



**Evaluation of the  
Expanded Family LawLINE**

**Evaluation Refresh  
Final Report**

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Prepared for:

Legal Services Society of British Columbia

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## **Executive summary**

This report presents the findings for the evaluation refresh of the Legal Services Society of British Columbia's Expanded Family LawLINE (LawLINE) project. The evaluation refresh uses a similar methodology to the process and summative evaluations of LawLINE, which were conducted in 2015 and 2016, respectively. The evaluation refresh was conducted to demonstrate LawLINE's progress made toward achieving its intended outcomes after two full years of operations. The evaluation covers the project's activities from March 24, 2015 to April 28, 2017.

## **Conclusions on delivery of the Expanded Family LawLINE**

**The Expanded Family LawLINE model continues to work well and has mostly been implemented as planned. In addition, the project has made several improvements since the summative evaluation.** Earlier growing pains related to project forms and issues for some roster lawyers who were new to using the technology and providing telephone advice have lessened over time. The project has also responded to address identified issues. In particular, there are regular teleconferences with roster lawyers so they can share experiences; the project has increased its flexibility in scheduling with morning appointments; and improved client assessment forms used by roster lawyers have been developed. The formal coaching model that was to be part of the expanded service has not been developed or implemented yet. LSS determined that investing time in developing this model, which relies on successive coaching sessions, is premature given the low volume of clients having more than one meeting.

The refresh evaluation did identify areas for improvement based on interviews. One area involves an improvement intended more for LSS intake than the project itself. When LSS transfers callers to the LawLINE administrator, LSS intake could provide more information to both the caller and LawLINE to avoid confusion. The other major area for improvement identified is promotion and outreach. Internal and external key informants believe more could be done to make stakeholders and potential clients aware of LawLINE and the expanded services offered.

**The project has sufficient tools, resources, and supports to handle the current level of demand.** All of the internal key informants reported that the project has sufficient capacity to meet its current demand, both in terms of roster lawyers and administrators. One measure of sufficient capacity is wait times and, on that measure, the project is doing well. Clients report that connecting with LawLINE is easy and wait times are reasonable. The greater concern expressed by internal key informants was not insufficient capacity of the project, but the lower than expected call volumes. However, they believe that appointments and return calls are increasing.

## **Achievement of outcomes**

**The refresh evaluation shows that uptake of LawLINE and its expanded services remains an issue.** Intake has declined during LawLINE's second year of operations, although there is some increase in the use of the expanded services as the hours of service and number of meetings for clients from 2015–16 has increased since the summative evaluation. That said, clients are still not approaching six hours of advice time. In terms of reaching its target groups, while most clients are from urban areas, LawLINE is serving clients from rural and remote areas as well as Indigenous clients. More promotion is needed to increase the volume of intake for LawLINE, according to key informants, and the involvement of other justice stakeholders, in particular court registries, is considered central to this effort.

**The refresh evaluation confirmed the findings in the summative evaluation as to LawLINE's effectiveness in improving clients' knowledge of the process, family law, and their legal options.** While the level of understanding can vary by client due to factors such as whether the client has mental health issues or cognitive impairments, in general most internal (LSS and roster lawyer) and external key informants believe that the LawLINE's services are improving clients' knowledge of the family law legal process and their legal options. Based on lawyer assessments made at the end of each client meeting, about half of clients experienced some change in their level of understanding of their issue and the court process, while a smaller percentage of clients were better able to prepare and submit forms. Improvements are more likely to be reported for clients with more than one meeting. Key informants also reported that the project generally improves client understanding, although this will vary by client. Surveyed clients were very positive on LawLINE's ability to provide helpful assistance.

**The refresh evaluation findings are inconclusive on whether LawLINE services have increased clients' ability to manage and resolve their legal issues.** While clients respond positively to the services provided and believe they are better able to make decisions as a result, roster counsel assessments at the end of each client meeting indicate that the majority of clients have no change in their organization and preparation for addressing their legal issue. In interviews, roster lawyers emphasized that the level and nature of success in improving clients' abilities to resolve their legal issues varies by client.

**Clients are generally accessing LawLINE at an early stage where the service can assist them before their options are more limited.** There may be the potential for LawLINE to reach some clients sooner, and thereby help these clients resolve their legal issues earlier. The administrative data show that just over 1 in 10 clients connect with LawLINE after a final order or agreement. While the final order or agreement at issue may have occurred before the expanded LawLINE services were available, this is potentially an indication that the project could connect with some clients at an earlier stage of their cases.

**LawLINE does not have a formal way of tracking client resolutions; consequently, the refresh evaluation remains unable to definitively determine whether LawLINE clients resolve their legal problems.** The evaluation also cannot determine with confidence the extent to which LawLINE assists clients in resolving their problems. That said, client survey results suggest LawLINE is helping at least some clients resolve their family law matters out of court. Among clients surveyed who reported resolving all or some of their family law issues out of court, 4 out of 5 reported that the LawLINE assistance was helpful or very helpful.

**Based on client survey results, most clients are satisfied with the assistance they received from LawLINE.** Over 9 in 10 client survey respondents reported that they were treated with respect and listened to, and that roster lawyers took time to understand their legal issues. Most client survey respondents reported receiving all the help they needed (76%) and were satisfied with the help received (86%).

**The integration between LawLINE and other supports and services occurs through referrals to and from LawLINE and is fairly concentrated with certain service providers (LSS intake and FJCs).** Key informants mentioned the need to raise awareness of LawLINE as the main impediment to greater integration with other services. For referrals made by LawLINE, most clients used the referrals and found them to be helpful.

**Available information suggests that net system savings due to efficiencies gained from the LawLINE's operation should be occurring.** As with the summative evaluation, data are not available to make conclusive statements on net system savings due to efficiencies gained. The refresh evaluation was able to update the cost avoidance scenarios estimated in the summative evaluation using the most recent LawLINE data and updated court costs provided by LSS. The analysis shows a range of potential net system savings should the project be able to reduce the number of appearances and trials that involve its clients.

## **Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1:** Increase activities to increase awareness of LawLINE and its expanded services available.

**Recommendation 2:** Consider whether LawLINE should undertake different approaches in order to encourage clients to return for expanded service or better understand why they do not return.

## **1.0 Introduction**

The British Columbia Ministry of Attorney General (the Ministry)<sup>1</sup> provided the Legal Services Society of British Columbia (LSS) with \$2 million of additional funding over a three-year period (2014–15 to 2016–17) to implement five pilot projects intended to help address access to justice in the province, collectively referred to as the Justice Innovation and Transformation Initiatives (JITI). These projects included the Parents Legal Centre (PLC), the Expanded Family Duty Counsel (EXP FDC), Expanded Criminal Duty Counsel (EXP CDC), Family Mediation Referrals (MED REF), and the subject of this report, the Expanded Family LawLINE (LawLINE).

PRA Inc. was hired to conduct process and summative evaluations for the projects in 2015–2016. The process evaluations focussed on the early implementation phase of the projects. The summative evaluations covered the entire period of project operations and considered issues related to implementation, achievement of outcomes, and efficiencies. For the LawLINE project, the time period covered by the summative evaluation was March 24, 2015 to April 4, 2016.

As noted in the LawLINE summative evaluation report, the process and summative evaluations occurred primarily during the first year of the project’s operations, which is an early stage for assessing achievement of outcomes. Evidence related to the achievement of intermediate and long-term outcomes is usually not available for at least two to three years. As a result, the summative evaluation report noted that evidence of achievement of outcomes is preliminary and based on the best available evidence.

Since the summative evaluation, LSS committed to updating the four evaluations for the projects that are continuing (PLC, EXP FDC, EXP CDC, and LawLINE) in order to demonstrate progress made toward achieving outcomes.<sup>2</sup> The replication of the summative evaluations is intended to provide more recent data on the degree to which projects are meeting their objectives and yielding efficiencies. In so doing, the evaluations will be able to consider another year of project operations. With the additional year of data, the evaluations should be able to at least partially address some of the methodological limitations to the summative evaluations, such as the short time that the project had been operating.

This report presents the refresh evaluation findings for the LawLINE project and covers the project’s activities from March 24, 2015 to April 28, 2017.

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<sup>1</sup> The Ministry of Attorney General was previously known as the Ministry of Justice prior to July 19, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> MED REF did not receive funding to continue beyond 2016.

## 2.0 Brief overview of LawLINE

LawLINE is a service that provides brief family law advice over the telephone for eligible clients. LawLINE lawyers give “next step” advice about issues such as parenting time, parenting contact/access, guardianship/custody, spousal support, child support, property, family agreements, family violence or protection orders, child protection, and court procedures. Clients can access the province-wide service through LSS’s call centre. Lawyers deliver the advice by accessing the telephone system from their private offices.

Through JITI funding, the program was expanded in the form of a pilot project to provide greater continuity of advice and new services. The project is available province-wide. The project expands on the LawLINE model with the following new or modified features:

- ▶ **An appointment-based approach:** LawLINE makes efforts to schedule appointments so that clients may work with the same lawyer throughout the service, ensuring greater continuity; in the old model, there were no appointments, and so clients would usually speak with a different lawyer at every call.
- ▶ **Up to six hours of service per client:** Under the old model, clients received a maximum of three hours of service, and the number of service hours was not tracked.
- ▶ **Client files:** A feature of the expanded LawLINE service is maintaining a file on each client. The file is then available to all lawyers who provide that client with service. This feature offers file continuity, and therefore greater continuity of service than was available under the previous LawLINE model.
- ▶ **Document preparation:** LawLINE lawyers identify and provide direction on legal forms for clients to complete. In some cases, they may edit or help draft documents, and these documents are shared via email. In the old model, lawyers could provide advice about documents, but they could neither review nor help draft the documents (as the documents could not be shared by email).
- ▶ **Administrative support:** A full-time project administrator supports the project in various ways, such as conducting client intake and screening processes, scheduling appointments, and maintaining client files; this support was not available under the old model.
- ▶ **Expanded ability for Family Justice Counsellor (FJC) referrals:** FJCs, located throughout the province, are able to refer clients to LawLINE using a project referral form. Although FJCs have always been able to refer clients to LawLINE, the new referral form provides more information on the client, including contact information, a list of all other parties involved, and information on the case (such as the types of legal issues, and whether or not the client is currently in mediation). Clients are able to send an email to the project with documents that they prepared with their FJC (e.g., a proposed settlement arrangement), so that the roster lawyer can provide advice regarding the documents. FJC mediation clients receive priority service from LawLINE.
- ▶ **Coaching for clients to represent themselves in court:** Coaching services were not available under the old model. As of the refresh evaluation, the formal coaching model has not been developed, which is discussed in more detail in Section 5.1, Evaluation Question 1.

As stated in its Project Charter, the objectives of LawLINE are the following:

- ▶ increase the number of clients served by LawLINE
- ▶ increase the number of clients in rural and remote areas accessing LawLINE services
- ▶ increase the availability of LawLINE services for clients who cannot call during the original hours
- ▶ improve continuity of service for clients
- ▶ improve quality and consistency of LawLINE services
- ▶ improve clients' ability to prepare and submit court documents
- ▶ improve clients' ability to represent themselves effectively at all stages of their family law issue, including settlement and hearings
- ▶ improve clients' ability to achieve early resolution
- ▶ increase lawyers' ability to refer clients to local resources

The LawLINE project is directly served by 15 personnel:

- ▶ a lead Family LawLINE lawyer, who leads and provides support to the roster lawyers, supervises the project administrator, and provides LawLINE services to clients
- ▶ a project administrator, who is responsible for answering phones, determining the urgency of client matters, determining the eligibility of clients for LawLINE services, creating and maintaining client files, scheduling appointments for roster lawyers, and many other assorted duties; the project administrator receives part-time administrative support from two other staff, who also provide administrative support to the other JITI projects
- ▶ 13 roster lawyers, who provide LawLINE services to clients for a typical minimum of six to eight hours per week<sup>3</sup>

Procedures for initiating contact with LawLINE include the following:

- ▶ New clients may call LSS intake, and intake staff will assess clients to determine their appropriateness for various LSS services, including LawLINE. If a client is referred through LSS intake, they must still be screened by the LawLINE administrator.
- ▶ Current LawLINE clients may call LSS intake, and intake staff will redirect the call to LawLINE's voice mailbox, after which the project administrator will call the client and set up an appointment. If the client has an urgent matter, LSS intake can transfer the client directly to the project administrator queue.
- ▶ Current LawLINE clients are to call the LawLINE voice mailbox directly, at which point they will leave a message indicating that they would like to book an appointment; the project administrator will then call the client and set up an appointment.
- ▶ A community organization may refer a client to LawLINE by providing the client with contact information for LSS intake, after which the client would call intake.

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<sup>3</sup> Since the roster lawyers are all private contractors, the number of available lawyers changes over time.



Once in contact with LawLINE, the process is different for new clients and current LawLINE clients:

- ▶ If the client is new to LawLINE, then during the initial call to LawLINE, the project administrator must complete a screening process with the client to collect information, determine if their case is appropriate for the project, and check for lawyer conflicts. If the client is ready to talk to a lawyer, or if the matter is urgent, the client may be transferred to the advice line queue to wait for the next available lawyer. In some cases, the project administrator will book an appointment for the client, and the lawyer will call the client at the designated date and time. When possible, the project administrator will ask the client to provide any relevant documents for the lawyer to review before the appointment.
  
- ▶ If the caller is a current LawLINE client or a new client who is in mediation with a Family Justice Counsellor, the client will call the LawLINE voice mailbox and leave a message indicating that they would like to book an appointment. The project administrator will then call the client back to schedule the appointment and ensure that the client has completed the tasks or provided the documents required for the appointment. The lawyer will call the client at the designated time. If the matter is urgent, the project administrator will try to arrange an appointment on the same day if an appointment time is available, or the client may choose to wait in the phone queue. Alternatively, if the client's previous LawLINE lawyer will soon be available, and the client can wait until then before having an appointment, the project administrator may schedule the appointment for that time so that the client can meet with the same lawyer.

## 2.1 Profile of clients

Table 1 provides an overview of the clients accepted since the LawLINE project became fully operational, from March 23, 2015 to April 28, 2017. Of the 5,374 clients:

- ▶ the majority (72%) are female;
- ▶ most (79%) are over 30 years old;
- ▶ 40% are separated while 34% are single; and
- ▶ 14% self-identify as Indigenous (about 4% were not asked or declined to answer).

<b>Table 1: Client demographics (n=5,374) (administrative data)</b>		
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	3,889	72%
Male	1,482	28%
Other	1	<1%
Not identified	2	<1%
<b>Age</b>		
Under 18	2	<1%
18 to 25	346	6%
26 to 30	659	12%
31 to 40	1,907	36%
41 to 50	1,335	25%
51 or over	1,002	19%
Not identified	123	2%
<b>Marital status</b>		
Separated	2,172	40%
Single	1,821	34%
Married	584	11%
Common law	397	7%
Divorced	384	7%
Widowed	16	<1%
<b>Indigenous ancestry</b>		
Yes	732	14%
No	4,406	82%
Declined to ask/answer	236	4%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Clients' family law issues typically involve the other parent (57%) or an ex-spouse (21%).

<b>Table 2: Other party type (n=5,374) (administrative data)</b>		
<b>Opposing party type</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Other parent	3,058	57%
Ex-spouse	1,129	21%
Spouse	642	12%
Common law spouse	200	4%
Other (grandparent, sibling, cousin, aunt)	345	6%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Over the course of the project, most clients (n=4,436, or 83%) had one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer. Another 938 clients (17%) had more than one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer.

Number of client meetings	#	%
1	4,436	83%
2	570	11%
3*	178	3%
4	92	2%
5	44	1%
6	24	<1%
7	18	<1%
8	3	<1%
9	6	<1%
10+	3	<1%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 \*Includes one client with 3.5 meetings.

The number of roster lawyers assisting clients increased with the number of client visits.

Number of client meetings	Number of lawyers involved in the case					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	100%	1%				
2	70%	30%	<1%			
3*	57%	36%	7%	1%		
4	63%	24%	13%			
5	57%	34%	7%	2%		
6	46%	42%	13%			
7	28%	56%	11%	6%		
8	33%	33%		33%		
9	50%	33%	17%			
10+	33%	33%				33%

Note: Rows may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 \*Includes one client with 3.5 meetings.

Most clients dealt with family law legal issues, such as parenting issues<sup>4</sup> (57%) and/or child support (45%), during their LawLINE meeting(s). Property division and spousal support were also common matters. Issues under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* (CFCSA) were uncommon among LawLINE clients.

