



# Notice to Counsel

September 26, 2024, #127

## Province-wide Change in Court Transcript Service Provider

### Background

In British Columbia, transcripts must be prepared by contracted service providers or authorized reporters and these service providers invoice Legal Aid BC (LABC) directly. The Government of BC recently announced that Veritext Canada will take over the provision of transcription services for the entire Province, effective October 1, 2024.

Previously, the responsibility for court transcriptions was split between two service providers operating in different regions:

- **J.C. WordAssist Ltd.:** Mainland Vancouver, Vancouver Island, North B.C. Region, Interior B.C. Region, Sunshine Coast, and any Supreme Court Criminal or Supreme Court Civil proceedings across B.C.
- **Verbatim Words West Ltd:** Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Coquitlam, New Westminster, Richmond and Surrey (Provincial Court proceedings only).

After October 1, Veritext Canada will replace these two service providers in all regions of BC and for all court transcription services.

### Transition

*Transcripts produced on or before September 30, 2024:*

The current service providers (J.C. WordAssist Ltd. and Verbatim Words West Ltd.) will continue to deliver court transcripts, appeal books and appeal transcripts on or before September 30, 2024. Any orders placed for new transcripts or second copies prior to that date will be fulfilled.

JC Word and Verbatim are also allowed to provide copies for 180 days from the date the transcript was produced. However, as of October 31, 2024, Verbatim will cease providing copies. JC Word has not yet advised Court Services Branch the date they will stop providing this service.

After October 31, 2024 (in the case of Verbatim, date TBD for JCWord), any request for copies of transcripts produced on or before September 30, 2024, must be made to the court registry. The court registry will provide electronic copies for any transcript prepared after 2018, but before September 30, 2024, and paper copies will be provided where electronic copies are not available. Lawyers requiring paper copies will be responsible for the binding of those documents. Court registries do not have binding machines and therefore cannot provide this service.

Note that in these situations, copyright issues will not arise from counsel making copies of transcripts prepared before September 30, 2024. Access to court transcripts is governed by the Court's judicial access policies, which can be found here: [Access court records - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca/courts/records/).

*Transcripts produced on or after October 1, 2024:*

After October 1, 2024, publicly accessible transcripts of court proceedings will continue to be prepared, upon request, for a fee by the new service provider, Veritext Canada. Orders can be placed online via Veritext's webform. The current Transcript Order Form will apply to first-party orders up to September 30,

2024, and second-party orders during the transition. First-party orders after this date can be submitted using Veritext's online order form.

The ordering of transcripts from an Authorized Reporter for any Supreme Court Civil proceeding in B.C. or Supreme Court Criminal/Civil proceedings where the authorized reporter attends the proceeding in person will continue as before.

## **Changes to LABC Tariffs and Internal Procedures**

As with the previous transcript service providers, Veritext Canada will bill LABC directly for transcription costs. We have updated our disbursement tariff (see “Transcripts” section). Please note that all requirements regarding authorization continue to apply.

We will provide the necessary support and training to assist lawyers and staff during the transition period. We are working hard to make this change as seamless as possible for lawyers doing legal aid work and appreciate your patience and understanding during this transition. Please contact Lawyer Support with any questions or issues so we can assist.

As always, we welcome your feedback regarding the *LABC Tariffs*. If you have any comments, please email [lawyer.support@legalaid.bc.ca](mailto:lawyer.support@legalaid.bc.ca).

Rhaea Bailey  
Vice-President, Legal Strategy

September 26, 2024

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## **Questions or comments?**

Contact our Lawyer Support team:

- Call 604-601-6155; 1-888-401-6206 (no charge), or
- Email [lawyer.support@legalaid.bc.ca](mailto:lawyer.support@legalaid.bc.ca)

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