

FAMILY DUTY COUNSEL ROSTER LAWYERS

100 Mile House, Burns Lake, Fort Nelson, Fort St. James, Hazelton, Merritt, Port Hardy, Prince Rupert, Rossland, Smithers, Williams Lake

The Legal Services Society, also known as Legal Aid BC (LABC) is seeking applications from qualified family lawyers to be added to the Family Duty Counsel rosters in various locations. The roster lawyers provide next step legal advice to clients at court locations, including coaching them through negotiations, mediation and litigation. In some locations, the roster of lawyers is guided by and works closely with the Lead Family Duty Counsel for that location.

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

The purpose of the Family Duty Counsel service is to provide assistance to low-income family clients who do not qualify for representation under our current 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;
- Assistance with urgent applications such as Protection Orders, if necessary;
- Referrals to other resources, such as family justice counsellors.

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

Responsibilities

The roster lawyers will:

- Be available for regularly scheduled shifts (length and frequency varies by location);
- Provide advice and limited representation to Family Duty Counsel clients on family and child protection law matters, in the Provincial and Supreme Courts; and
- Follow LABC policies and procedures.

Criteria for selection

The successful applicant will:

- Be a member in good standing with the Law Society with preference given to counsel with at least five years' experience primarily in Family Law;
- Be eligible for an LABC 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 local Provincial Court, preferably for at least the past two years;
- Have demonstrated comfort and experience supporting clients and appearing in court in person and remotely using video technology and software, including MS Teams/Zoom; 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*, *Provincial Court (CFCSA) Rules*, and *Supreme Court Family Rules*, including prescribed forms;

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

- Experience working with Indigenous clients and communities;
- Awareness of the unique needs of Indigenous clients;
- Awareness of local cultural diversity issues in and around the location applied for, 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
- Law Society of BC discipline history;
- Information received from the LABC Audit & Investigations Department; and
- satisfactory recommendation, evaluation or reference from stakeholders contacted by LABC.

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 LABC discretion, depending on the need for lawyers in a particular location. Presence on or removal from a roster is at the discretion of LABC.

Compensation: LABC tariff rates for Family Duty Counsel

Closing Date for Applications: **Open until filled**

Telephone interviews of short-listed candidates will be conducted as soon as possible and may commence prior to the closing date. We would like to thank all applicants for their interest, but regret that only those short-listed will be contacted.

To apply, please e-mail your resume and cover letter outlining qualifications **and the location(s) you are applying for** to:

Legal Aid BC

Thomas M. Berger

Barrister & Solicitor

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