Table 5: Legal issues addressed for clients (administrative data)						
Legal issue addressed	Clients with more than one meeting (n=935)*		Clients with one meeting (n=4,373)*		All cases (n=5,308) *	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Family law legal issues</b>						
Parenting issues	545	58%	2,452	56%	2,997	57%
Child support	498	53%	1,895	43%	2,393	45%
Property division	314	34%	1,236	28%	1,550	29%
Spousal support	292	31%	994	23%	1,286	24%
Divorce	170	18%	620	14%	790	15%
Family violence	108	12%	549	13%	657	12%
Denial of parenting time	84	9%	387	9%	471	9%
Relocation	92	10%	365	8%	457	9%
Protection order (family member)	71	8%	297	7%	368	7%
Maintenance enforcement	78	8%	219	5%	297	6%
Hague convention	4	<1%	12	<1%	16	<1%
<b>CFCSA issues</b>						
Risk of removal	14	2%	165	4%	179	3%
Access	10	1%	55	1%	65	1%
Removal	7	1%	74	2%	81	2%
Transfer a child to a non-parent	4	4%	58	1%	62	1%
Cancellation of continuing custody order	--	--	12	<1%	12	<1%
Note: Cases could include more than one legal issue; totals sum to more than 100%.						
*Cases without data on legal issues addressed are removed (n=3 for clients with more than one meeting; 63 for clients with one meeting; and 66 total cases removed).						

<sup>4</sup> “Parenting issues” includes custody and access under the *Divorce Act* and guardianship, parenting time, allocation of parental responsibilities and contact under the *Family Law Act*.

## 2.2 Cost of the Expanded LawLINE

The table below provides the project costs for fiscal years 2014–15 to 2016–17 and includes a calculation of the unit costs of providing its services in its first two full years of operations (Year 2 and Year 3).<sup>5</sup> A unit is defined as a client file. The number of expanded service clients per fiscal year was calculated as those whose date of first service occurred in the fiscal year; no calculations are made for Year 1 as it is a partial year. During 2014–2015, costs totalled about \$118,818 and were associated with training and initial implementation activities. Year 2 of the project (2015–16) corresponds to the full implementation of the Expanded LawLINE, which cost about \$375,152. In 2016–17, the project costs were \$392,581. Most of these costs were to cover the salaries for the project’s lead lawyer, roster lawyers, and the project administrators.

Item	Year 1 2014–15 Actual	Year 2 2015–16 Actual	Year 3 2016-17 Actual
Full-time lead lawyer	\$57,478	\$120,000	\$120,000
Roster lawyers – LawLINE shifts (added)	\$26,487	\$93,000	\$93,000
2 full-time administrators	\$14,014	\$105,996	\$114,618
Office expenses	\$5,244	\$2,975	\$7,228
Roster team meetings (8 per year)	-	\$201	-
<b>Subtotal for Expanded LawLINE expenses</b>	<b>\$103,223</b>	<b>\$322,172</b>	<b>\$334,847</b>
In-kind: Overhead on lawyer salaries <sup>2</sup>	\$12,595	\$31,980	\$33,735
In-kind: Office space <sup>3</sup>	\$3,000	\$21,000	\$24,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$118,818</b>	<b>\$375,152</b>	<b>\$392,581</b>
Number of expanded service clients per fiscal year	-	2,857	2,285
Unit cost (total costs / # of clients per FY)	-	\$131	\$172
Sources: Calculations were made based on project database and LSS data. Totals and sub-totals may be affected by rounding. <sup>2</sup> Calculated as 15% of lawyer contract costs. <sup>3</sup> Calculated as \$1,000 per month per open workspace used (n=2).			

Using the costs for each fiscal year and dividing this by the number of clients served, provides the cost per unit (clients served). Given the decrease in clients served and increase in costs between Year 2 and Year 3, the cost per unit has risen about 30% from \$131 in 2015–16 to \$172 in 2016–17. It is important to keep in mind that the reported project costs are based on a project that provided, on average, about one hour of service to each client. As noted in the summative evaluation, the volume of clients in Year 2 was less than anticipated, so the decline in Year 3 is problematic. Intake volumes are discussed in more detail in Section 5.2, Evaluation Question 3.

<sup>5</sup> The Expanded LawLINE cost per unit analysis is not intended for comparison to costs of other LSS services for similar family law matters, such as the regular family duty counsel service or representation contracts. The unit cost analysis includes costs for LSS overhead, while tariff rates do not include similar LSS overhead costs (e.g., application processing, invoice processing). For the same reason, overall project costs are not intended for direct comparison with costs avoided through system efficiencies, which don’t include costs avoided for comparable overhead (including facilities, out-of-court activities, etc.)

### **3.0 Methodology**

The evaluation refreshes the methodology used in the summative evaluation of the LawLINE project and consists of four lines of evidence: a document and data review, interviews with key informants, a survey of clients, and a systems efficiency analysis.

Prior to commencing data collection, LSS and PRA reviewed and revised as appropriate the logic model and evaluation matrix, which are in Appendices A and B, respectively. PRA also revised the data collection instruments to update them, and LSS approved the data collection instruments used for the refresh evaluation. The data collection instruments are included in Appendix C.

#### **3.1 Document and data review**

PRA reviewed relevant documents produced by the project, including the project manual and charter, descriptions and diagrams of the LawLINE model, and forms used by the project to collect information on its clients and the types of assistance provided, as well as project financial information. The data review for the refresh evaluation relies on available data in the project database as of April 28, 2017.

The refresh evaluation also includes the data provided by the Court Services Branch (CSB) for the summative evaluation. Given the timelines for the refresh evaluation and the data needs for the evaluations of the PLC and the EXP FDC, it was decided that the CSB data for LawLINE would not be refreshed. The CSB data includes the numbers of initiating and subsequent family applications filed at the provincial courts or Supreme Court between January 1, 2012 and October 31, 2015 throughout the province.<sup>6</sup>

#### **3.2 Key informant interviews**

The refresh evaluation includes interviews with key informants to obtain their perspectives on project implementation and evidence of outcomes. Interviews were conducted by telephone with 13 internal key informants (the LawLINE project lead, the project lead lawyer, the project administrator, and 10 roster lawyers), either individually or in small groups, and with four external key informants (one FJC and three community resource representatives).<sup>7</sup> Interviews were conducted by telephone and occurred in May 2017.

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<sup>6</sup> When the data request was made during the summative evaluation, the end-date of October 31, 2015 was chosen in order to meet evaluation timelines, given that approximately three months are required for court data to stabilize.

<sup>7</sup> The report generally refers to interviewees as key informants. Internal key informants refer to individuals directly involved in LawLINE (interviewees from LSS and roster lawyers), while external key informants refer to project collaborators or partners outside of LSS.

### 3.3 Client survey

PRA conducted a telephone survey of 200 LawLINE clients to obtain feedback on their experience and satisfaction with LawLINE services. PRA developed a survey questionnaire in consultation with LSS. Approximately one-third of the clients (35%) reported speaking once with a LawLINE lawyer about their legal issue, while most clients (62%) reported having more than one meeting.<sup>8</sup> Most surveyed clients (68%) spoke to one lawyer during their meeting(s), while just under one-third of the surveyed clients spoke to two or more lawyers. The survey was in the field from May 29 – June 15, 2017.

<b>Table 7: Respondent profile (n=200) (survey data)</b>		
<b>Q2. About how many times did you talk to a lawyer at the LawLINE about your legal issue?</b>		
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
One	70	35%
Two	53	27%
Three	33	17%
Four	20	10%
Five or more	18	9%
Don't know/no response	6	3%
<b>Q3. How many different LawLINE lawyers did you speak with about your legal issue?</b>		
One	136	68%
Two	48	24%
Three	9	5%
Four	1	1%
Five	2	1%
Don't know/no response	4	2%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

<sup>8</sup> In part, the results may reflect the longer period of time that the LawLINE has been operating and demonstrate that more clients have been able to use LawLINE services more than once. In the summative evaluation, approximately half of the survey respondents (53%) reported having one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer compared to 35% in the refresh evaluation, and the percentage reporting more than one meeting has grown from 47% to 62%. However, it should also be noted that the results are based on client self-reporting and recollections may be inaccurate.

### **3.4 System efficiency analysis**

The system efficiency analysis considers the potential for LawLINE to achieve system efficiencies by estimating the potential impact of the project to avoid court costs through the earlier and more efficient resolution of cases. Early resolution can be demonstrated, for example, by the following:

- ▶ an increase in cases that reach agreement without court involvement
- ▶ a reduction in the number of court appearances and/or potentially more effective court appearances and therefore reduced use of court time during appearances, both of which should result in reduced court hours
- ▶ a reduction in the time to resolution
- ▶ an increase in cases resolved without a trial

If the project is able to achieve its intended objectives (described in Section 2.0), then such reductions in court hours might be expected to occur through diversion of cases from the court system altogether (e.g., by LawLINE helping clients realize the value of out-of-court options, such as mediation), or through clients' making better use of their court appearances (e.g., better prepared court forms, better prepared to represent themselves in court) and therefore requiring fewer and shorter appearances, fewer adjournments, and fewer trials.

Court activity data provided by CSB were used to develop the profile of family law cases in Section 4.0 and were used, along with the project's administrative data, to calculate average court costs per hour in an effort to provide estimates around potential court cost avoidance as a result of reductions in court hours and court trials. The monetary estimates of efficiency (i.e., cost avoidance) are based on average provincial court and Supreme Court costs per hour.

It should be noted that it is not possible to make any conclusive statements on efficiencies gained or costs avoided, as no data are available on the extent that the project has resulted in such impacts, which includes the diversion of cases from the court system or reduced appearances, adjournments, trials, or shorter court appearances. The analysis uses statistics on family court cases from provincial court and the Supreme Court in British Columbia. Estimates of potential future efficiencies are based on a hypothetical scale of success in reducing the number of court hours and trials.



### **3.5 Evaluation limitations**

Some methodological limitations affect the evaluation.

- ▶ No project or court data were available to make any assessments on whether the project has had a measurable impact on the early resolution of clients' family law matters and if they were resolved without the need for a court trial. Roster lawyers do not have ongoing interactions with clients once they have completed their services and, therefore, the project cannot track client outcomes past the time of their last meeting. Furthermore, the CSB data provided for the evaluation were intended to be used to illustrate the average characteristics of family law matters handled in BC courts. These averages were helpful for the system efficiency analysis for estimating potential cost avoidance if various scenarios occurred as a result of the project. However, no conclusions can be made as to what extent these scenarios are achievable within the current project.
- ▶ Certain limitations also existed with the information that could be obtained from the CSB data due to the complexity and volume of court data, and how various court activities are accounted for on CSB's Civil Electronic Information System (CEIS). For example, the number of adjournments could be provided only as adjournments that occurred prior to the scheduled appearance and not those that occurred on the day of a scheduled appearance.
- ▶ The available data on court costs provide only some of the potential costs that might be avoided by the project's operations. The hourly court cost includes the cost for a court clerk, a provincial court judge or Supreme Court justice, and court registry staff for provincial family court, but do not include the cost of judicial support services, or court overhead.

#### 4.0 Profile of family law cases at all court locations in British Columbia

To give some context of the environment in which LawLINE is operating, this section provides a brief profile of family law cases at all court locations in British Columbia, including provincial court and the Supreme Court.<sup>9</sup> As shown in the table below, courts in BC handled over 40,000 total applications annually for 2012 to 2014. A total of 35,807 applications were dealt with in 2015 up to October 31, which, if extrapolated to the end of 2015 would also be just over 40,000 applications. Subsequent applications to the provincial court account for the majority of total applications, ranging from 23,917 to 26,344 between 2012 and 2014. Annual initiating applications are considerably higher in the Supreme Court than provincial court.

Year	Provincial court		Supreme Court	Total applications
	Initiating applications	Subsequent applications*	Initiating applications	
2012	8,484	26,344	12,171	46,999
2013	7,395	23,917	11,912	43,224
2014	7,609	24,286	11,304	43,199
2015 (up to October 31)	6,199	19,736	9,872	35,807

Source: Data provided by Court Services Branch  
 \*Includes all subsequent applications filed annually and may be related to applications initiated in earlier years.

Family law cases can be protracted and lengthy with respect to the family’s involvement with the court system. In order to make some considerations for the characteristics of family law cases that are dealt with at courts throughout the province, after consultation with CSB it was determined that a data extract covering 2012 initiating and subsequent applications (and related court activity) would be used to provide contextual information on the use of family law courts in BC and key data for the system efficiency analysis.

Table 9 below illustrates the number of subsequent applications that can be generated from initiating applications at provincial courts throughout the province. From the 7,328 initiating applications for 2012, another 13,393 subsequent applications were filed up to October 31, 2015, with 47% (6,359) of these filed in 2012 and 25% (3,321) in 2013. On average, 1.6 subsequent applications were filed for every initiating application.

Year	Number	
<b>2012 initiating applications</b>	<b>7,328</b>	
<b>Subsequent applications from the initiating applications</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
2012	6,359	47%
2013	3,321	25%
2014	2,243	17%
2015 (up to October 31)	1,470	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,393</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Average subsequent applications per case</b>	<b>1.6</b>	

Source: Data provided by Court Services Branch

<sup>9</sup> As noted in the methodology (Section 3.0), the CSB data were not refreshed for the LawLINE evaluation, so this section is the same as the trends section in the summative evaluation report.

As shown in Table 10 below, the most common issues in provincial court for initiating applications were for custody/guardianship, followed by child support. Issues for subsequent applications varied, with 40% being related to custody/guardianship and about a quarter being related to access/contact/ parenting time, parenting issues, and child support. The most common issues for initiating applications in Supreme Court were divorce, followed by parenting issues and property division/debt division.

Issue	Provincial court			Supreme Court initiating (n=12,171)
	Initiating (n=7,325)	Subsequent (n=41,896)	All (n=49,221)	
Access/contact/parenting time	20%	24%	24%	2%
Child support	48%	23%	27%	15%
Custody/guardianship	108%	40%	50%	5%
Divorce	-	-	-	79%
Maintenance enforcement	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Parenting issues	2%	24%	21%	23%
Possession of home	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%
Property division/debt division	<1%	-	<1%	17%
Protection order	11%	7%	8%	3%
Relocation	5%	7%	7%	1%
Spousal support	11%	3%	4%	13%
Support arrears	<1%	4%	3%	<1%
Transfer a child to non-parent	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Other*	31%	69%	64%	29%

Source: Data provided by Court Services Branch  
 Note: Each case may have more than one issue, so summing the number of cases when represented by issue will exceed the total number of cases.  
 \*Other issues are mainly administrative in nature, such as to shorten time to serve a notice or document, to transfer a file to another court registry, or to produce financial statements or other documents.

From Table 11, each initiating and subsequent application in provincial court had an average of 1.4 and 2.3 scheduled appearances, respectively, as well as 0.17 and 0.31 adjournments; however, the latter only includes those adjournments that occurred prior to the scheduled appearance. Supreme Court initiating applications had an average of 1.3 appearances and 0.38 adjournments. There was an average of 120 days between filing an application and the first appearance for initiating applications, and an average of 59 days for subsequent applications for provincial court. The Supreme Court was considerably longer, with an average of 165 days to the first appearance. The average court time required per application, including all appearances associated with an application, was close to 1.0 hours for both initiating and subsequent applications for provincial court, and just over 3.0 hours for the Supreme Court. Considering each initiating application in provincial court has an average of 1.6 subsequent applications, each case requires about 3.5 hours of total court time.

**Table 11: Court activity for family law cases at all courts — average activity up to October 31, 2015 for applications initiated in 2012 and their subsequent applications occurring in 2012 (CSB data)**

Element	Provincial court			Supreme Court initiating
	Initiating	Subsequent	All	
Number of applications	7,321	23,542	30,863	12,171
Average scheduled appearances	1.4	2.3	2.1	1.3
Average number of adjournments*	0.17	0.31	0.28	0.38
Average days to first appearance**	120.2	59.3	69.2	164.5
Average days to first order***	146.6	93.9	102.9	192.0
Percent of applications going to trial+	9.2%	17.6%	15.8%	3.2%
Average days to first trial appearance+	283.9	210.3	219.6	514.1
Average days to last trial appearance+	351.8	277.8	287.2	586.5
Average court hours per application++	1.3	1.4	1.4	3.2

Source: Data provided by Court Services Branch  
 \* Includes adjournments that occurred up to a court hearing, including those occurring the same day as the hearing but not adjournments that occurred at the court hearing.  
 \*\*Of 3,225 initiating and 16,581 subsequent applications in provincial court and 3,059 in Supreme Court that had a first appearance.  
 \*\*\*Of 2,558 initiating and 12,374 subsequent applications in provincial court and 10,410 in Supreme Court that had a first order.  
 +Of 673 initiating and 4,645 subsequent applications in provincial court and 390 in Supreme Court that had a trial/hearing.  
 ++Court hours include time for all appearances for 3,223 initiating and 16,569 subsequent applications in provincial court and 3,039 initiating applications in Supreme Court.

## 5.0 Findings

The refresh evaluation findings are organized by evaluation question. They consider the operations of LawLINE, particularly since the summative evaluation, and the project's achievement of its intended outcomes in its first two years.

### 5.1 Delivery

**1. How well is the Expanded Family LawLINE model working for providing the expected services since the summative evaluation? What, if any, changes or improvements have been made to the model or how it operates?**

**Key findings: The summative evaluation found that the Expanded LawLINE had been implemented as planned and was generally working well. The refresh evaluation confirmed the summative evaluation results. Internal and external key informants generally agreed that the model is working well in delivering the expanded services. Identified areas for improvement include streamlining intake and engaging in more promotion.**

The expanded LawLINE model has not experienced any major changes since the summative evaluation. Internal key informants reported that the model is working well and issues have been more in the category of growing pains —issues with the project forms, and for some roster lawyers, lack of experience with the technology and delivering telephone advice. Those interviewed said these types of issues have lessened over time as roster lawyers have gotten comfortable in their role.

