



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

December 17, 2019

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

Dear Jean Whittow:

I would like to extend appreciation on behalf of Premier Horgan and the Executive Council for your dedication, and that of your board members, in leading your organization and helping government deliver on our priorities to British Columbians.

Government remains focused on its three strategic priorities: making life more affordable, delivering better services, and investing in a sustainable economy.

Every public sector organization is accountable to the citizens of British Columbia. The expectations of BC citizens are identified through their elected representatives, the members of the Legislative Assembly.

This mandate letter, which I am sending in my capacity as Minister responsible for the Legal Services Society, on behalf of the Executive Council, communicates those expectations for your agency. It sets out overarching government priorities that will inform your agency's policies and programs, as well as specific direction on priorities and expectations for the coming fiscal year.

Our goal is to build a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone. We are committed to working with you and other Crown Agencies to provide quality, cost-effective services to British Columbia families and businesses. By adopting the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens and Business and Economic Implications Framework to policy development, we will ensure that equity is reflected in government budgets, policies and programs. You are encouraged to apply the GBA+ lens in your Crown Agency operations and programs. In the same vein, appointments to agencies, boards and commissions reflect government's direction to promote equity and leadership at senior levels in the public and private sectors, with a view to building strong public sector boards that reflect the diversity of British Columbia.

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Two key priorities that will underpin lasting prosperity are advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and moving towards a low-carbon economy.

In November 2019, government passed the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* which represents a crucial step towards true and lasting reconciliation. In keeping with the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Act was developed in collaboration with the First Nations Leadership Council to create a framework for reconciliation in BC. All Crown Agencies are expected to incorporate the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission within their specific mandate and context.

Announced in December 2018, the CleanBC plan puts our province on the path to a cleaner, better future – with a low-carbon economy that creates opportunities while protecting our clean air, land and water. As part of the new accountability framework established in CleanBC, and consistent with the *Climate Change Accountability Act*, please ensure your organization plans to align operations with targets and strategies for minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and managing climate change risk. Please be prepared to work with government to report out on these plans and activities.

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 2020/21. This will include online training modules and in-person conferences, as government works to support strong public sector boards that reflect the diversity of British Columbia.

As the Minister Responsible for the Legal Services Society, I expect that you will make substantive progress on the following priorities and incorporate them in the goals, objectives and performance measures in your 2020/21 Service Plan:

- **Indigenous Access to Justice:** Work with Indigenous communities and leaders, the Ministry of Attorney General and affected ministries to continue to identify ways to improve access to justice for Indigenous peoples.
- **Family Law Services:** Work with the Ministry of Attorney General, affected ministries and relevant stakeholders to determine opportunities to better meet the legal needs of low-income families.
- **Maclaren Report:** Support the Ministry of Attorney General in implementing Ministry identified recommendations made in the Maclaren report.

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- **Information and Transparency:** Provide the Ministry of Attorney General with early and comprehensive notice of issues related to the provision of legal aid services in the province.
- **Administration Costs:** Set a goal for reducing administration costs as a percentage of funding received from LSS funding partners, where administration costs are defined as all LSS costs that are not incurred in direct legal service delivery to LSS clients or the public, and where the goal for percent of funding spent on administration costs is lower than current levels. 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 2020.

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

DEC 17 2019

Date:

pc: The Honourable John Horgan, Premier
Don Wright, Deputy Minister to the Premier and Cabinet Secretary
Lori Wanamaker, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Finance
Heather Wood, Associate Deputy Minister and Secretary to Treasury Board,
Ministry of Finance
Richard Fyfe, QC, Deputy Attorney General, Ministry of Attorney General
Karen Christiansen, CPA, CA, FCA, FCPA Member,
Legal Services Society Board of Directors
Celeste Haldane, QC, Member, Legal Services Society Board of Directors
Alison MacPhail, Member, Legal Services Society Board of Directors
Dinyar Marzban, QC, Member, Legal Services Society Board of Directors
Gisela Ruebsaat, Member, Legal Services Society Board of Directors
Nathalie Baker, Member, Legal Services Society Board of Directors
Christine Smith-Martin, Member, Legal Services Society Board of Directors
Donna M. Turko, QC, Member, Legal Services Society Board of Directors
Mark Benton, QC, Chief Executive Officer/President Legal Services Society

Jean P. Whittow, QC
Chair
Board of Directors
Legal Services Society

Nathalie Ricker
Member
Board of Directors
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Karen Christiansen, CPA,
CA, FCA, FCPA
Member
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Celeste Haldane, QC
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