- Develop strategic partnerships and collaborate to achieve systemic changes.
- Sustain and enhance clients’ ability to engage in remote legal processes.

Performance Measure(s)	2005 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
4.1a Percent of the public that supports the provision of legal aid services	89%	89%	—	>90%	—	>90%

Data source: Biennial LABC Public Opinion Poll

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

4.1a Sustained public support for legal aid contributes to LABC’s influence on justice system changes. LABC maintains the target of greater than 90 percent based on the consistent high level of past performance.

Discussion

The level of public support for legal aid is a primary indicator of the value BC residents place on legal aid services and the contribution of these services to a fair and efficient justice system. This measure is linked to public awareness of legal aid services and helps demonstrate the importance of legal aid in ensuring access to justice for the people of BC.

Objective 4.2: Promote innovations that help people resolve their legal issues

This objective recognizes that LABC will drive systemic change by supporting, developing, and implementing innovative justice services that improve the outcomes of people who use them.

Key Strategies

- Develop and pilot innovative services that improve the outcomes of people who use them.

Performance Measure(s)	2017/18 Baseline	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2023/24 Target	2024/25 Target
4.2a Number of clients accessing innovative ¹ legal aid services who resolve their legal issues	248 ²	2,062 ³	2,700	2,760 ⁴	2,870 ⁴	3,080 ⁴

Data source: LABC client information system

¹ For the purposes of this measure “innovative” services are defined key specialized services, including PLCs, Criminal Early Resolution Contracts, and digital early resolution services such as online dispute resolution, remote mediation and online tools

² Baseline data includes results from Vancouver PLC and Expanded Criminal Duty Counsel

³ 2020/21 Actuals include the following key specialized services: all 10 PLC locations; Criminal Early Resolution Contracts; Family Limited Representation Contracts; and digital early resolution services such as online dispute resolution, remote mediation and online tools.

⁴ 2022/23 and future years’ targets include the following key specialized services: all 10 PLC locations; Criminal Early Resolution Contracts; Family Limited Representation Contracts, and digital early resolution services such as parenting and child support arrangements created through the Family Resolution Centre.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective

4.2a This measure reflects the impact of innovative, resolution-focused services on people in BC. This evidence of the usage and effectiveness of innovative legal aid services can be used to inform decisions concerning continuation and expansion of these services.

Discussion

As new specialized services are introduced or changed, they are included or excluded from results and targets as appropriate. LABC will update targets for future years as data become available.

Financial Plan

Financial Summary

(\$000)	2021/22 Forecast	2022/23 Budget ¹	2023/24 Plan ¹	2024/25 Plan ¹
Total Revenue				
Government Revenue	114,353	114,972	114,972	114,972
Non-Government Revenue ²	4,327	3,965	3,965	3,965
Total Revenue	118,680	118,937	118,937	118,937
Total Expenses				
Criminal tariff ¹	61,823	62,269	62,269	62,269
Family tariff ¹	27,336	28,036	28,036	28,036
Child Protection tariff ¹	6,379	7,760	7,760	7,760
Immigration and Refugee tariff ¹	4,203	2,489	2,489	2,489
Justice Initiatives ³	7,386	7,467	7,467	7,467
Indirect (Administration) ⁴	7,851	7,957	7,957	7,957
Publications	2,162	2,135	2,135	2,135
Indigenous ⁵	714	-	-	-
Community Engagement	824	824	824	824
Total Expenses	118,680	118,937	118,937	118,937
Annual Surplus (Deficit)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
Total Debt	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)	939	939	939	939
Capital Expenditures⁶	3,000	1,400	600	100

Note: The above financial information was prepared based on current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

¹ Cost pressures may arise if demand exceeds available funding; LABC will work with the Ministry of Attorney General to mitigate this risk and will provide services to the available funding.

² Non-Government Revenue includes funding from the Law Foundation, the Notary Foundation, investment income, and Federally Funded Cases by the Department of Justice (DOJ) Canada.

³ Justice Initiatives includes Expanded Family Duty Counsel Victoria, and Family LawLINE. The Parents Legal Centre operations are included under Justice Initiatives. Cost pressures may arise if demand exceeds available funding; LABC will work with the Ministry of Attorney General to mitigate this risk and will provide services to the available funding.

⁴ Commencing in 2020/21, all direct costs are allocated to the tariffs and direct service delivery categories based on budgeted figures.

⁵ Indigenous services and budget have been moved into Indirect (Administration) for 2022/23 onward to support the implementation of Indigenous justice strategies and the transition of Indigenous justice services.

⁶ Capital expenditures are expected to decline in future periods in alignment with approved amortization schedules.

Key Forecast Assumptions, Risks and Sensitivities

The tariff budgets are based on our best estimates of volume of applications and contracts, contract rates, and average case costs, taking into consideration any known changes to policies, initiatives, and historical trends.