One aspect of the model has yet to be implemented. A formal coaching model was to be developed as part of the expanded services, but given the low volume of clients having more than one meeting with LawLINE, LSS determined that it was premature to invest the time in development of the model, which relies on successive coaching sessions. Instead, training on coaching skills occurred as part of the training sessions for the roster and lead lawyers, and additional training was conducted during the Family Duty Counsel conference in February 2016. Some internal key informants noted that roster lawyers have incorporated this learning in how they provide services to clients.

According to key informants, while there have not been any major changes since the summative evaluation, there have been some improvements.

- ▶ The project has begun having regular teleconference meetings with the project administrative staff, the project lead lawyer, and the roster lawyers. These are voluntary meetings that are intended for sharing experiences, identifying service gaps, and addressing issues. They are reportedly well-attended, and roster lawyers who mentioned these meetings found them very useful, noting that before these meetings were instituted they would sometimes feel isolated. They appreciate getting to know the other roster counsel, talking about common experience, and learning from each other.
- ▶ The project has also begun to book appointments in the morning. For some clients, morning appointments work better, so this flexibility in scheduling is seen positively by key informants. This change has also reportedly reduced lawyer down time when no calls are coming through, which should increase the project's efficiency.

- ▶ The project administrator is explaining LawLINE to clients, particularly that they can have return appointments and up to six hours of advice, before transferring them to the lawyer for advice. This extra reminder is intended to reinforce what the lawyer tells the client and the advice form that the client receives.
- ▶ The floater administrators are now able to work remotely, which provides more flexibility and capacity in the administrator role.
- ▶ The project acknowledges that the forms used by LawLINE lawyers to assess the improvement in clients' knowledge or ability at the end of a telephone call were subjective and difficult to complete. The project has conducted work to improve the form and plans to implement the new form when the updated project database is launched later in 2017.

### **Suggested areas for improvement:**

**Intake:** The summative evaluation found that the intake process was working well. For new clients, LSS intake conducts the initial screening to identify individuals who are not eligible for full representation and transfers them to LawLINE intake, which conducts additional screening for the expanded service.<sup>10</sup> While internal key informants were still positive about the general approach to intake, they suggested some ways that the hand-off between LSS intake and LawLINE could be improved. In particular, they commented that the two-stage intake process (LSS and then LawLINE) could perhaps be more seamless and less confusing for clients. They acknowledged that it is important to ensure that individuals eligible for legal aid representation contracts are identified. However, for those who are not eligible for legal aid representation contracts and are forwarded to LawLINE, there is both confusion as to the process and disappointment once they realize they are not receiving legal aid representation. Internal key informants report that some clients come to LawLINE who do not understand why they were transferred, or that it may mean that they will not receive legal aid representation. LSS intake does not always enter notes in the LSS CIS database on their conversation with clients. The hand-off between LSS intake and LawLINE could be improved by providing consistent information on what intake told the client and why they are being referred to LawLINE in the LSS CIS database, so that LawLINE can help explain the situation to them (i.e., they need to provide LSS with financial information for their legal aid application, but are being referred in the meantime for advice or because their matter is urgent).

A few key informants advocated for LawLINE to have a direct line so that new clients who just want legal advice can contact LawLINE directly. These key informants mentioned that some clients have complained about having to give the same information and go through the same steps as they do when initially speaking to intake, when they simply want to talk to a LawLINE lawyer. Offering new clients a direct line to LawLINE would require additional administrative resources and policy changes to support the increase in call volumes to the LawLINE administrator, LSS noted.

**Promotion and outreach:** A key target group for LawLINE is people living in rural and remote communities who have more limited access to services. Several key informants (internal and external) believe that the project could do more to increase awareness of its services among its target groups. LawLINE is engaging in promotional activities, such as presentations at

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<sup>10</sup> The project administrator screens for whether the client already has a lawyer, financial eligibility for the expanded service, the type of family law issue, and the urgency of the client's situation.

conferences to community partners, and other activities. However, key informants had some suggestions as to how other stakeholders could assist; in particular, the Ministry could actively encourage court registries to hand out information or display posters to raise awareness of LawLINE's services.

**Greater clarity on the integration with family duty counsel:** Some roster lawyers believe that LawLINE services could be better integrated with family duty counsel, but this perception appears to stem from a possible misunderstanding of LSS policy. According to these roster lawyers, clients are not supposed to use both services, so they are told not to refer clients across the services. However, according to LSS, the two services are complementary and clients can be assisted by both. For EXP FDC clients and LawLINE clients, they have a combined six hours of advice across the two services. Other family duty counsel clients are restricted to three hours of advice and, therefore, receive more hours of advice from LawLINE. However, there is no policy stating that LawLINE clients cannot be referred to family duty counsel on either court days or non-court days, when duty counsel are available.

**Training on call centre technology:** Most roster lawyers reported that they like the new call centre technology,<sup>11</sup> although based on interviews, there may be a need to provide more training on its features. Some roster counsel commented that they could no longer monitor the queue, which affected their ability to manage their calls, while others said they appreciated the ability to monitor the queue that the new system provides. Some said they had not yet used the chat feature, while others commented on how useful it was for relaying information between roster lawyers or between roster lawyers and the project administrator.

## 2. Does the Expanded Family LawLINE have sufficient tools, resources, supports, and capacity to meet demand and any intended targets?

**Key findings: Internal key informants report that the project has sufficient tools, resources, and supports to handle the current level of demand. In fact, the greater concern expressed by them was the lower than expected call volumes, although they believe that appointments and return calls are increasing. LawLINE intake is considered to have sufficient capacity, and clients report that connecting with LawLINE is easy and wait times are reasonable.**

All of the internal key informants reported that the project has sufficient capacity to meet demand. The number of roster lawyers has remained at approximately 13 throughout the first two years of the project, and was considered adequate for the workload. In addition, the project administrator and floater positions are thought to provide the staffing needed to handle the intake process efficiently.

The main concern of internal key informants was with the lower than anticipated call volumes, but that was lessening for some as they perceive that the number of return clients has been increasing lately. However, the general perception was that the project could handle higher call volumes, and that the demand is likely there. Intake volumes are discussed in more detail in Evaluation Question 3.

<sup>11</sup> In April 2017, LSS replaced its telephone system with an online-based system.

The ability to conduct the necessary promotional work to increase intake was considered to be one capacity issue by internal key informants. As noted earlier, the project does outreach to community organizations, but these organizations have frequent staff turnover, which means that promotion must be a continuous activity. The responsibility for LawLINE-specific outreach falls primarily to the lead lawyer, who also administers the project and provides direct services to clients. It should be noted that LSS has a communications department, a public legal information department, and legal information outreach workers that also conduct outreach and/or promotion for all LSS programs; they meet with community organizations regularly, and LawLINE is one of the services they promote. Family duty counsel also promote LawLINE by referring clients to the service.

One measure of sufficient capacity is client wait times, and on that measure, the project is doing well. While the project does not track wait times in its administrative data, the client survey found that clients considered wait times to be reasonable. Over three-fourths (78%) of clients reported the wait time they experienced the first time they called LawLINE was about right. The majority of these clients (62%) waited a day or less to speak to a lawyer. Of the clients who called LawLINE more than once, two-thirds (67%) indicated the longest amount of time they waited was about right, with one-quarter (25%) finding the wait to be too long. Most of these clients waited less than a week before speaking to a LawLINE lawyer. The table below summarizes wait times reported by LawLINE clients.

<b>Table 12: Client wait times (survey data)</b>				
	<b>Q4A. How long did you wait before you talked with a lawyer (n=200)</b>		<b>Q7A. What is the longest you waited before talking with a lawyer? (n=124)*</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Waited a day or less	124	62%	51	41%
Waited several days, but less than a week	41	21%	40	32%
Waited a week or more	18	9%	24	19%
Don't know	17	9%	9	7%
<b>Q5 and Q8. Did you feel the wait time was...</b>				
About right	78%		67%	
Too long	14%		25%	
Don't know	9%		8%	
* Only asked of clients who reported talking to a lawyer at LawLINE more than once. Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.				



## 5.2 Achievement of outcomes

This section considers the project’s ability to demonstrate achievement of its outcomes after just over two years of operations.

### 3. To what extent does the Expanded Family LawLINE increase client access to Family LawLINE services, including clients from rural and remote areas and Indigenous clients?

**Key findings:** LawLINE intake has declined during its second year of operations, although there is some increase in the use of the expanded services as the hours of service and number of meetings for clients from 2015–16 has increased since the summative evaluation. That said, clients are still not approaching six hours of advice time. In terms of reaching its target groups, while most clients are from urban areas, LawLINE is serving clients from rural and remote areas, as well as Indigenous clients. More promotion is needed to increase the volume of intake for LawLINE, according to key informants, and the involvement of other justice stakeholders is considered central to this effort.

#### Intake volumes

The project continues to have a downward trend in intake since it peaked at nearly 300 clients per month in August 2015. There are month-to-month variations, but overall, the project has lacked a sustained increase in intake. The evaluation was unable to determine the causes of or reasons for this trend.

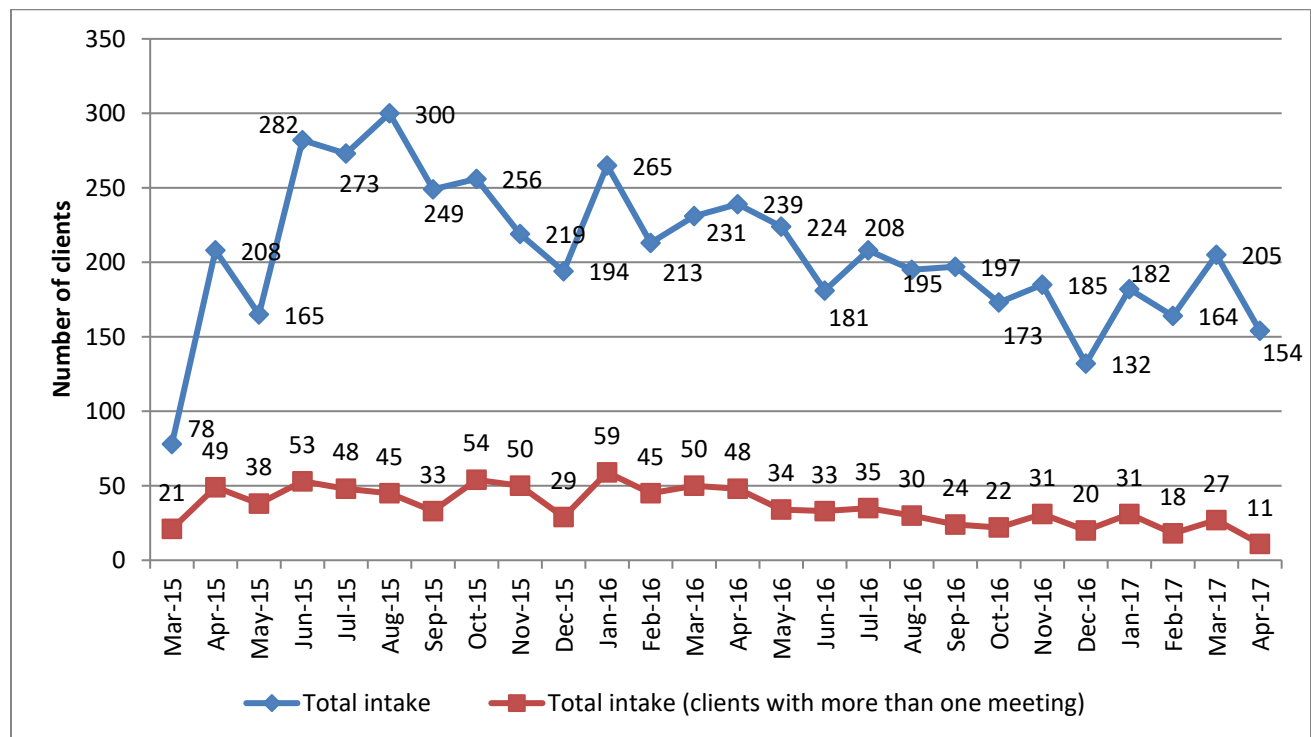


Figure 1: Intake (based on file open date)<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Intake of clients with more than one meeting is a sub-set of total intake.

## Reaching target groups

As described in Section 2.0, one objective for the project is to increase the number of clients in rural and remote areas accessing LawLINE services. For the purposes of this evaluation, urban was defined by LSS as communities with a population of 2,500 or more that are located within 50 kilometers of a legal aid office. Based on this definition, three-quarters (74%) of all LawLINE clients are from urban areas, and 22% are from rural and/or remote areas of the province. While Indigenous clients are less likely to be from urban areas than non-Indigenous clients, two-thirds (66%) are.

If the project intends to use LawLINE to fill legal service gaps in rural and/or remote areas of British Columbia where populations have traditionally been underserved, it would be beneficial to continue monitoring its reach to these areas and, in particular, Indigenous clients from rural and/or remote areas who may lack access to in-person legal services.

**Table 13: Client geography (administrative data)**

		Indigenous clients (n=732)		Non-Indigenous clients (n=4,406)		All cases (n=5,374)	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
Geography	<b>Urban</b> Pop. ≥ 2,500 LSS office ≤ 50 km	483	66%	3,334	76%	3,978	74%
	<b>Remote/island</b> LSS office > 50 km	104	14%	478	11%	607	11%
	<b>Rural and remote</b> Pop. < 2,500 LSS office > 50 km	86	12%	274	6%	380	7%
	<b>Rural</b> Pop. < 2,500	37	5%	142	3%	185	3%
	<b>Out of province</b>	22	3%	172	4%	207	4%
	<b>Missing data</b>	--	--	6	<1%	17	<1%

Note: Column percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 The 236 clients for whom there is no information on Indigenous ancestry (declined to ask or declined to answer) are not included.

As noted in the summative evaluation report, LawLINE appears to be reaching potential Indigenous clients. Statistics Canada reports that BC has about 232,290 residents reporting an Indigenous identity,<sup>13</sup> which represents about 5% of the province’s population. Just over one-tenth (14%) of LawLINE clients identified themselves as having Indigenous ancestry.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-011-x/99-011-x2011001-eng.cfm>

Accessibility of the project to Indigenous clients is reflected in the similar proportions of Indigenous clients (15%) and non-Indigenous clients (18%) who had more than one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer.

	Cases with more than one meeting			
	Indigenous clients (n=732)		Non-Indigenous clients (n=4,406)	
	#	%	#	%
Yes	113	15%	799	18%
No	619	85%	3,607	82%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 The 236 clients for whom there is no information on Indigenous ancestry (declined to ask or declined to answer) are not included.

The hours of service used by Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients are also very similar; overall, they both averaged one hour of service. When considering Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients who had more than one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer, there was a negligible difference (median of .70 hours for both; average 2.2 hours for Indigenous clients and 2.3 for non-Indigenous clients).

### Use of additional time

The summative evaluation found that the level of demand for expanded services (i.e., multiple appointments and up to six hours of assistance) was not meeting expectations, which remains largely unchanged. The project is still not encountering the level of demand for service hours that was assumed in the model and expected by key informants. Since the project launched in March 2015, about three-quarters (75%) of all LawLINE clients have used one hour or less of service. About 18% (n=938) of LawLINE clients had more than one meeting with a LawLINE lawyer, and these clients used, on average, about two hours of service. Of the clients with more than one meeting, 4% (n=42) approached, used, or exceeded the maximum number of available service hours (6 hours). These results are very similar to the summative evaluation findings.

	Cases with more than one meeting (n=938)		All cases (n=5,356)*	
	#	%	#	%
One hour or less	114	12%	3,900	75%
Between 1 and 2 hours	435	46%	964	18%
Between 2 and 3 hours	196	21%	209	4%
Between 3 and 4 hours	97	10%	97	2%
Between 4 and 5 hours	54	6%	54	1%
Between 5 and 6 hours	21	2%	21	<1%
Between 6 and 7 hours	9	1%	9	<1%
Between 7 and 8 hours	7	1%	7	<1%
Between 8 and 9 hours	2	<1%	2	<1%
Between 9 and 10 hours	2	<1%	2	<1%
More than 10 hours	1	<1%	1	<1%
Mean	2.3 hours		1.0 hours	
Median	1.8 hours		0.80 hours	

\* Cases without hours of service are excluded (n=18).

Family law matters can take months to years to resolve, so the use of the additional appointments and meeting time may require a longer time horizon than was available to the summative or refresh evaluations. Roster lawyers perceive that during the project’s second full year of operations, more clients are making additional appointments, although still less than hoped for, and the available data bear this out. As shown in Table 16, the proportion of clients with more than one meeting has increased from 15% to 19% when comparing clients at the time of the summative evaluation to clients at the time of the refresh evaluation. Similarly, the refresh data shows an increase in the average number of meetings and service hours for files opened in fiscal year 2015/16.

