

Notice to Counsel



Legal
Services
Society

#105 – April 2020

Updates to the Legal Aid BC Tariffs

As set out in the Tariff Agreement between the Association of Legal Aid Lawyers (ALL) and the Ministry of Attorney General, tariff rates are increasing for services provided on or after April 1, 2020.

The agreement implements tariff increases in stages starting November 4, 2019, and counsel will receive the rate applicable at the time that services were provided.

Revisions related to the Tariff Agreement:

- To reflect increases effective April 1, 2020 all chapters of the *Legal Aid BC (LABC) Tariffs* have been updated with new rates, as outlined in the table below.

| Year of Call | Hourly tariff rates for services provided before November 4, 2019 | Hourly tariff rates for services provided on or after November 4, 2019 | Hourly tariff rates for services provided on or after April 1, 2020 |
|--|---|--|---|
| Less than 4 years | \$83.90 | \$104.88 | \$111.17 |
| 4 or more years and less than 10 years | \$88.10 | \$110.13 | \$116.73 |
| 10 or more years | \$92.29 | \$115.36 | \$122.29 |
| Enhanced Fees | \$125.00 | \$156.25 | \$165.63 |

- Effective April 1, 2020, junior counsel rates have increased to \$95.18 for tier 1 (less than 4 years of call). Junior counsel are entitled to tier rates, where applicable.
- The criminal block fees have been increased an equivalent percentage to the hourly rates.

Other tariff revisions include:

- Timesheets** – All timekeeping records submitted with invoices must be typed. You may continue to use your own digital timesheet, timekeeping software, or you may use a new **fillable timesheet** provided by LABC for optional lawyer use.
- Payment of Tiered Rates** – Tiered rates, will be calculated based on the service date or service month (new - see below) of the tariff item billed and your call date, where applicable (currently tiered rates are based on the date the contract was issued and your call date at that time).
- Disbursements Tariff** – rates for meals and medical-legal experts have been increased as per BC Public Service and Doctors of BC rate increases.

LSS Online (Lawyer Portal) changes to support billing processes based on service date

- The 'certification' box will not pop up anymore as our billing system now calculates rates and tiers.
- When invoicing, your billable rate will calculate based on the tariff item's service date (or month) and your call date for each tariff item billed.
- All hourly preparation items now require a service 'month' to be entered when invoicing.
 - *For example, when billing for preparation time for January, February and March, bill each month separately claiming the total hours for each of those months. This change applies to new invoices and any draft invoices.*
- Some Criminal Tariff items now require a service date to be recorded, such as the Provincial Court Fee and Gladue fee. When invoicing, enter the last date of service provided under that item to ensure you are paid the highest rate available.

Transition rule for contracts

Effective April 1, 2020, you will receive the tariff rate increase for fee services provided on or after this date and you will also need to provide a service date or service month when invoicing.

Further information

Please see **FAQs** for further information regarding the tariff and Lawyer Portal invoicing changes.

As always, we welcome your feedback regarding the *Legal Aid BC Tariffs*. If you have any comments, please email lawyersupport@lss.bc.ca.

Heidi Mason,
Vice-President, Legal Advice and Representation

April 1, 2020