External Risk Factors

1. Approximately 3.3 percent of LABC’s revenue (\$4.0 million) is from non-government sources and is interest- rate sensitive (i.e. Law Foundation, Notary Foundation, and investment income). This revenue is used to fund the Community and Publishing Services Department, the Family LawLINE, digital delivery and legal information outreach workers.
2. Complex criminal trials are taking longer because of police investigation techniques, disclosure challenges, undercover operations, and gang-related prosecutions. These factors result in higher costs to LABC, including case preparation and court attendance. Fixed budgets mean LABC must allocate resources prudently, often impacting the level of service provided to other areas, in order to manage these cost pressures.
3. A risk LABC continues to face is the recruitment and retention of senior level management staff. LABC is exploring options with government on ways to mitigate this risk.

Management’s Perspective on the Financial Outlook

LABC is dependent on provincial government funding to finance the majority of its expenditures. We also receive revenue from non-government sources that are tied to interest rates. LABC will provide services to the available budget.

Risk Mitigation Strategies

1. LABC will use models for budgeting and forecasting.
2. LABC will use data analytics, trend analysis, and seek timely access to other justice system data (for example, government, courts, and judiciary).
3. LABC will use technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our programs and services.
4. LABC has implemented a Management Succession Plan to ensure continuity of leadership.
5. LABC will pursue increased collaboration and discussions with government and other justice system stakeholders.

Appendix A: Additional Information

Corporate Governance

Board Governance: legalaid.bc.ca/about/ourGovernance.php

Senior Management: legalaid.bc.ca/about/ourExecutive.php

Organizational Overview

Mandate: legalaid.bc.ca/about/ourMandate.php

Who We Are, and Our Vision, Mission, and Values: LABC.bc.ca/about

Legal Aid Services: legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid

Legal Aid Locations: legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/legalAidLocations.php

Appendix B: Crown Mandate Letter from the Minister Responsible



BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 20, 2021

Jean P. Whittow, QC
Chair, Board of Directors
Legal Aid BC
400 – 510 Burrard Street
Vancouver BC V6C 3A8

Dear Jean Whittow:

On behalf of Premier Horgan and the Executive Council, I would like to extend my thanks to you and your board members, as well as the staff of Legal Aid BC, for the dedication, expertise, and skills with which you serve the people of British Columbia.

Every public sector organization is accountable to the citizens of British Columbia. The expectations of British Columbians are identified through their elected representatives, the members of the Legislative Assembly. Your contributions advance and protect the public interest of all British Columbians and through your work, you are supporting a society in which the people of this province can exercise their democratic rights, trust and feel protected by their public institutions.

You are serving British Columbians at a time when people in our province face significant challenges as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Recovering from the pandemic will require focused direction, strong alignment and ongoing engagement between public sector organizations and government. It will require all Crowns to adapt to changing circumstances and follow Public Health orders and guidelines as you find ways to deliver your services to citizens. This mandate letter, which I am sending in my capacity as Minister responsible for Legal Aid British Columbia, on behalf of the Executive Council, communicates expectations for your organization. It sets out overarching principles relevant to the entire public sector and provides specific direction to Legal Aid BC (LABC) about priorities and expectations for the coming fiscal year.

I expect that the following five foundational principles will inform your agency's policies and programs:

- **Putting people first:** We are committed to working with you to put people first. You and your board are uniquely positioned to advance and protect the public interest and I expect that you will consider how your board's decisions maintain, protect and enhance the public services people rely on and make life more affordable for everyone.

.../2

- **Lasting and meaningful reconciliation:** Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility for us all. Government’s unanimous passage of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* was a significant step forward in this journey – one that all Crown agencies are expected to support as we work in cooperation with Indigenous peoples to establish a clear and sustainable path to lasting reconciliation. True reconciliation will take time and ongoing commitment to work with Indigenous peoples as they move towards self-determination. Guiding these efforts, Crown agencies must also remain focused on creating opportunities that implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission through your mandate.
- **Equity and anti-racism:** Our province’s history, identity and strength are rooted in its diverse population. Yet racialized and marginalized people face historic and present-day barriers that limit their full participation in their communities, workplaces, government, and their lives. The public sector has a moral and ethical responsibility to tackle systemic discrimination in all its forms – and every public sector organization has a role in this work. All Crowns are expected to adopt the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens to ensure equity is reflected in your operations and programs. Similarly, appointments resulting in strong public sector boards that reflect the diversity of British Columbia will help achieve effective and citizen-centred governance.
- **A better future through fighting climate change:** Announced in December 2018, the CleanBC climate action plan puts our province on the path to a cleaner, better future by building a low-carbon economy with new clean energy jobs and opportunities, protecting our clean air, land and water and supporting communities to prepare for carbon impacts. As part of the accountability framework established in CleanBC, and consistent with the *Climate Change Accountability Act*, please ensure your organization aligns operations with targets and strategies for minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and managing climate change risk, including the CleanBC target of a 50 per cent reduction in public sector building emissions and a 40% reduction in public sector fleet emissions by 2030. Your organization is expected to work with government to report out on these plans and activities as required by legislation.
- **A strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone:** I expect that you will identify new and flexible ways to achieve your mandate and serve the citizens of British Columbia within the guidelines established by the Provincial Health Officer and considering best practices for conducting business during the pandemic. Collectively, our public sector will continue to support British Columbians through the pandemic and economic recovery by investing in health care, getting people back to work, helping businesses and communities, and building the clean, innovative economy of the future. As a public sector organization, I expect that you will consider how your decisions and operations reflect environmental, social and governance factors and contribute to this future.