<b>Table 16: Uptake of expanded LawLINE (administrative data)</b>						
	Summative evaluation			Refresh evaluation		
	Total files opened*	#	%	Total files opened*	#	%
Clients with more than one meeting	2,759	422	15%	2,857	553	19%
			<b>Average</b>			<b>Average</b>
Number of meetings	2,768	3,457	1.24	2,857	3,907	1.37
Hours of service	2,827	2,727	0.96	2,844	3,015	1.06

\*Number based on files opened during FY 2015/16 and excludes files with missing data.

### Potential reasons for lower than expected uptake

**Awareness of LawLINE:** As mentioned in Section 5.1 (Evaluation Question 1), key informants have identified a need for more promotion of LawLINE. Key justice partners, such as registry staff, judges, and social workers with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, were listed as not having awareness of LawLINE or of what services it provides (e.g., return appointments, up to six hours of assistance from a roster lawyer). An example was given of other stakeholders knowing to refer parents to LSS to make a legal aid application, but not realizing that grandparents or other family members can receive assistance from LawLINE. Several internal stakeholders mentioned that the ability to have posters and flyers in court registries would be extremely helpful for promoting LawLINE. Each registry has its own approach to whether promotional materials would be allowed. The suggestion was that a province-sanctioned approach to making materials available at the court registries would be very helpful to raise awareness of the project.

For LawLINE, much of the promotion is done as part of LSS programs, so it is promoted through LSS’s website, Facebook page, and Twitter feed. In addition, as mentioned earlier, the legal information outreach workers and the public legal information and promotion departments of LSS handle outreach for LSS more generally, and so will promote LawLINE as part of that work. The current approach to the promotion of LawLINE was thought to be insufficient for building awareness. There is the desire for a more proactive and targeted promotion strategy that is LawLINE-specific and not incorporated as part of a general LSS outreach strategy. For example, promoting LawLINE should focus on rural and remote areas as well as Indigenous communities, and it should target community organizations that can assist clients with accessing the service. In addition, some key informants mentioned that the information on LawLINE was sometimes incomplete on the LSS corporate platforms. For example, the LSS website mentions that LawLINE is a telephone advice service, but does not mention the expanded services, such as the ability to have multiple appointments.

**Awareness of expanded service and possibility of return appointments:** Based on client survey results, clients are aware of the ability to have multiple appointments. Nearly all of the surveyed LawLINE clients (94%) recalled being informed about the option to call back again if they needed further assistance in their family law matter. Most of these clients mentioned that the LawLINE lawyer told them about this option, while others recalled being informed by an intake worker or a form they received from the lawyer. Roster lawyers could not provide reasons why clients are not making use of the expanded features of the service. Some lawyers reported more success with return appointments if they give the client a task to do so that they will come back once it is done. Client survey results indicate a possible reason, which is that clients do not perceive a need for a return appointment as just over three-quarters (76%) said they received all the help they needed.

**Accessibility of intake:** While key informants believe that the two-stage intake may create difficulties for clients, as discussed in Evaluation Question 2, clients do not perceive the wait time as being too long. In addition, 83% of surveyed clients rated the process of reaching a LawLINE lawyer as somewhat (46%) or very easy (37%).

**Technological barriers:** A few internal and external key informants mentioned that technological barriers — such as not having access to email, a computer, a phone, or not being technologically literate — could prevent access to the expanded LawLINE because the service relies on the use of such technology. However, as mentioned in the summative evaluation report, LSS recognized this potential limitation and attempted to address this by having LawLINE direct clients to friends or family, community partners, or other community agencies that might help facilitate the process of using the expanded features of LawLINE (e.g., assisting with scanning documents, sending and receiving emails).

**Other available services:** LawLINE provides referrals to other services, including family duty counsel. While the project does not track whether clients use the referrals, based on client survey results, about half of surveyed clients recalled receiving a referral, and of those clients, two-thirds used the referral and three-quarters found the referral to be helpful. It is possible that the referrals made by LawLINE provide clients with the remaining assistance that they need and, therefore, they do not return to LawLINE.

In addition, there are some new or expanded services that serve the same client group as LawLINE, which may explain LawLINE's intake volume. On May 30, 2016, LSS launched [MyLawBC.com](http://MyLawBC.com), which is a web-based tool to assist individuals — particularly low income individuals — with everyday legal problems by creating customized action plans. The platform currently offers assistance with topics that are also covered by LawLINE, such as separation, divorce, and other family matters. In addition, the Justice Education Society provides online chat, email service, and an advice telephone line for legal information. Currently, the telephone advice service primarily responds to small claims issues and only a minor number of calls involve family law matters. An exploration of whether these services duplicate or complement LawLINE and their potential effect on LawLINE was beyond the scope of the refresh evaluation.

**4. Does the project improve the continuity and consistency of the Family LawLINE services?**

**Key findings: Two-thirds of clients with more than one meeting had a high level of counsel continuity. The approach to documenting interactions with clients and the advice given also ensures that, in situations where the same lawyer is not assisting the client, the new lawyer has the information needed to provide consistent service. Continuing to ensure continuity of service remains important. While most clients who had multiple lawyers assist them were still satisfied with the services received, one-third of clients found it unhelpful to have more than one LawLINE lawyer assist them.**

One of LawLINE's objectives is to improve continuity of service, which is intended to improve the consistency and quality of service, as well as build client trust. Continuity of service is intended to be primarily provided by assigning a roster lawyer to a client so that they receive advice from the same lawyer at their return appointments. However, in recognition that this is not always possible, LawLINE has file continuity to ensure that if another lawyer assists the client, they have access to information on the legal issue involved, any documents provided by the client, the relevant facts, the advice given, and suggested next steps. The file continuity is based on any notes on the file, as well as the advice form that is also provided to the client.

In general, roster lawyers report that continuity of lawyers is maintained, although occasionally clients have an urgent matter and their assigned lawyer is not available, or they desire an appointment time when the assigned lawyer is not working. In the latter situation, clients are encouraged to schedule their appointment when they can speak to their assigned lawyer, but the project will defer to client preferences. In cases where a roster lawyer handles another lawyer's file, they have found the advice forms to be sufficient to enable them to provide consistent service to the client. The one suggestion was for roster lawyers to include the court form names they have asked the client to fill out in the advice form, so it is clear what forms the lawyer has requested the client to complete.

Based on the project's administrative data, the project has continued to provide continuity of counsel since the summative evaluation, as just over two-thirds (69%) of LawLINE clients who had more than one meeting had high continuity of counsel, meaning there was either one lawyer involved in all their meetings or the total number of lawyers involved in their meetings was less than half the total number of meetings (e.g., clients who saw two lawyers had at least five meetings).<sup>14</sup> Of those in the high continuity category, most (602 out of 644) had the same lawyer for all of their interactions with LawLINE.

<sup>14</sup> Just under two-thirds (64%) of clients had high continuity of counsel at the time of the summative evaluation.

About 1 in 5 files had no continuity of counsel, meaning the client had a different lawyer each time they called. Of these clients, most of them had two meetings with two different counsel (172 out of 186). Another 12% of files had some level of counsel continuity, meaning the total number of lawyers involved in their case was equal to or greater than half their total number of meetings (e.g., clients who saw two lawyers over three or four meetings; clients who saw three lawyers over four to six meetings).

<b>Table 17: Continuity of counsel —refresh evaluation (administrative data)</b>		
<b>Refresh evaluation</b>	<b>Cases with more than one meeting (n=938)</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
No continuity	186	20%
Some continuity	108	12%
High continuity	644	69%
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.		

Based on the client survey results, continuity of service has generally been maintained, and even when multiple lawyers have worked with a client, most clients remain satisfied. Over two-thirds of clients surveyed (68%) worked with one LawLINE lawyer. Among clients who reported having multiple meetings and multiple LawLINE lawyers (n=56), most (61%) indicated that having multiple lawyers was helpful or made no difference. Most commonly, these clients reported that having multiple lawyers was helpful because they got to hear different opinions from the lawyers. Some clients said they preferred the other lawyer who assisted them, or found that it made no difference to them because the lawyers were all helpful in providing assistance.

Over one-third of client survey respondents (36%) reported that having multiple lawyers was not helpful. Clients who found it unhelpful to have multiple lawyers assist them most often mentioned having to repeat their story each time, or the related point that the lawyers were not familiar with their case. Among clients who reported having multiple meetings with a single LawLINE lawyer (n=64), most clients (92%) indicated it was helpful (23%) or very helpful (69%). These clients reported that having the same lawyer was helpful because they did not need to re-explain their situation to different lawyers each time, and the lawyer involved was familiar with their case.

<b>Table 18: Client opinions on continuity of service and continuity of counsel (survey data)</b>		
<b>Q15. How helpful or unhelpful was it to you to work with different LawLINE lawyers rather than just one LawLINE lawyer? (n=56)</b>		
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Very helpful	7	13%
Helpful	13	23%
Made no difference	14	25%
Not helpful	15	27%
Not at all helpful	5	9%
Don't know/no response	2	4%
<b>Q18. How helpful was it to you to work with the same LawLINE lawyer compared to if you had different lawyers each time you called? (n=64)</b>		
Very helpful	44	69%
Helpful	15	23%
Made no difference	2	3%
Not helpful	1	2%
Not at all helpful	--	--
Don't know/no response	2	3%
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Totals for Q15 and Q18 do not sum to 124 (total number of clients who had more than one meeting) because these questions were only asked to respondents who recalled the number of lawyers <u>and</u> number of meetings involved in their LawLINE service (n=120).		



**5. Have the Family LawLINE services improved clients' knowledge of the process, family law, and their legal options?**

**Key findings:** The refresh evaluation confirmed the findings in the summative evaluation as to LawLINE's effectiveness in improving client's knowledge. Based on lawyer assessments, about half of clients experienced some change in their level of understanding of their issue and the court process, while a smaller percentage of clients were better able to prepare and submit forms. Improvements are more likely to be reported for clients with more than one meeting. Key informants also reported that the project generally improves client understanding, although this will vary by client. Surveyed clients were very positive regarding LawLINE's ability to provide helpful assistance.

While the level of understanding can vary by client due to factors such as whether the client has mental health issues or cognitive impairments, in general most internal (LSS and roster lawyer) and external key informants believe that the LawLINE's services are improving clients' knowledge of the family law legal process and their legal options. Roster lawyers who were interviewed believe that the ability to spend an hour on the initial consultation, have follow-up appointments, and provide written summaries of the advice for clients enables the project to make a difference in the level of comprehension. A few clients, particularly those with cognitive issues, also include advocates or representatives of community organizations on the call, which can be helpful in ensuring they understand the information provided by LawLINE.<sup>15</sup> These roster lawyers also believe that they can assess the level of understanding at the end of the call based on the client's questions or their responses when asked what the client intends to do. Most of the external key informants consider clients' understanding to be improved based on the ability of clients to relay the call to them.

<sup>15</sup> When third parties attend the calls, the appropriate documentation to support the waiver of solicitor-client privilege must be completed.

## Understanding of family law issues

Roster lawyers' interview responses were generally more positive than their assessments of clients' understanding of family law issues captured in the administrative data.<sup>16</sup> However, this may reflect the reality that not all clients will experience improved knowledge of family law issues. The administrative data suggest that clients who receive more than one meeting with LawLINE lawyers are more likely to demonstrate change in their level of understanding. However, the overall results suggest many clients are perceived as having no improvement in understanding their family law issues. Specifically, among clients who had more than one meeting, about 51% were rated as having a moderate change in their level of understanding, while a similar proportion (48%) were rated as having no change. Clients who had a single meeting had lower overall ratings, with most clients (54%) being rated as having no change in understanding.

	<b>Clients with more than one meeting (n=877)*</b>		<b>Clients with one meeting (n=3,998)**</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Large change (low to able)	5	1%	14	<1%
Moderate change (low to some; some to able)	448	51%	1826	46%
No change	424	48%	2157	54%
Moderate change – negative (some to low; able to some)	-	-	1	<1%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 \* Excludes 61 cases missing lawyer assessment data.  
 \*\* Excludes 438 cases missing lawyer assessment data.

<sup>16</sup> Clients' level of understanding is assessed by the roster lawyer at the beginning of a call and is assessed again at the end of a call. Each time a client calls the LawLINE, their end-of-call assessment from the previous appointment is overwritten by the end-of-call assessment from the current appointment. The rating scale includes: Low, Some, and Able. LSS reports that while the assessment was discussed during roster lawyer training, the assessment process does not take into account variations in lawyers' perception of client ability. The project is currently working on making the assessments more objective.

## Understanding of the legal process

Roster lawyers also gave ratings based on their client’s understanding of the legal processes related to their cases.<sup>17</sup> Specifically, nearly half of all clients who had more than one meeting were rated as having a moderate change in understanding, while the other half were rated as having no change in understanding. Clients who had a single meeting had lower overall ratings, with most clients (59%) being rated as having no change in understanding.

**Table 20: Client understands the legal processes that relate to their case (administrative data)**

	Cases with more than one meeting (n=846)*		Cases with one meeting (n=3,843)**	
	#	%	#	%
Large change (low to able)	5	1%	11	<1%
Moderate change (low to some; some to able)	408	48%	1,573	41%
No change	430	51%	2,257	59%
Moderate change – negative (some to low; able to some)	3	<1%	2	<1%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 \* Excludes 92 cases missing data  
 \*\* Excludes 593 cases missing data

Results from the client survey indicate that clients have a positive response to the ability of the service to help them understand their family law issues, the legal process, and options. Among clients who reported that their LawLINE lawyer(s) explained and provided them with information about their family law matter (90%) and explained the legal process (80%), the vast majority of clients (89%) reported that this information was helpful or very helpful. Similarly, most clients (86%) found the information and assistance for understanding and making decisions on their various legal options was helpful or very helpful.

**Table 21: Client opinions on helpfulness of LawLINE information (survey data)**

<b>Q22. How helpful was this information and assistance for understanding the legal process and your family law matter? (n=193)</b>		
	#	%
Very helpful	90	47%
Helpful	82	42%
Not helpful	9	5%
Not at all helpful	10	5%
Don't know/no response	2	1%
<b>Q24. How helpful was this information and assistance for understanding and making decisions on your various options for handling your family law matter? (n=191)</b>		
Very helpful	85	45%
Helpful	80	42%
Not helpful	13	7%
Not at all helpful	12	6%
Don't know/no response	1	1%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

<sup>17</sup> See footnote 16 for description of assessment procedure.

**Assistance with forms and documents**

About half of client survey respondents (46%) reported receiving help with forms or documents needed for their legal matter. This assistance typically involved identifying the type of forms needed, where the forms could be found, and providing information on how to fill the forms out on their own and how to submit the forms. The majority of clients (90%) who received assistance on forms and documents found this assistance to be helpful (31%) or very helpful (59%). This result is an increase from 75% of client survey respondents in the summative evaluation who found assistance with forms and documents to be helpful or very helpful. Among surveyed clients who submitted documents to the court registry (n=95 or 48% of all clients), the majority (91%) reported their documents were accepted the first time they tried to submit them, which is also an improvement from the summative evaluation where 79% of respondents were successfully able to submit their court documents on their first attempt.

<b>Table 22: Client opinions on helpfulness of LawLINE assistance with forms and documents (survey data)</b>		
<b>Q27. Overall, how helpful was this assistance to you for preparing your own forms and documents? (n=88)</b>		
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Very helpful	52	59%
Helpful	27	31%
Not helpful	3	3%
Not at all helpful	1	1%
Not applicable, did not prepare own documents	4	5%
Don't know/no response	1	1%
<b>Q29. Were your documents accepted the first time you tried to submit them? (n=95)</b>		
No	8	8%
Yes	86	91%
Don't know/no response	1	1%
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.		

Roster lawyer assessments of clients' ability to prepare and submit provincial court and Supreme Court documents show a difference between clients who had more than one meeting and clients who had a single meeting, particularly for Supreme Court documents. However, in both cases, a majority of clients were rated as having no change in ability to prepare and submit provincial and Supreme Court documents.

<b>Table 23: Client is able to prepare and submit provincial court documents (administrative data)</b>				
	<b>Cases with more than one meeting (n=383)*</b>		<b>Cases with one meeting (n=1,686)**</b>	
	#	%	#	%
Large change (low to able)	6	2%	-	-
Moderate change (low to some; some to able)	104	27%	349	21%
No change	272	71%	1,334	79%
Moderate change – negative (some to low; able to some)	1	<1%	3	<1%
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding * Excluding 555 cases missing data. ** Excluding 2,750 cases missing data.				

<b>Table 24: Client is able to prepare and submit Supreme Court documents (administrative data)</b>				
	<b>Cases with more than one meeting (n=284)*</b>		<b>Cases with one meeting (n=871)**</b>	
	#	%	#	%
Large change (low to able)	5	2%	2	<1%
Moderate change (low to some; some to able)	89	31%	125	14%
No change	189	67%	743	85%
Moderate change – negative (some to low; able to some)	1	<1%	1	<1%
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding * Excluding 654 cases missing data. ** Excluding 3,565 cases missing data.				

