



MAR 13 2018

Ms. Celeste Haldane
Chair, Board of Directors
Legal Services Society
400 – 510 Burrard Street
Vancouver BC V6C 3B9

Dear Ms. Haldane:

On behalf of the Government of British Columbia, I approve the 2018/19 three-year budget management plan for Legal Services Society (LSS) as submitted on February 21, 2018, reflecting the funding increases confirmed on Budget Day, assuming we have a common understanding and agreement on the following points:

1. As you know, budget decisions regarding legal aid were informed by a number of sources, primarily platform commitments, mandate letters and budget proposals. Treasury Board (TB) has advised that funding must be directed towards the purpose for which it was approved. As such, please notify ministry staff if new priorities arise that have not been otherwise addressed so they may be discussed at the ministry/LSS working group as per the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
2. I understand the main priorities of the LSS board align closely with those of government, especially related to Indigenous justice and family legal aid services. I assume your plans and priorities for allocation of the new funding are generally as follows. If not, please advise ministry staff so that we can come to a common understanding of the priorities and next steps:
 - a. Indigenous justice: I expect your plans focus on expansion of the Parents' Legal Centre to more locations, guided by the Grand Chief Ed John's recommendations and results of current consultations with Indigenous communities. In addition, I appreciate your work in supporting the Native Courtworkers and other stakeholders in developing their proposal and plan for an Indigenous Justice Centre; I understand LSS is targeting the production of 250 to 300 Gladue reports in 2018/19.

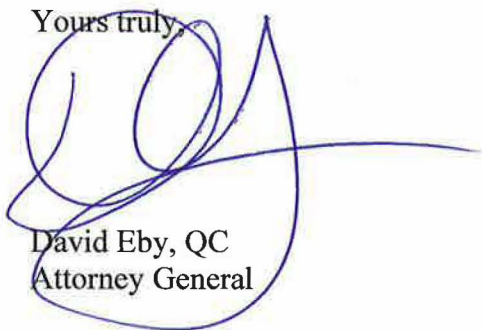
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- b. Family services: Top priority is to reinstate the extended family services that were discontinued in 2016 and advance family case conferences.
 - c. Criminal services: I expect LSS is planning to launch the Expanded Criminal Duty Counsel model to more locations and advance weekend and evening bail and transcripts.
3. I realize that compensation for legal aid lawyers continues to be of concern. Although I cannot approve of a tariff rate increase at this time, I ask that you earmark \$1 million of the \$4.7M legal aid expansion envelope for an incentive-based compensation plan for fiscal 2018/19. Please work with ministry staff to finalize a recommendation for my approval.
 4. I expect that any mitigation strategies that impact service delivery would only be undertaken after all administrative spending options have been assessed jointly by LSS and ministry staff and approved by the LSS board.
 5. Please continue to work with government communications staff on the key messaging and timing of any public communications that have, or may be perceived as having, ministry impacts.

Please submit LSS's first forecast for fiscal year 2018/19 to ministry staff by Friday, May 4, 2018 for large and major cases (Categories B and C as per the MOU) and advise of any notable variances in other budget areas.

I appreciate the considerable time and diligence that you, the LSS board and staff have dedicated to the budget development process, and look forward to ongoing collaboration with LSS.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'David Eby', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Eby, QC
Attorney General

pc: Mr. Richard J. M. Fyfe, QC
Mr. Kurt J. W. Sandstrom, QC
Mr. Mark Benton, QC