The Crown Agencies and Board Resourcing Office (CABRO), with the Ministry of Finance, will continue to support you and your board on recruitment and appointments as needed, and will be expanding professional development opportunities in 2021/22. This will include online training and information about provincial government initiatives to foster engaged and informed boards. As the Minister Responsible for LABC, I expect that you will make substantive progress on the following priorities and incorporate them in the goals, objectives, and performance measures in your 2021/22 Service Plan:

- Indigenous Justice – Work with the BC First Nations Justice Council, the Ministry of Attorney General, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and affected ministries on the BC First Nations Justice Strategy and related initiatives such as the transition of Gladue services and future transition of other Indigenous justice services.
- Family Law – Work with the Ministry of Attorney General, affected ministries and stakeholders to identify the best ways and tools to improve access to justice for low income families. This includes support for the Early Resolution and Case Management Process (currently operating in Victoria and implemented in Surrey in December 2020), and new Provincial Court Family Rules (to be implemented in May 2021); and any related strategies, initiatives or additional early resolution sites.
- Justice Recovery Initiative – Align legal aid service delivery approaches with transformative changes in the justice sector focussed on efficient, timely and accessible legal services, leveraging technology and new efficiencies where possible. This includes working with Ministry of Attorney General, affected ministries and relevant stakeholders to deliver core services digitally and the development of systems to support online mobile access to legal aid services.
- Administration Costs – Set a goal for reducing administration costs as an amount of funding received from LABC funding partners, where administration costs are defined as all LABC costs that are not incurred in direct legal service delivery to LABC clients or the public, and where the goal for the amount of funding spent on administration costs is lower than current level. Include in your annual report or another public report your administration cost actuals and progress towards your administrative cost goals.

Each board member is required to sign the Mandate Letter to acknowledge government's direction to your organization. The signed Mandate Letter is to be posted publicly on your organization's website in spring 2021.

Jean P. Whittow, QC
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I look forward to continuing to work with you and your board colleagues to build a better British Columbia.

Yours truly,



David Eby, QC
Attorney General and
Minister Responsible for Housing

Date: April 20, 2021

Enclosure: LABC Mandate Letter signing sheet

pc: The Honourable John Horgan, Premier
Lori Wanamaker, Deputy Minister to the Premier, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the BC Public Service
Heather Wood, Deputy Minister and Secretary to Treasury Board, Ministry of Finance
Douglas S. Scott, Deputy Minister, Crown Agencies Secretariat, Ministry of Finance
Richard J. M. Fyfe, QC, Deputy Attorney General, Attorney General
Jean P. Whittow, QC, Chair, LABC Board of Directors
Nathalie Baker, Member, LABC Board of Directors
Karen Christiansen, CPA, CA, FCA, FCPA, Member, LABC Board of Directors
Celeste Haldane, QC, Member, LABC Board of Directors
Nancy G. Merrill, QC, Member, LABC Board of Directors
Gisela Ruebsaat, Member, LABC Board of Directors
Allan P. Seckel, QC, Member, LABC Bords of Directors
Christine Smith-Martin, Member, LABC Board of Directors
Donna M. Turko, QC, Member, LABC Board of Director
Mark Benton, QC, Chief Executive Officer/President, Legal Aid BC

Legal Aid BC Mandate
Letter 2021/22 Board
Signature Sheet



Jean P. Whittow, QC
Chair
Board of Directors
Legal Aid BC



Nathalie Baker
Member
Board of Directors
Legal Aid BC



Karen Christiansen, CPA,
CA, FCA, FCPA
Member
Board of Directors
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Celeste Haldane, QC
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Board of Directors
Legal Aid BC



Gisela Ruebsaat
Member
Board of Directors
Legal Aid BC



Allan P. Seckel, QC
Member
Board of Directors
Legal Aid BC

Resigned: February 13, 2021

Christine Smith-Martin
Member
Board of Directors
Legal Aid BC



Donna M. Turko, QC
Member
Board of Directors
Legal Aid BC