**6. Have the Family LawLINE services increased client’s ability to manage and resolve their legal issue?**

**Key findings: As with the summative evaluation, the refresh evaluation findings are inconclusive. While clients respond more positively and believe they are better able to make decisions, roster counsel assess the majority of clients as having no change in their organization and preparation for addressing their legal issue.**

As discussed under Evaluation Question 5, client survey respondents report that LawLINE has helped them make decisions on the options available to them as well successfully submit court documents. Internal key informants also report some success in this regard, but emphasize that the level and nature of the success varies by client. As one roster lawyer stated, “We need to meet the client where the client is.” Clients that are clearly overwhelmed and need more supports are referred to available in person services, according to roster lawyers. Other clients have greater capacity to assist themselves and LawLINE provides the types of supports—information, resource referrals, options and next steps—that work well for these clients. Based on interviews with roster lawyers, the level of support they provide is not consistent, and perhaps should not be; however, some roster lawyers will complete court documents for clients and others will only review the forms once clients have completed them. Overall, according to roster lawyers, the service they provide helps clients focus on the key issues and some specific tasks related to their case, which is critical to enabling the clients to manage and resolve their legal issues.

Roster lawyer assessments made after each client meeting of the clients’ organization and preparation to address their legal issue were less positive than the interview findings.<sup>18</sup> The majority of clients were rated as having no change in their organization and preparation to address their legal issue. One reason for this result may be that roster lawyers do not believe they have the ability to assess whether the client has become more organized or prepared without knowing the result of the client’s case or having more contact with the client. Unless the client calls again and tells the roster lawyer what has transpired with their case, the result of the case or the extent that LawLINE assisted in the result, are unknown.

**Table 25: Client is organized and prepared to address their legal issue (administrative data)**

	Cases with more than one meeting (n=767)*		Cases with one meeting (n=3,235)**	
	#	%	#	%
Large change (low to able)	14	2%	13	<1%
Moderate change (low to some; some to able)	271	35%	987	31%
No change	479	63%	2,227	69%
Moderate change – negative (some to low; able to some)	3	<1%	8	<1%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 \* Excludes 171 cases missing data.  
 \*\* Excludes 201 cases missing data.

<sup>18</sup> See footnote 16 for description of assessment procedure.

**7. Are the Family LawLINE services helping clients achieve resolutions to their legal problems?**

**Key findings:** Clients are generally accessing LawLINE at an early stage where the service can assist them before their options are more limited. However, there may be the potential for LawLINE to reach some clients sooner, and thereby help these clients resolve their legal issues earlier. As was the case during the process and summative evaluations, LawLINE does not have a formal way of tracking client resolutions. Consequently, the refresh evaluation remains unable to definitively determine whether LawLINE clients resolve their legal problems, nor can the evaluation determine with confidence the extent to which LawLINE assists clients in resolving their problems. That said, client survey results suggest LawLINE is helping at least some clients resolve their family law matters out of court.

LSS key informants and roster lawyers reported that clients are engaging LawLINE early enough in their family law matters before their options for a resolution may be more limited. Clients are coming to them at the outset of a separation, after separation papers have just been served, or well in advance of their next court date. There is the perception among some roster lawyers that the timely connection of clients with LawLINE has improved, although the project administrative data do not indicate this has changed since the summative evaluation.

The project administrative data shows that over half of all clients (61%) came to LawLINE at an early stage of their family law matters, which includes before court proceedings/written agreement or before a case conference (see Table 28). Cases with one meeting were somewhat more likely (62%) to engage with LawLINE early in their family law matter compared to cases with more than one meeting (54%). However, 12% of clients connect with LawLINE after a final order or agreement. While the final order or agreement at issue may have occurred before the expanded LawLINE service was available and/or the client may have received other legal assistance at that earlier stage, this is potentially an indication that the project could connect with clients earlier in their case. The timely connection with clients is an area for the project to continue to monitor and potentially explore further to ensure that lack of awareness of LawLINE is not an issue.

Few clients were identified as having CFCSA-related matters (n=179), but among those cases, about half (94 out of 179, or 55%) engaged with LawLINE at an early stage of their case, while the remainder engaged LawLINE at a later stage in their CFCSA matter.

**Table 26: Stage of client case when file opened (n=5,374) (administrative data)**

Stage of case			Cases with more than one meeting (n=938)*		Cases with one meeting (n=4,436)*		Total (n=5,374)	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
FAMILY LAW	EARLY STAGE	Before court proceedings or written agreement	374	40%	2,254	51%	2,628	49%
		Court action commenced - before case conference	134	14%	494	11%	628	12%
	LATER STAGE	After final order or agreement	182	19%	696	16%	878	16%
		Change final order or agreement	96	10%	327	7%	423	8%
		After case conference - before interim orders	19	2%	55	1%	74	1%
		Before final order	98	10%	300	7%	398	7%
CFCSA	EARLY STAGE	Risk of removal	8	1%	86	2%	94	2%
	LATER STAGE	New removal/presentation	3	<1%	39	1%	42	1%
		Protection	3	<1%	14	<1%	17	<1%
		Continuing custody order (CCO)	1	<1%	7	<1%	8	<1%
		Cancellation of CCO	-	-	6	<1%	6	<1%
		Director no longer involved	-	-	1	<1%	1	<1%
		Extension	-	-	2	<1%	2	<1%
Transfer of child to a non-parent	-	-	9	<1%	9	<1%		

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 \*Excludes cases where there is no data on the number of meetings.

In terms of whether clients have successfully resolved their matters, survey results show that half of the surveyed clients (51%) resolved all or some of their issues at the time of the survey, while the other half (47%) had not resolved any of their issues. Survey results show that clients who resolved all or some of their issues were considerably more likely to do so out of court (32% compared to 17% after a trial on at least some issues).

**Table 27: Current status of family law issues (Q33 and Q34) by number of meetings with LawLINE (Q2) (survey data)**

Status	Clients who reported having more than one meeting (n=124)		Clients who reported having one meeting (n=70)		Total (n=200)*	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
No issues are yet resolved	52	42%	40	57%	93	47%
All or some issues resolved/settled out of court without a trial	40	32%	19	27%	63	32%
All or some issues resolved/settled through an order from a judge after a trial	20	16%	8	11%	28	14%
All or some issues resolved/settled with some being settled out of court and some being settled through an order from a judge after a trial	8	7%	1	1%	10	5%
Don't know/no response	4	3%	2	3%	6	3%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 \*Includes six respondents who did not know how many meetings they had with a LawLINE lawyer



Among surveyed clients who reported resolving some or all of their family law issues out of court (n=63), most clients (81%) reported the information or assistance they received from LawLINE was helpful (25%) or very helpful (56%).<sup>19</sup> Clients commonly commented that the assistance they received was helpful because they received advice and guidance, and processes were explained; some clients also believe LawLINE helped them understand their options and determine their next steps.

**Table 28: Q36. How helpful was the information or assistance you received from the LawLINE in resolving all or some of your matters out of court? (n=63) (survey data)**

	#	%
Very helpful	35	56%
Helpful	16	25%
Not helpful	9	14%
Not at all helpful	2	3%
Not applicable, did not get information or assistance from the LawLINE for this	1	2%

Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Based on client survey results, LawLINE advice appears to be less instrumental in helping prepare clients for trial. Among the clients who went to a court trial (n=38 or 19% of total) to settle all or some of their issues, nearly half (n=18 or 47%) indicated they self-represented. Over half of these clients (n=9) said they received no information or advice on self-representation from LawLINE, while those who indicated they did most commonly said the advice included how the court process works, what to bring to court, how to address the judge, and tips on how to present their case. Whether they reported receiving advice from LawLINE to help them prepare for trial or not, clients reported that they were prepared to handle the trial, with only 1 saying they weren't prepared and 17 saying they were prepared. For clients who appeared before a judge for reasons other than a trial (n=62, or 31% of total), just over a third (n=21 or 34%) said they received information from LawLINE about the court appearance and instruction on how to prepare for court.

<sup>19</sup> This is an increase from the summative evaluation survey results, where 71% of clients found LawLINE's assistance to be helpful (29%) or very helpful (42%).

**8. Are clients satisfied with their experience using the added Family LawLINE services? What, if anything, can be done to improve clients' experience?**

**Key findings:** Based on client survey results, most clients are satisfied with the assistance they received from LawLINE; they were treated with respect and listened to, and roster lawyers took time to understand their legal issues.

Feedback from the client survey indicates a high level of satisfaction with LawLINE services. Nearly all clients reported they were treated with respect (96%) and felt the LawLINE lawyer(s) listened to them and took the time to understand their legal issue (91%). Most client survey respondents (76%) reported receiving all the help they needed. Overall, most clients (86%) were satisfied with the help and support they received through LawLINE, and most of these clients reported being very satisfied (52%).

When asked how LawLINE services could be improved, the most common response was no suggested changes. Of those clients who did provide suggestions for improving LawLINE, the most common suggestion was to allow the LawLINE lawyer to represent the client in court, which goes beyond the scope of the project. The second suggestion—allow more time with the lawyer—either reflects a lack of understanding that clients have up to six hours of advice available to them, or the opinion that each meeting with the lawyer is too short. The two suggestions that appear most relevant to the other findings in this report were less waiting time for call-backs or to book appointments, and ensuring continuity of service with the assigned lawyer.

**Table 29: Q67. What, if anything, would you change about LawLINE to make the services better? (n=200) (survey data)**

	#	%
No suggestions	77	39%
Allow lawyer to represent clients in court	21	11%
Allow more time with the lawyer	19	10%
Less waiting time to book appointment/for call backs	18	9%
Ensure the client works with the same lawyer	13	7%
Expand types of issues covered	11	6%
Have more lawyers available	10	5%
More communication/advertising of services	10	5%
Improve intake/appointment making process	9	5%
Lawyers should listen more/show more compassion	9	5%
Better match lawyers' expertise with clients' legal needs	5	3%
Provide clients with document on how to prepare for meeting with lawyer	3	3%
More flexible financial guidelines/eligibility requirements	3	2%
Provide more information on available options/alternatives to resolve issue	4	2%
Lawyers need to be knowledgeable on various family matters	3	2%
More follow-up	3	2%
Offer evening hours/expand hours	2	1%
More coaching	2	1%
Other	16	8%
Don't know/no response	11	6%

Note: Multiple responses accepted; totals will sum to more than 100%.

**9. Does the expanded Family LawLINE improve the level of integration across available family legal supports and services? Are the Family LawLINE referrals to other resources helpful to clients in resolving their family law issues?**

**Key findings: The level of integration between LawLINE and other supports and services has not changed since the summative evaluation. The integration occurs through referrals to and from LawLINE and is fairly concentrated with certain service providers. Key informants mentioned the need to raise awareness of LawLINE as the main impediment to greater integration with other services. For referrals made by LawLINE, most clients used the referrals and found them to be helpful.**

Integration between LawLINE and other services primarily occurs through referrals both to and from LawLINE. In terms of how well-integrated LawLINE is with other services based on referrals to LawLINE, the available administrative data show that among the 720 cases with referral source data, common referral sources were LSS intake (28% or n=198), Family Justice Counsellors (FJCs) from one of the provincial Justice Access Centres (24% or n=170), online resources (20% or n=144), family or friends (18% or n=127), and advocates and various types of community organizations (9% or n=62).<sup>20</sup> This shows a relatively concentrated network with most referrals coming from two service providers (LSS and FJCs), followed by self-help forms of referral. Key informants believe that in order to increase the level of integration, more efforts to increase awareness of LawLINE are needed. This is particularly true for community organizations and other justice stakeholders, such as court registry and social workers (see discussion in Evaluation Question 3).

Results from the client survey are similar in terms of the most common referral sources, although their order of frequency is reversed. Clients most often learn of LawLINE through self-help methods such as the internet (34%) and friends or relatives (13%). Other sources included counsel or staff at the courthouse (13%), FJCs (12%), and legal aid (10%).

**Table 30: Q1. How did you first find out about the LawLINE? (n=200) (survey data)**

	#	%
Saw it online/through internet	67	34%
Friend/relative	26	13%
At the courthouse (e.g., the duty counsel, someone else at the courthouse)	26	13%
Family Justice Counsellors or someone else at the Justice Access Centre (JAC)	23	12%
Someone at legal aid (this includes intake workers at the legal aid call centre)	19	10%
Through another organization/support service	17	9%
Private lawyer	6	3%
Someone at the Family Mediation Referral Pilot	4	2%
Poster/brochure/booklet	3	2%
Phonebook	3	2%
Previous experience	3	2%
Through work/school	1	1%
Other	4	2%
Don't know/no response	13	7%

Note: Multiple responses accepted; totals will sum to more than 100%.

<sup>20</sup> Most LawLINE clients (87% or n=4,654) do not have administrative data showing by whom they were referred.

LawLINE integrates with other services by referring clients to other services that can assist them further with family law matters. Most clients (88%) received a referral to another resource, and the most common referrals were to online resources (51%), legal aid intake (25%), and Family Duty Counsel (FDC) (23%), followed by FJCs (17%), private lawyers (16%), and court staff or judiciary (11%).

<b>Table 31: LawLINE referrals to other resources (administrative data)</b>		
	<b>Referrals to other resources (n=5,374)</b>	
Online/internet	2,744	51%
Legal aid/LSS intake	1,339	25%
LSS Family Duty Counsel	1,225	23%
Family Justice Counsellor	921	17%
Private lawyer	858	16%
Court staff or judiciary	580	11%
Advocate or community agency	245	5%
Other government agency	186	4%
Private mediator	223	4%
JAC resource room/self-help	150	3%
FMEP	145	3%
Social worker	138	3%
Health professionals	91	2%
Police/victim services	103	2%
Courthouse library	53	1%
Access Pro Bono	34	1%
Indigenous community agency	31	1%
Income assistance	24	<1%
Child Support Officer (CSO)	14	<1%
Crown counsel/prosecutor	16	<1%
Immigrant settlement or multicultural organization	7	<1%
Law students' clinic or program	5	<1%
No data	567	11%

Note: Clients might receive multiple referrals to other resources.

The client survey followed up with clients on their satisfaction with referrals to other resources. Almost half of the surveyed clients (47%) recalled receiving a referral. Among those who reported receiving a referral (n=93), about two-thirds (65%) indicated they used the referral and over three-quarters (77%) found the referrals helpful.

**10. To what extent has the Family LawLINE project led to net system savings due to efficiencies gained for LSS and/or other areas of the justice system?**

**Key findings:** As with the summative evaluation, data are not available to make conclusive statements on net system savings due to efficiencies gained. The refresh evaluation was able to update the cost avoidance scenarios estimated in the summative evaluation using the most recent LawLINE data and updated court costs provided by LSS. The analysis shows a range of potential net system savings, should the project be able to reduce the number of appearances and trials that involve its clients.

This section<sup>21</sup> looks at potential efficiencies gained for LSS and/or other areas of the justice system as a result of the project. As noted in the methodology section, it is not possible to make any conclusive statements on efficiencies gained or costs avoided, as there are no data available on the extent to which the project diverted its cases from the court system or reduced the number and length of appearances, or the number of adjournments and trials. Furthermore, outside of court costs, no other information was available to attach monetary estimates to other potential savings to the justice system outside of court costs (e.g., reduced demands on court registry from people looking for assistance or direction). Therefore, this section uses statistics on family court cases from across British Columbia, along with project data, to make some estimates of potential cost avoided if LawLINE achieved its outcomes. Hypothetical scenarios are used to illustrate different levels of costs avoided, based on the level of impact the project might have on the court system.

Provincial court applications and Supreme Court applications that involve a court appearance are not equal in their time requirements.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, it is useful to look at the levels of court for the LawLINE clients. The levels of court for clients during this period are as follows:

<b>As identified in database</b>	<b>Files opened Apr 2015-Mar 2016</b>	<b>Files opened Apr 2016-Mar 2017</b>
Provincial court	1,053	937
Supreme Court	621	408
Both provincial court and Supreme Court	137	154
Other	112	60
Not applicable	125	192
No data	809	534

The files identified as “other” and the files identified as “not applicable” are not included in the estimates in Table 33.

<sup>21</sup> We understand that any efficiency created in the system will be backfilled by cases waiting for a hearing. Thus, any court savings are at best costs avoided by these cases. The language above has not been changed as it was approved during consultations for development of the summative evaluation matrix.

<sup>22</sup> See Section 4.0, Table 11.

The files with both provincial and Supreme Court identified were added to the existing totals for provincial and Supreme Court for each year. Next, some assumptions were needed to include the files that have no level of court identified. While it is possible that these files may never go to court, it is also possible that those with an identified level of court might not proceed to court. For the purposes of the analysis, it is assumed that those files with no identified court level would be distributed in a similar portion to those files whose court level was identified. Therefore, these files were redistributed between provincial court and Supreme Court according to the relative distribution of files with identified court levels (61% provincial court, 39% Supreme Court for FY 2015–16 and 66% provincial court and 34% Supreme Court for FY 2016–17).<sup>23</sup>

The revised total number of files for each court level is in Table 33.

As identified in database	Files opened Apr 2015-Mar 2016	Files opened Apr 2016-Mar 2017
Provincial court	1,684	1,443
Supreme Court	1,073	744

### Potential cost avoidance from reduced court hours

Many family law cases do not go to court and therefore the analysis needs to take this into consideration. According to CSB data, approximately 59% of provincial court and 25% of Supreme Court applications result in a court appearance. For the purposes of these estimates, each LawLINE file is treated as an application. Provincial court applications that make a court appearance require an average of approximately 1.4 hours of court time, and Supreme Court applications that make a court appearance require an average of approximately 3.2 hours. These include court appearances for any reason. In addition, from data provided by CSB, courts costs per hour are approximately \$618 for provincial court and \$846 for Supreme Court.

