



Legal Aid Facts

Parents Legal Centre

The Parents Legal Centre (PLC) provides services that focus on early, collaborative resolution of child protection issues. It engages with eligible parents at an early stage prior to and during their involvement with the Ministry of Children and Family Development/Delegated Aboriginal Agency.

The Parents Legal Centre, located at the Robson Square Courthouse in Vancouver, is one of four justice transformation initiatives funded by the Ministry of Justice. The model was piloted for three years ending March 31, 2017. The provincial government has extended funding for the Vancouver PLC until March 31, 2020.

The Ministry of Justice announced new funding to expand the PLC model to Surrey. The Legal Services Society is currently developing an implementation plan for the Surrey location.

Innovative services

The PLC is available for all child protection issues under the Child Family and Community Services Act. It offers the following services:

- Information and advice on options for resolving child protection issues out of court
- Legal advice and representation, where appropriate, and collaborative processes such as mediation and family case planning conferences
- Information and advice on court processes
- Legal advice and representation at uncontested hearings
- Referrals to other services, including online resources and other public agencies

The PLC focusses on trying to resolve cases early, collaboratively and out of court, and identifies measures to address underlying issues, such as housing or addictions, before they escalate and require court processes.

Benefits for families

By focussing on early and collaborative approaches to resolution, the Parents Legal Center supports parents to achieve better outcomes for their families.

Collaborative planning and decision making has been shown to strengthen family relationships by empowering families to work together to find long-term solutions to the problems giving rise to child protection concerns.

The centre's approach helps families avoid lengthy hearings, thereby freeing up judicial resources. The centre also facilitates the improvement of the flow of cases through the courts.