



Notice to Counsel

January 2026, #129

Immigration and Appeals Tariff changes to enhance immigration and refugee services

Effective February 1, 2026, Legal Aid BC (LABC) will introduce changes to the Immigration Tariff, the Appeals and Judicial Reviews Tariff, and the Disbursements Tariff to enhance support for immigration and refugee clients and better reflect the time lawyers require to represent them effectively. The changes were developed with input from the Immigration Tariff Advisory Committee of the Association of Legal Aid Lawyers (ALL).

The following sections summarize the changes that will come into effect on February 1, 2026.

Immigration Tariff

Increased preparation time for refugee cases

LABC is increasing the pre-authorized General Preparation available on an Immigration Standard contract from 16 hours to 20 hours (plus corresponding increases for second or subsequent clients).

Additional Preparation for Complex Refugee Claims

LABC is adding a new tariff item Additional Preparation for Complex Refugee Claims to reflect the extra time required to represent refugee claimants when the Minister gives notice of intervention or Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) makes

inquiries or schedules an interview regarding eligibility.

This new tariff item allows lawyers to claim, without prior authorization, actual time up to an additional 5 hours for legal services in these circumstances.

Appeals and Judicial Reviews Tariff

LABC will increase the preparation hours available for a number of immigration and refugee services in the Appeals and Judicial Review tariff:

Humanitarian and compassionate applications

- Pre-authorized General Preparation hours increased from 9 to 16 hours
- Upon request, LABC may approve an additional 10 hours of preparation where the application moves past the first stage
- Upon request, LABC may approve an additional 5 hours of preparation to assist an applicant with a temporary resident permit application

Pre-Removal Risk Assessment (PRRA) submissions

- Pre-authorized General Preparation Hours will increase from 9 to 10 hours
- Upon request, LABC may approve an additional 6 hours for Enhanced PRRA (where a hearing is ordered)

Danger to the public submissions

- Pre-authorized General Preparation hours increase from 10 to 16

Minister's interventions in RAD appeal

- Upon request, LABC may approve an additional 5 hours of preparation where the Minister gives notice of intervention

Disbursements Tariff

Translation

- For all immigration contracts, LABC will increase the pre-authorized maximum word count from 1900 to 3500 (the LABC rate remains at \$0.19 per word).

As always, we welcome your feedback regarding the LABC Tariffs. If you have any comments, please email lawyer.support@legalaid.bc.ca.

Rhaea Bailey
Vice-President, Legal Strategy

January 15, 2026

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
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