From the above information, the following estimates can be made in Table 34.

Row #	Item	2015–16		2016–17	
		Provincial court	Supreme Court	Provincial court	Supreme Court
1	Number of LawLINE files (applications)	1,684	1,073	1,443	744
2	Percent of applications that make a court appearance	59%	25%	59%	25%
3	Number of LawLINE files with an appearance (row 1 * row 2)	994	268	852	186
4	Average court hours per application that makes a court appearance	1.4	3.2	1.4	3.2
5	Total court hours (row 3 * row 4)	1,391	858	1192	595
6	Court costs per hour	\$618	\$846	\$618	\$846
7	Total court costs (row 5 * row 6)	\$859,732	\$726,068	\$736,833	\$503,237

Sources: Calculations made based on project database and CSB data. Court cost data were provided by LSS, working with George McCauley, an independent consultant, and are based on Ministry of Justice data.  
 Note: Numbers may not calculate exactly due to rounding.

<sup>23</sup> To give an example from FY 2015–16: provincial court is given a weighting of (1,053+137)/1,948 (n=1,190, or 61%) and Supreme Court a weighting of (621+137)/ 1,948 (n=758, or 39%).

While we do not have any project data to indicate what happens to these cases once they have completed the project services, we can make some estimates based on scenarios. Below we provide some potential impacts of the project, based on what might be considered low to very high impacts if the services from LawLINE were able to reduce the number of court hours per file by anywhere from 10%, 30%, and 50%. These estimates are provided in Table 35.

<b>Table 35: Estimated court costs avoided based on several scenarios of reduced court hours</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>2015–16</b>		
	<b>Provincial court</b>	<b>Supreme Court</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total annual court costs for all files	\$859,732	\$726,068	\$1,585,801
Reduce court hours by:	<b>Annual court cost reduction</b>		
10%	\$85,973	\$72,607	\$158,580
30%	\$257,920	\$217,820	\$475,740
50%	\$429,866	\$363,034	\$792,900
<b>2016–17</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Provincial court</b>	<b>Supreme Court</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total annual court costs for all files	\$736,833	\$503,237	\$1,240,070
Reduce court hours by:			
10%	\$73,683	\$50,324	\$124,007
30%	\$221,050	\$150,971	\$372,021
50%	\$368,417	\$251,619	\$620,035

Sources: Calculations made based on project database and CSB data.  
 Note: Numbers may not calculate exactly due to rounding.

Therefore, based on these estimates, the LawLINE project has the potential to avoid between \$124,007 and \$158,580 in court costs annually if court hours per files making a court appearance are reduced by 10%, and between \$620,035 and \$792,900 if court hours are reduced by 50%; this is assuming the number of client files handled annually by LawLINE are within the range of intake experienced between 2015–16 and 2016–17. The estimates would be the same if, instead of reducing court hours, the scenarios considered diverting these same percentages from court altogether.

These estimates are highly dependent on the volume of LawLINE clients, the estimated cost of court hours, and the effectiveness of LawLINE services; as intake increases and more clients have improved knowledge of family law, are aware of their legal options, and have an increased ability to manage and resolve their legal issues, there would be greater potential for court costs to be avoided. The results for 2016–17 show the effect of the reduced intake on cost avoidance.

**Potential cost avoidance from reducing court trials**

Another set of scenarios (which would be a subset of the above) can be estimated considering a reduction in the number of applications that end in a court trial. From CSB data, approximately 15.8% of provincial court and 3.2% of Supreme Court applications go to a trial in the end. Trial durations are an average of 1.32 hours in provincial court and 2.44 hours in Supreme Court. Given that, prior to going to trial, many cases first have to go to a family/judicial case conference to try to resolve matters, it can be assumed that if they go to trial, they have also had a case conference. These conferences are an average of 0.78 hours in provincial court and 0.99 hours in Supreme Court.

From this information, the following estimates can be made in Table 36, keeping in mind that these only include average costs for the trial and any associated family/judicial case conference. As well, it is assumed that the average court costs per hour can also be applied to case conferences.

Row #	Item	2015–16		2016–17	
		Provincial court	Supreme Court	Provincial court	Supreme Court
1	Number of LawLINE files (applications)	1,684	1,073	1,443	744
2	Percent of applications that go to trial	15.8%	3.2%	15.8%	3.2%
3	Number of LawLINE files that go to trial (row 1 * row 2)	266.1	34.3	228.1	23.8
4	Average family/judicial case conference duration (hours)	0.78	0.99	0.78	0.99
5	Average trial duration (hours)	1.32	2.44	1.32	2.44
6	Total average court hours per trial (row 4 + row 5)	2.10	3.43	2.10	3.43
7	Court costs per hour	\$618	\$846	\$618	\$846
8	Total cost/trial (row 6 * row 7)	\$1,298	\$2,902	\$1,298	\$2,902
9	Total court costs for those going to trial (row 3 * row 8)	\$345,350	\$99,617	\$295,982	\$69,044

Sources: Calculations made based on project database and CSB data. Court cost data were provided by LSS, working with George McCauley, an independent consultant, and are based on Ministry of Justice data.  
 Note: Numbers may not calculate exactly due to rounding.



As with court appearances, we can make some estimates based on various scenarios for court trials. We provide some potential impacts of the project, based on what might be considered low to very high impacts if the services from LawLINE were able to reduce the number of trials and their associated case conferences by 10%, 30%, or 50%. These estimates are provided in the table below. This scenario assumes that with the assistance of LawLINE, these clients are able to resolve their matters without the involvement of the judiciary through a trial and the associated case conference. Case conferences themselves are valuable for resolving matters and avoiding trials, or for narrowing the issues that need to be addressed at trials. This scenario does not include those files that might have a case conference only and do not need to go on to a trial; it considers only the reduction in the number of court trials and associated case conferences.

<b>Table 37: Estimated court costs avoided based on several scenarios of reduced court trials</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>2015–16</b>		
	<b>Provincial court</b>	<b>Supreme Court</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total annual court costs for all files	\$345,350	\$99,617	\$444,967
Reduce # of trials by:	<b>Annual court cost reduction</b>		
10%	\$34,535	\$9,962	\$44,497
30%	\$103,605	\$29,885	\$133,490
50%	\$172,675	\$49,808	\$222,483
<b>Item</b>	<b>2016–17</b>		
	<b>Provincial court</b>	<b>Supreme Court</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total annual court costs for all files	\$295,982	\$69,044	\$365,026
Reduce # of trials by:			
10%	\$29,598	\$6,904	\$36,503
30%	\$88,795	\$20,713	\$109,508
50%	\$147,991	\$34,522	\$182,513
Sources: Calculations made based on project database and CSB data. Note: Numbers may not calculate exactly due to rounding.			

Based on these estimates, the LawLINE project has the potential to avoid between \$36,503 and \$44,497 in court costs annually if the court trials that might be expected from the files handled by LawLINE are reduced by 10%, and between \$182,513 and \$222,483 if trials are reduced by 50%; this is assuming the number of client files handled annually by LawLINE are within the range of intake experienced between 2015–16 and 2016–17.

These estimates are highly dependent on the volume of LawLINE clients, the estimated cost of court hours, and effectiveness of LawLINE services; as intake increases and more clients have improved knowledge of family law, are aware of their legal options, and have an increased ability to manage and resolve their legal issue, there would be greater potential court costs to be avoided. The results for 2016–17 show the effect of the reduced intake on cost avoidance.

## 6.0 Conclusions

This section presents the conclusions of the refresh evaluation.

### 6.1 Conclusions on delivery of the Expanded Family LawLINE

**The Expanded Family LawLINE model continues to work well and has mostly been implemented as planned. In addition, the project has made several improvements since the summative evaluation.** Earlier growing pains related to project forms and issues for some roster lawyers who were new to using the technology and providing telephone advice have lessened over time. The project has also responded to address identified issues. In particular, there are regular teleconferences with roster lawyers so they can share experiences; the project has increased its flexibility in scheduling with morning appointments; and improved client assessment forms used by roster lawyers have been developed. The formal coaching model that was to be part of the expanded service has not been developed or implemented yet. LSS determined that investing time in developing this model, which relies on successive coaching sessions, is premature given the low volume of clients having more than one meeting.

The refresh evaluation did identify areas for improvement based on interviews. One area involves an improvement intended more for LSS intake than the project itself. When LSS transfers callers to the LawLINE administrator, LSS intake could provide more information to both the caller and LawLINE to avoid confusion. The other major area for improvement identified is promotion and outreach. Internal and external key informants believe more could be done to make stakeholders and potential clients aware of LawLINE and the expanded services offered.

**The project has sufficient tools, resources, and supports to handle the current level of demand.** All of the internal key informants reported that the project has sufficient capacity to meet its current demand, both in terms of roster lawyers and administrators. One measure of sufficient capacity is wait times and, on that measure, the project is doing well. Clients report that connecting with LawLINE is easy and wait times are reasonable. The greater concern expressed by internal key informants was not insufficient capacity of the project, but the lower than expected call volumes. However, they believe that appointments and return calls are increasing.

### 6.2 Achievement of outcomes

**The refresh evaluation shows that uptake of LawLINE and its expanded services remains an issue.** Intake has declined during LawLINE's second year of operations, although there is some increase in the use of the expanded services as the hours of service and number of meetings for clients from 2015–16 has increased since the summative evaluation. That said, clients are still not approaching six hours of advice time. In terms of reaching its target groups, while most clients are from urban areas, LawLINE is serving clients from rural and remote areas as well as Indigenous clients. More promotion is needed to increase the volume of intake for LawLINE, according to key informants, and the involvement of other justice stakeholders, in particular court registries, is considered central to this effort.

**The refresh evaluation confirmed the findings in the summative evaluation as to LawLINE’s effectiveness in improving clients’ knowledge of the process, family law, and their legal options.** While the level of understanding can vary by client due to factors such as whether the client has mental health issues or cognitive impairments, in general most internal (LSS and roster lawyer) and external key informants believe that the LawLINE’s services are improving clients’ knowledge of the family law legal process and their legal options. Based on lawyer assessments made at the end of each client meeting, about half of clients experienced some change in their level of understanding of their issue and the court process, while a smaller percentage of clients were better able to prepare and submit forms. Improvements are more likely to be reported for clients with more than one meeting. Key informants also reported that the project generally improves client understanding, although this will vary by client. Surveyed clients were very positive on LawLINE’s ability to provide helpful assistance.

**The refresh evaluation findings are inconclusive on whether LawLINE services have increased clients’ ability to manage and resolve their legal issues.** While clients respond positively to the services provided and believe they are better able to make decisions as a result, roster counsel assessments at the end of each client meeting indicate that the majority of clients have no change in their organization and preparation for addressing their legal issue. In interviews, roster lawyers emphasized that the level and nature of success in improving clients’ abilities to resolve their legal issues varies by client.

**Clients are generally accessing LawLINE at an early stage where the service can assist them before their options are more limited.** There may be the potential for LawLINE to reach some clients sooner, and thereby help these clients resolve their legal issues earlier. The administrative data show that just over 1 in 10 clients connect with LawLINE after a final order or agreement. While the final order or agreement at issue may have occurred before the expanded LawLINE services were available, this is potentially an indication that the project could connect with some clients at an earlier stage of their cases.

**LawLINE does not have a formal way of tracking client resolutions; consequently, the refresh evaluation remains unable to definitively determine whether LawLINE clients resolve their legal problems.** The evaluation also cannot determine with confidence the extent to which LawLINE assists clients in resolving their problems. That said, client survey results suggest LawLINE is helping at least some clients resolve their family law matters out of court. Among clients surveyed who reported resolving all or some of their family law issues out of court, 4 out of 5 reported that the LawLINE assistance was helpful or very helpful.

**Based on client survey results, most clients are satisfied with the assistance they received from LawLINE.** Over 9 in 10 client survey respondents reported that they were treated with respect and listened to, and that roster lawyers took time to understand their legal issues. Most client survey respondents reported receiving all the help they needed (76%) and were satisfied with the help received (86%).

**The integration between LawLINE and other supports and services occurs through referrals to and from LawLINE and is fairly concentrated with certain service providers (LSS intake and FJCs).** Key informants mentioned the need to raise awareness of LawLINE as the main impediment to greater integration with other services. For referrals made by LawLINE, most clients used the referrals and found them to be helpful.

**Available information suggests that net system savings due to efficiencies gained from the LawLINE’s operation should be occurring.** As with the summative evaluation, data are not available to make conclusive statements on net system savings due to efficiencies gained. The refresh evaluation was able to update the cost avoidance scenarios estimated in the summative evaluation using the most recent LawLINE data and updated court costs provided by LSS. The analysis shows a range of potential net system savings should the project be able to reduce the number of appearances and trials that involve its clients.

### 6.3 Recommendations

Below provides a few recommendations for LSS’s consideration.

***Recommendation 1: Increase activities to increase awareness of LawLINE and its expanded services available.***

The consensus view is that LawLINE needs to increase uptake of both new clients and returning clients. Three features of the project are based on clients returning to LawLINE —offering up to six hours of service per client; using an appointment-based approach so return clients have greater continuity in the roster lawyers assisting them; and coaching for clients to represent themselves in court. While there are indications in the second year of operations that clients are returning, the percentage is still rather low. The evaluation findings point to several ways that LawLINE could improve its promotion and outreach efforts. First, the LSS and LawLINE websites could be improved to better describe the expanded service. Second, LawLINE cannot rely so heavily on the lead lawyer to conduct the outreach efforts, as that individual also has to administer the project and provide advice to clients. Third, the outreach and promotion undertaken by other areas within LSS should be LawLINE-specific and targeted to stakeholder groups best suited to reach low income individuals, particularly those living in rural and remote areas of the province. Fourth, LSS should work with the Ministry to obtain its approval and support for all court registries in the province to post and handout materials related to LawLINE when appropriate to do so.

***Recommendation 2: Consider whether LawLINE should undertake different approaches in order to encourage clients to return for expanded service or better understand why they do not return.***

There is consensus among justice stakeholders that there is an increasing number of unrepresented litigants, including those with family law matters. Given the consequent need for advice services for those who cannot afford counsel, the lower than anticipated uptake of LawLINE raises the question of why. The evaluation cannot offer a definitive answer, although many clients surveyed reported they received all the help they needed, LawLINE does provide referrals to other services to most clients, and, in addition, MyLawBC.com and other services are also available. However, internal key informants believe the demand is there for LawLINE’s expanded services. Some roster lawyers reported using methods to encourage clients to return, such as giving them an assignment to complete. Perhaps the development of the formal coaching model would provide a reason for clients to return, or at least assist roster lawyers with ways to encourage the use of the expanded services. The evaluation findings cannot provide clear direction on what approach to take, but since the expanded service is a critical feature of the LawLINE model, undertaking efforts to increase return clients or determine if the demand does not exist seems essential for the project.

## Appendix A – FAM LL logic model

	Program activities	Program outputs	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes
<b>ACCESS</b>	Deliver a stakeholders engagement and marketing/recruitment plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of clients accessing Family LawLINE service from rural and remote areas of BC</li> <li># of non-English speaking clients</li> <li># of clients referred from Family Justice Services Division attending their scheduled LawLINE appointment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clients are accessing the Family LawLINE service early in the process of dealing with their legal situation</li> <li>Clients in rural and remote areas of BC</li> </ul>	
<b>SERVICES TO SUPPORT CLIENTS IN RESOLVING LEGAL PROBLEMS</b>	Provide legal advice and information to qualifying low-income individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of clients accessing Family LawLINE service</li> <li># of Family LawLINE clients receiving summary legal advice</li> <li># and type of different Family Law issues</li> <li>Amount of time (service hours) per client</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clients' knowledge of the legal process is increased</li> <li>Clients are more informed about family law and their legal options</li> <li>Clients are better prepared for their legal process</li> <li>Clients are more effective at representing themselves at all stages of dealing with their legal problem</li> <li>Clients are satisfied with the level of support received from FAM LL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FAM LL clients achieve a resolution to their legal problem</li> <li>The client's overall ability to manage and resolve their legal problems is improved</li> <li>Efficiency of the LSS Family Law Services is improved</li> </ul>
	Provide document preparation services to Family LawLINE clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of Family LawLINE clients receiving document preparation assistance for Supreme Court matters</li> <li># of Family LawLINE clients receiving document preparation assistance for Provincial Court matters</li> <li>Amount of time (service hours) spent on document prep/client</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The client's ability to prepare and submit court documents is improved</li> </ul>	
	Provide support for the development and finalization of agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of full agreements reached</li> <li># of partial agreements reached</li> <li># of consent or orders filed</li> <li># of agreements filed</li> <li># of FJC clients provided summary advice on agreements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The client's ability to prepare and finalize agreements is improved</li> </ul>	
	Provide a continuous and consistent service to Family LawLINE clients <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheduling appointments/follow-up with clients</li> <li>Provide a standard set of processes for each client</li> <li>Lawyers spend less time gathering repeat information on clients who call multiple times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of cases with full continuity of service (with a focus on file continuity: smooth case progression, even if the client sees different lawyers)</li> <li># of referrals to FAM LL from Family Justice Counsellors</li> <li># of referrals from FAM LL to other connected services (qualitative assessment only)</li> <li># of hours spent per client</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuity of the FAM LL service is improved</li> </ul>	

**Appendix B – FAM LL evaluation matrix**

Framework for the Evaluation of the Family LawLINE pilot project (revised April 2017)		
Questions	Indicators	Data sources
<b>Delivery questions</b>		
1. How well is the FAM LL model working for providing the expected services since the summative evaluation? What, if any, changes or improvements have been made to the model or how it operates?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder opinion on the model or aspects of the model and how well it works</li> <li>Stakeholder suggestions for improvements to the model or how it operates</li> <li>Decision-records and timelines of changes made to improve model or how it operates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key informant interviews</li> <li>Document review</li> <li>LSS CIS database</li> </ul>
2. Does the FAM LL have sufficient tools, resources, supports, and capacity to meet demand and any intended targets?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder opinion that the FAM LL has sufficient resources, supports, and capacity to meet demand</li> <li>FAM LL staff opinion on whether they receive the needed level of support to provide the expected services</li> <li>Client opinion on the level of assistance provided by the FAM LL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FAM LL database</li> <li>LSS CIS database</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> <li>Client survey</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome questions</b>		
3. To what extent does the expanded FAM LL increase client access to Family LawLINE services, including clients from rural and remote areas and Aboriginal clients?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder perception on steps taken to inform relevant stakeholders of services available through the expanded FAM LL</li> <li># and % of clients using more than one meeting</li> <li># and % of clients using additional hours</li> <li># of clients accessing FAM LL services from rural and remote areas of BC</li> <li># of Aboriginal clients accessing FAM LL services</li> <li>Stakeholder assessment of extent to which more clients from rural and remote areas and Aboriginal clients used the services after its expansion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FAM LL database</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> </ul>
4. Does the pilot project improve the continuity and consistency of the Family LawLINE services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># and % of FAM LL clients who have continuous contact with a single lawyer</li> <li>Stakeholder perceptions on case file continuity</li> <li>Extent to which FAM LL clients felt it was helpful to work with the same FAM LL lawyer</li> <li>Extent to which clients who saw different lawyers felt there was still file continuity in their case</li> <li>Extent to which FAM LL clients felt they benefited from being referred from FAM LL to another service</li> <li>Lawyer perspective on the effectiveness/continuity of the new service model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FAM LL database</li> <li>Client survey</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> </ul>
5. Have the Family LawLINE services improved clients' knowledge of the process, family law, and their legal options?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent to which clients feel their knowledge of family law and the legal process is increased</li> <li>Extent to which FAM LL clients feel more informed about their legal options</li> <li>Key informant opinions on the extent to which clients increased their knowledge of the legal process</li> <li>Changes in roster lawyer reporting on client understanding between beginning and end of service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Client survey</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> </ul>
6. Have the Family LawLINE services increased client's ability to manage and resolve their legal issue?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent to which clients felt prepared for their legal process (e.g., readiness for self-representation in court)</li> <li>Key informant feedback on the improved ability of clients to represent themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Client survey (PRA and LSS)</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> <li>FAM LL database</li> </ul>



Framework for the Evaluation of the Family LawLINE pilot project (revised April 2017)		
Questions	Indicators	Data sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of FAM LL clients who believe they could prepare/submit court documents on their own</li> <li>• Proportion of clients who reported documents they prepared and submitted themselves were refused by court as incomplete/inaccurate</li> <li>• Changes in roster lawyer reporting on client understanding between beginning and end of service</li> </ul>	
7. Are the FAM LL services helping clients achieve resolutions to their legal problems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # and % of FAM LL clients who accessed the service before filing a court application</li> <li>• Key informant assessment of the extent to which clients are accessing FAM LL services early in their legal process (especially whether they access FAM LL with enough time to prepare for self-representation in court)Extent to which clients believe the FAM LL helped them resolve their issues</li> <li>• Key informant assessment of FAM LL impact on case resolutions</li> <li>• # and % of clients who had no issues resolved</li> <li>• # and % of clients who had all or some of their issues resolved out of court without a trial</li> <li>• # and % of clients who had all or some issues resolved/settled through an order from a judge after a trial</li> <li>• # and % of clients who had all or some issues resolved/settled with some being settled out of court and some being settled through an order from a judge after a trial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAM LL database</li> <li>• Client survey</li> <li>• Key informant interviews</li> </ul>
8. Are clients satisfied with their experience using the added Family LawLINE services? What, if anything, can be done to improve clients' experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent to which FAM LL clients are satisfied with the level of support received from FAM LL</li> <li>• Client and stakeholder suggestions on improvements to the FAM LL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Client survey</li> <li>• Key informant interviews</li> </ul>
9. Does the expanded FAM LL improve the level of integration across available family legal supports and services? Are the FAM LL referrals to other resources helpful to clients in resolving their family law issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # and type of services referring to FAM LL</li> <li>• # and type of referrals from FAM LL to other services</li> <li>• Extent to which clients feel that the FAM LL referral to a support resource was helpful</li> <li>• Key informant opinions on the effectiveness of referrals from FAM LL services to other services</li> <li>• Key informant assessment of the level of integration between FAM LL and Family Justice Counsellors (or other services)</li> <li>• Key informant assessment of the benefits to clients from integration with Family Justice Counsellors (or other services)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAM LL database</li> <li>• Client survey</li> <li>• Key informant interviews</li> </ul>
10. To what extent has the FAM LL pilot led to net system savings due to efficiencies gained for LSS and/or other areas of the justice system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAM LL average cost per case</li> <li>• Cost implications of estimates of avoided court costs based on costs of actual court activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAM LL database</li> <li>• CSB data</li> <li>• Key informant interviews</li> </ul>

## Appendix C – Instruments

**Legal Services Society of British Columbia  
Family LawLINE Pilot Project Evaluation Refresh**

**Interview guide for internal stakeholders  
(Project Lead, Lead Lawyer, Administrator, roster lawyers)**

The Legal Services Society (LSS) of British Columbia requires an update of the evaluation of the Family LawLINE (FAM LL) additions pilot project, which has been implemented under the Justice Innovation and Transformation Initiative (JITI). LSS hired PRA Inc., an independent research company, to assist in the evaluation. One component of the evaluation is to conduct telephone interviews with stakeholders who are familiar with FAM LL.

The interview should take no more than one hour. The information we gather through the interviews will be summarized in aggregate form. With your permission, we will audio-record the interview. Although we will take notes throughout the interview, no one outside of PRA will see these notes or listen to the recordings.

A process evaluation that focussed on the implementation of the FAM LL project and a summative evaluation that considered outcome achievements and efficiencies were completed in 2015 and 2016, respectively. LSS committed to updating (or refreshing) the evaluation to support the request to the British Columbia Ministry of Justice for the possible expansion of the project. This interview is for the refresh evaluation component and will consider delivery of the FAM LL project and its progress in achieving the expected outcomes.

We realize that you may not be able to answer all of the questions; please let us know, and we will skip to the next question.

**Delivery of FAM LL**

1. Please briefly describe your role in the delivery of the FAM LL pilot project.
2. Based on your observations, since the summative evaluation, how well has the model worked for providing the expected services? Are you aware of any barriers to accessing FAM LL services? (Q1)
3. Have any changes or improvements been made to the model since the summative evaluation? Have any changes been made to streamline or improve the administrative processes of FAM LL? If any changes have been made how well have these worked? (Q1)
4. In your opinion, does FAM LL have sufficient resources and capacity for providing the expected level of services? Please explain why or why not. Have demands for services changed since the summative evaluation and has this affected resources and capacity? Do staff (administrator, lawyers) receive the needed supports for providing the expected services? What steps has FAM LL taken to overcome any resource challenges? (Q2)

## Progress towards achieving objectives

5. Based on your observations, would you say that there is sufficient awareness of FAM LL and the services it provides? Why or why not? Are all potential clients that could benefit from the services aware of FAM LL? (*Probe: What has been done to inform key stakeholders of the service? What about in rural and remote areas, particularly among Indigenous communities? Is there more that could be done to improve awareness?*) (Q3)
6. To what extent is FAM LL able to provide clients with continuity and consistency in service? What are the challenges, if any, in ensuring continuity of service to clients and how are these challenges being addressed? (*Probe: Is “file continuity” being maintained? I.e., is there a smooth hand-off of cases between different lawyers?*) (Q4)
7. Based on your experience, are clients accessing FAM LL services early in their family law process? Are they engaging the service with enough time to prepare for self-representation in court? If not, what needs to change for the clients to access the services sooner? (Q7)
8. From your perspective, is FAM LL able to give clients a good understanding of the family law and the legal process? Please explain what services FAM LL provides that achieve this result for clients, and on what basis you believe client understanding improves after using FAM LL. (Q5)
9. In your opinion, how do FAM LL services influence the client’s ability to manage and resolve their own legal issue? What supports/information/tools does FAM LL provide clients that will result in increasing client capacity in this way? (*Probe: follow-up appointment.*) In your experience, are clients able/willing to handle the tasks expected of them (e.g., seeking information, filling out documents, scanning and emailing completed documents)? (Q6, Q8)
10. Are clients making full and effective use of the available FAM LL services? For example, are clients coming back as expected and completing any tasks assigned to them on their matter? Are they making full use of their available six hours? Is six hours enough? Too much? (Q3)
11. Have you observed any changes in integration of FAM LL services with other family law services since the summative evaluation? Have any steps been taken to increase interactions and communications between the FAM LL and other family law services (e.g., community partners, family justice counsellors, mediation services, family duty counsel)? If yes, what were these and did they enhance the integration of services? Do you think there are any gaps in FAM LL’s integration with other family law services? (Q10)
12. What other family law services are FAM LL clients typically referred to? Do you have any knowledge of the extent to which FAM LL clients follow up on these referrals and how helpful these services are to clients? (Q10)
13. Do you have any other suggested improvements for the FAM LL model or any operational aspects of the model that have not already been mentioned? Do you have any other comments?

**Thank you for your time.**

**Legal Services Society of British Columbia  
Family LawLINE Pilot Project Evaluation Refresh**

**Interview guide for external stakeholders  
(Family Justice Counsellors, Community Resources)**

The Legal Services Society (LSS) of British Columbia requires an update of the evaluation of the Family LawLINE (FAM LL) additions pilot project which has been implemented under the Justice Innovation and Transformation Initiative (JITI). LSS hired PRA Inc., an independent research company, to assist in the evaluation. One component of the evaluation is to conduct telephone interviews with stakeholders who are familiar with FAM LL.

The interview should take no more than one hour. The information we gather through the interviews will be summarized in aggregate form. With your permission, we will audio-record the interview. Although we will take notes throughout the interview, no one outside of PRA will see these notes or listen to the recordings.

The current evaluation focusses on the delivery of the FAM LL project and its progress in achieving the expected outcomes since the summative evaluation in 2016.

We realize that you may not be able to answer all of the questions; please let us know, and we will skip to the next question.

**Delivery of the FAM LL pilot**

1. Please briefly describe your involvement with the FAM LL pilot project (e.g., how your organization works with or interacts with FAM LL) or with clients of the FAM LL pilot project.
2. Have any changes or improvements been made to the model since the summative evaluation? If any changes have been made, how well have these worked? (Q1)

**Progress towards achieving objectives**

3. How would you rate your knowledge of the services available to clients through the expanded FAM LL? Are there particular aspects of the services of the FAM LL that you wish you better understood? (Q10)
4. Do you refer your clients to the FAM LL? In what circumstances/for what issues do you refer to the FAM LL? In what circumstances would you not refer a potentially eligible client? Are you aware of any barriers to accessing LawLINE? Overall, how would you describe your experience of referring clients to the FAM LL? (Q10)
5. Based on your experience, are clients accessing FAM LL services early in their family law process? Are they engaging the service with enough time to prepare for self-representation in court? If not, what needs to change for the clients to access the services sooner? (Q7)

6. From your perspective, is the FAM LL able to give clients a good understanding of the family law and the legal process? Of the options available to them for resolving their family law issue (e.g., *collaborative processes versus court*)? Please explain what services FAM LL provides that achieve this result for clients, and on what basis you believe client understanding improves after using the FAM LL. (Q5)
7. In your opinion, how do the FAM LL services influence the client's ability to manage and resolve their own legal issue? What supports/information/tools does the FAM LL provide clients that will result in increasing client capacity in this way? In your experience, are clients able/willing to handle the tasks expected of them (e.g., seeking information, filling out documents, scanning and emailing completed documents)? (Q6)
8. Do you have any other suggestions for FAM LL that would improve clients' experiences? Do you have any other comments? (Q9)

**Thank you for your time**

**Legal Services Society of British Columbia  
Family LawLINE Additions Evaluation Refresh**

**Survey questionnaire for clients**

Hello, is this \_\_\_\_\_?

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ with PRA Inc. We are an independent research company that the Legal Services Society, you may know them as legal aid, has hired to help them on a study of one of their services, the Family LawLINE. You may know this as ‘the LawLINE’. The LawLINE is a telephone service that offers legal advice to eligible clients with family law issues. Over the telephone, lawyers provide advice on legal processes and on possible options for resolving family law issues, including out-of-court settlements. They may also help with drafting documents.

Legal aid wants to know how well the LawLINE is working for clients. We understand you were or still are a client of the LawLINE. When you first obtained services from the LawLINE you indicated you may be contacted with questions about the value of the services. That is why I am calling today, to invite you to participate in a short survey. Please be assured that I will not ask you anything personal about your family law matter, only about the services you received and how helpful these were to you. This information will help the Legal Services Society in identifying how the project has helped people and how it can be improved.

Your information will be combined with the responses of others and reported all together, so your name will not be mentioned in any report. No one outside of PRA will see your answers.

The survey should take up to 15 minutes. Would you be willing to participate in the survey?  
RECORD RESPONSE (Yes/No). [Thank them and either proceed or end call].

Before we begin, for all the questions in this survey, please only think about the services you received from Family LawLINE since [enter MONTH/YEAR FROM **Date of first service variable**]

1. How did you first find out about the LawLINE? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY – DON’T READ UNLESS REQUIRE PROBING)
  - Family Justice Counsellors or someone else at the Justice Access Centre (JAC)
  - At the courthouse (e.g. the duty counsel, someone else at the courthouse)
  - A private lawyer
  - Saw it online/through internet
  - Someone at legal aid (this includes intake workers at the Legal Aid call centre)
  - Someone at the Family Mediation Referral Pilot
  - A friend/relative/acquaintance
  - Other (specify)
  - Don’t know/can’t recall

2. About how many times did you talk to a lawyer at the LawLINE about your legal issue?  
Insert number \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't know/can't recall

[if Q2=1, then Q3-1, so respondent can skip to Q4]

3. How many different LawLINE lawyers did you speak with about your legal issue?  
Insert number \_\_\_\_\_ (If same lawyer each time, enter 1)  
Don't know/can't recall

4. [if Q2=1, then ask] After speaking to the intake worker at the legal aid call centre, how long did you wait before you talked with a LawLINE lawyer?

[if Q2>1, then ask] Thinking of the first time you called the legal aid call centre and the intake worker referred you to LawLINE, how long did you wait before you talked with a LawLINE lawyer?

[ENTER TIME UNDER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING]

\_\_\_\_\_ MINUTES

\_\_\_\_\_ HOURS

\_\_\_\_\_ DAYS

\_\_\_\_\_ WEEKS

Don't know/can't recall

5. Did you feel the wait time was...?  
Too long  
About right  
Don't know/can't recall

6. **[REMOVED]**

[NOTE TO INTERVIEWER ABOUT Q7: *if clients called LawLINE to book a follow-up appointment or seek further advice or information about their family law matter, they typically need to leave a message on the LawLINE Voice Mailbox, after which they would receive a callback from the a LawLINE intake worker, who would assess the client's readiness for the next appointment or assess the urgency of the matter. If urgent, the client would typically be put in the queue to wait to talk to a LawLINE lawyer.*

*We want to measure the amount of time from the client leaving their voice mail to the time they got to speak to the lawyer (not the LawLINE intake worker).*



7. [if Q2 is more than 1] You indicated that you spoke to a LawLINE lawyer more than once. Thinking of all the other times you contacted the LawLINE to book an appointment or seek further advice or information from a LawLINE lawyer, what was the **longest** you waited before talking with a lawyer?

[ENTER TIME UNDER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING]

\_\_\_\_\_ MINUTES

\_\_\_\_\_ HOURS

\_\_\_\_\_ DAYS

\_\_\_\_\_ WEEKS

Don't know/can't recall

8. [if Q2 is more than 1] Did you feel the wait time was...?

Too long

About right

Don't know

9. Thinking of all the times you contacted the LawLINE, how would you rate the process of reaching a LawLINE lawyer? [READ RESPONSES]

Very easy

Somewhat easy

Somewhat difficult

Very difficult

Don't know

10. [IF Q9 IS 'somewhat or very difficult'] Can you tell me what made the process difficult?

Specify

Don't know

11. Were you informed about the option to call back again if you required further assistance in your family law matter?

If Yes, how were you informed of the option to call back? [DON'T READ, CAN SELECT MORE THAN 1 'YES']

Yes, the LawLINE lawyer told me.

Yes, I saw it on a form I received from the lawyer

Yes, the intake worker told me about this option

Yes (some other way / can't recall how)

No

Don't know/can't recall

12. Did you receive all the help you needed during your call/calls with the LawLINE lawyer(s)?

Yes [SKIP TO Q13\_2]

No

Don't know [SKIP TO Q13\_2]

13. [IF Q12=NO] What additional help would you have liked to receive from the LawLINE lawyer?

Other (specify)

Don't know

**NEW QUESTION** [all respondents]

[CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY]

Q13\_2 - When you called LawLINE, did you:

Use your own mobile device (cellphone, smartphone)

Use your own landline

Use a phone from a community agency/organization

Other

Don't know/no response

**NOTE A**

[Skip to Q21 if Q2 = 1 or Don't know/can't recall]

[Skip to Q18 if Q3 = 1 or Don't know/can't recall]

Otherwise, continue...

**Respondents who called multiple times and talked to more than 1 lawyer**

14. [REMOVED]

15. How helpful or unhelpful was it to you to work with different LawLINE lawyers rather than just one LawLINE lawyer? Was it....?

Very helpful

Helpful

Made no difference

Not helpful

[SKIP TO Q17]

Not at all helpful

[SKIP TO Q17]

Don't know

[SKIP TO Q21]

16. Why did you find it helpful or very helpful or made no difference? [DON'T READ UNLESS NECESSARY TO PROBE. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

- You got to hear different opinions from the lawyers
- The lawyers had reviewed your file and/or were familiar with your case
- Other (specify)
- Don't know

[SKIP TO Q21]

17. Why did you find it not helpful or not at all helpful? [DON'T READ UNLESS NECESSARY TO PROBE. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

- You had to repeat your story each time
- The lawyer(s) were not all familiar with your case
- You got different opinions/legal advice from the lawyer(s)
- There was no continuum of service
- Other (specify)
- Don't know

[SKIP TO Q21]

**Clients who called the LawLINE multiple times, but talked to same lawyer each time**

18. How helpful was it to you to work with the same LawLINE lawyer compared to if you had different lawyers each time you called? Was it....?

- Very helpful
- Helpful
- Made no difference
- Not helpful [SKIP TO Q20]
- Not at all helpful [SKIP TO Q20]
- Don't know [SKIP TO Q21]

19. Why did you find it helpful or very helpful or made no difference? [DON'T READ UNLESS NECESSARY TO PROBE. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

- The lawyer was familiar with your case
- Didn't have to re-explain situation to different lawyers/keeping explaining each time
- You got to know the lawyer and were comfortable with them
- You got consistent advice/opinions throughout the process
- Other (specify)
- Don't know

[SKIP TO Q21]

20. Why did you find it not helpful or not at all helpful? [DON'T READ UNLESS NECESSARY TO PROBE. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
- You weren't satisfied with the advice the lawyer gave you
  - You weren't satisfied with the amount of help the lawyer gave you
  - You didn't get to work with the lawyer you had wanted to work with
  - Other (specify)
  - Don't know

## LEGAL INFORMATION/ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

**Next I'd like to ask you about the type of legal information and legal assistance you received from the LawLINE and how helpful this information was to you.**

21. Which of the following types of information and assistance did the LawLINE provide you? Did they...
- [Yes, No, Don't know/can't recall for each]
- Explain and provide you with information about your family law matter?
  - Explain the legal process to you?
  - Tell you about your different options for handling and resolving your legal matter?
  - Specifically talk to you about ways you could resolve your matter without going to court?
  - Help with forms or documents needed for your legal matter?
22. [If yes to any of Q21] Thinking of all the types of information and assistance you received from LawLINE, how helpful was this information and assistance for understanding the legal process and your family law matter? Was it...?
- Very helpful [SKIP TO Q24]
  - Helpful [SKIP TO Q24]
  - Not helpful
  - Not at all helpful
  - Don't know [SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q25]
23. Why do you believe this information and assistance was either not helpful or not at all helpful to you for understanding the legal process and your family law matter?
- Specify
  - Don't know
24. [If yes to any of Q21] Again, thinking of all the types of information and assistance you received from LawLINE, how helpful was this information and assistance to you for understanding and making decisions on your various options for handling your family law matter? Was it...?
- Very helpful [SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q25]
  - Helpful [SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q25]
  - Not helpful
  - Not at all helpful
  - Don't know [SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q25]

25. Why do you believe this information and assistance was either not helpful or not at all helpful to you for understanding and making decisions on your various options for handling your family law matter?

Specify

Don't know

[NOTE: IF THEY DID NOT INDICATE THEY GOT HELP WITH FORMS IN Q21 SKIP TO Q28]

26. [If yes to forms/documents in Q21] Which of following types of help did the LawLINE give you on forms and documents needed for your legal matter? READ RESPONSES; CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

The type of forms or documents you needed to complete

Where to find the forms or documents

Information and advice on how to fill out the forms or documents yourself

They checked over your forms to ensure they were completed properly

How to submit the forms or documents to the court or wherever else they needed to be submitted

They actually helped you fill out some or all of the forms or documents

Anything else (please specify) (INTERVIEWER: IF THEY SAID NO TO ALL OF THE ABOVE ASK THEM HERE WHAT THE LAWYER DID HELP THEM WITH ON THE FORMS OR DOCUMENTS)

Don't know/can't recall

[SKIP TO Q28]

27. Overall, how helpful was this assistance to you for preparing your own forms and documents?

Was it....?

Very helpful

Helpful

Not helpful

Not at all helpful

Or is it not applicable, you did not prepare own documents [SKIP to Q28]

Don't know

## NEW QUESTION

Q27\_1 Did you provide any forms or documents to LawLINE? This could include forms you filled out on your own or with the assistance of the LawLINE lawyer or another community organization.

Yes

No [SKIP to Q28]

Don't know [SKIP to Q28]

**NEW QUESTION**

Q27\_2 How easy was it for you to provide your forms and documents to LawLINE?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Not easy
- Not at all easy
- Don't know

**NEW QUESTION**

Q27\_3 – How did you provide your forms and documents to LawLINE?

[CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY - DON'T READ UNLESS NECESSARY]

[NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: RESPONDENTS WHO PROVIDED FORMS/DOCS TO LAWLINE SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST TWO RESPONSES: 1) HOW THEY SCANNED THEIR FORMS/DOCS; 2) HOW THEY SENT THEIR FORMS/DOCS

- I used my own scanner to scan my forms/documents
- I used a friend's/relative's/acquaintance's scanner to scan my forms/documents
- I used a community agency/organization to scan my forms/documents
- I used my smartphone to take a photo of my forms/documents
- I sent my forms/documents to LawLINE using my email address
- I sent my forms/documents to LawLINE using a friend's/relative's/acquaintance's email address
- I sent my forms/documents to LawLINE from a community agency/organization
- Other method of scanning and sending forms/documents
- Don't know/can't recall

28. Did you submit any documents to the court registry or court services?

- Yes
- No [SKIP TO Q31]
- Their lawyer submitted the documents [SKIP TO Q31]
- Don't know/can't recall [SKIP TO Q31]

29. [If yes to Q28] Were they accepted by the court registry the first time you tried to submit them?

- Yes [SKIP TO Q31]
- No
- Don't know/can't recall [SKIP TO Q31]

30. [If No to Q29] Why were they not accepted the first time you tried to submit them? Was it because you were told that.... [READ AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

- there was information missing
- the forms were not completed correctly
- Other (specify)
- Don't know/can't recall

## **REFERRALS PROVIDED BY LAWLINE**

31. Did your LawLINE lawyer(s) refer you to other services, including other agencies that could help you with your legal issues? *(if respondent is unsure, some examples include Family Duty Counsel, Family Justice Counsellors (FJCs), Justice Access Centre (JAC), court-based resources (incl. registry), Family Mediation Referral Pilot, private lawyer or mediator)*

Yes

No [SKIP TO STATUS OF THEIR FAMILY LAW MATTER]

Don't know/can't recall [SKIP TO STATUS OF THEIR FAMILY LAW MATTER]

32. Did you use any of the services referred to you by your LawLINE lawyer(s)?

Yes

No

Don't know/can't recall

Q32\_1 [only clients who used referral]

Were the services the LawLINE lawyer referred you to helpful?

Yes

No

Don't know/can't recall

## **STATUS OF THEIR FAMILY LAW MATTER**

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about what has happened with your family law matter since you first called the LawLINE . I will not ask you anything personal about your family law matter. We understand you first got help from the LawLINE around [ENTER MONTH AND YEAR FROM DATABASE; DATE OF FIRST SERVICE -]. For the rest of the questions please answer based on what happened since then and not anything that took place regarding your family law matter before that time.

33. Which of the following best describes the current status of your family law issues that you called the LawLINE about? [CHECK ONE ONLY]

- All issues have been resolved or settled either through agreement or an order from a judge
- Some issues have been resolved or settled, but some are still unresolved
- No issues are yet resolved [SKIP TO Q44]
- Don't know [SKIP TO Q44]

[INTERVIEWER READS] We are interested in learning about how people were able to resolve their matter, if they did so out of court or through a trial with a judge. By “out of court,” we mean that sometimes people are able to resolve some or all of their issues without the need of a court trial with a judge. This could be, for example, by coming to an agreement on their own with the other party, or by going to something called mediation, or by going to a Family Case Conference or Judicial Case Conference. A case conference is an informal meeting with a judge or Master to try to help people resolve their matter without a trial.

34. (Q33=All or some issues resolved or settled) For your issues that are resolved, how were you able to resolve them? Was it that:

- They were all settled by agreement without a trial
- They were all settled through an order from a judge after a trial [SKIP TO Q38]
- Some were settled by agreement and some were settled through an order from a judge after a trial
- Don't know/can't recall [SKIP TO Q44]

**[INTERVIEW ONLY READ IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE WHAT SETTLING BY AGREEMENT MEANS]** This means the issue is settled without the need for a trial before a judge. This could be, for example, by coming to an agreement on their own with the other party, or by going to something called mediation, or by going to a Family Case Conference or Judicial Case Conference. A case conference is an informal meeting with a judge or Master to try to help people resolve their matter without a trial.



35. How were you able to resolve all or some of your matters out of court without a trial? Was it through...[CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
- Worked out an agreement on your own with the other party
  - Taking part in mediation with a mediator
  - Taking part in a Family Case Conference or Judicial Case Conference
  - Other (specify)
  - Don't know/Can't recall

[INTERVIEWER PROVIDE THE BELOW DESCRIPTION IF THEY ARE STILL UNSURE OF WHAT THE CASE CONFERENCES ARE. ALSO, THEY MIGHT HAVE GONE TO ONE OF THESE EVEN IF THEY HAVE RESOLVED ALL THEIR ISSUES WITHOUT A TRIAL OR IF, IN THE END, THEY HAD TO GO TO A TRIAL]

**Family Case Conference in Provincial Court:** *A Family Case Conference is a private, informal one-hour meeting between you, the other party, and a Provincial Court judge (and your lawyers if you have them). At a Family Case Conference, the judge will help you try to settle some or all of your issues. The judge can also make court orders.*

**Judicial Case Conference in Supreme Court:** *A Judicial Case Conference is a private, informal one-hour meeting with a Supreme Court judge or master and the other party (and your lawyers if you have them). At a Judicial Case Conference the judge or master will help you try to settle some or all of your issues.*

**HELPFULNESS OF THE LAWLINE IF RESOLVED ON THEIR OWN, THROUGH MEDIATION, OTHER OR SAID DON'T KNOW**

36. How helpful was the information or assistance you received from the LawLINE in resolving all or some of your matters out of court? Was it....?
- Very helpful
  - Helpful
  - Not helpful
  - Not at all helpful
  - Or is it not applicable, you did not get information or assistance from the LawLINE for this
  - Don't know
- [SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q37]  
[SKIP TO NOTE AFTER Q37]

37. Please explain why you believe the assistance from the LawLINE was [INSERT RESPONSE FROM Q36] to you in resolving all or some of your matters out of court.
- Specify
  - Don't know
  - No response

**IF SAID IN Q34 THAT ALL ISSUES RESOLVED WITHOUT A TRIAL SKIP TO Q44]**

38. [REMOVED]  
39. [REMOVED]

40. You indicated in an earlier question that some or all of the matters that you addressed through LawLINE were resolved through a trial with a judge. Did you represent yourself at the trial or did you hire a private lawyer?

Represented self

Hired a lawyer

[SKIP TO Q44]

41. **[If self-represented]** Did the LawLINE help you prepare for representing yourself in court? For example, did the LawLINE lawyer give you information or advice about..... [READ RESPONSES; CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

What to expect in court

How the court process works

What to bring to court

What to wear to court

How to address the judge

How to present your case

Other information/advice about representing yourself in court (specify)

No, no information or advice was given

Don't know/can't recall

42. How prepared did you feel to handle the trial by yourself?

Very prepared

Prepared

Not prepared

Not at all prepared

Don't know

[SKIP TO Q44]

43. Please explain why you felt (insert response from Q42)?

44. **WORDING FOR THOSE WHO HAVE HAD A TRIAL** (*Those who said in Q34 that all or some issues settled through an order from a judge after a trial*): Other than for your trial, have you appeared before a judge on your family law matter for any other reasons since you first called the LawLINE in [enter MONTH/YEAR FROM **Date of first service variable** included in sample file]

**WORDING FOR THOSE WHO DID NOT HAVE A TRIAL** (*all other respondents*): Have you appeared before a judge on your family law matter for any reason since you first called the LawLINE in [enter MONTH/YEAR FROM **Date of first service variable** included in sample file]

Yes

No

Don't know/can't recall

[SKIP TO NOTE BEFORE Q55]

[SKIP TO NOTE BEFORE Q55]

45. **[REMOVED]**

46. **[REMOVED]**

47. Did the LawLINE give you any information about the court appearance and how to prepare for it?  
Yes  
No [SKIP TO Q49]  
Don't know/can't recall [SKIP TO Q49]
48. [If yes to Q47] Was the information and assistance from the LawLINE helpful to you for understanding any of the following about the court appearance?[CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]  
What would happen in court  
What you need to do get ready  
What information you should bring  
What you should say  
Other (specify)  
None of the above, the assistance was not helpful  
Don't know
49. [REMOVED]– SKIP TO Q50  
50. [REMOVED]  
51. [REMOVED]  
52. [REMOVED]  
53. [REMOVED]  
54. [REMOVED]

**[NOTE: IF SAID IN Q33 THAT THEY HAVE RESOLVED SOME OR NO ISSUES, OR SAID DON'T KNOW GO TO Q55, OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q61]**

55. What are your next steps for trying to resolve your family matter? Do you primarily plan to....[CHECK ONE ONLY]  
Take part in mediation with a mediator?  
Take part in a Family Case Conference or Judicial Case Conference?  
Try to resolve the matter on your own with the other party without a court trial?  
Have a court trial with a judge? [SKIP TO Q58]  
Other (specify) [SKIP TO Q61]  
Unsure of next steps
56. If you try to resolve you matters outside of a court trial, how helpful do you think the assistance and information you received from the LawLINE will be in this process? Will it be....?  
Very helpful  
Helpful  
Not helpful  
Not at all helpful  
Or is it not applicable, you have not yet received this type of  
help from the LawLINE [SKIP TO Q61]  
Don't know [SKIP TO Q61]

57. Please explain why you believe the assistance from the LawLINE will be [INSERT RESPONSE FROM Q56]  
Specify  
Don't know

[SKIP TO Q61]

58. [REMOVED]  
59. [REMOVED]  
60. [REMOVED]

**FOR ALL**

61. What would you have done if the LawLINE service was not available? For example, would you have.....[CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]  
Hired your own lawyer  
Relied on the Duty Counsel available in the court  
Represented yourself in court on your own without help  
Tried to resolve the matter out of court  
Dropped the matter entirely/done nothing  
Tried to find another service to help  
Other (specify)  
Don't know

62. [REMOVED]  
63. [REMOVED]

The last few questions are about your overall experience with the LawLINE

64. Did you feel treated with respect?  
Yes  
No  
Don't know

65. Did you feel they listened to you and took the time to understand your legal issue?  
Yes  
No  
Don't know

66. Overall, how satisfied were you with the help and support you received through the LawLINE?  
Were you....?  
Very satisfied  
Satisfied  
Unsatisfied  
Very unsatisfied  
Don't know

67. What, if anything, would you change about the LawLINE to make the services better? [DON'T READ; CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
- No suggestions, services were good
  - Have more lawyers available
  - Allow more time with the lawyer
  - Make sure the client works with the same lawyer all the time
  - Less wait time for appointments
  - Allow the lawyer to represent you in court
  - More communication/advertising to let people know it is available
  - Expand the types of issues they can cover
  - Other (specify)
  - Don't know
68. Do you have any other comments?
- Yes (specify)
  - No

**THAT IS THE END OF THE SURVEY. THANK-YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.**