

Community Partners

ORIENTATION MANUAL

triage



guidance

collaboration

*community
engagement*

support

referrals

resources

education

outreach

Information



Legal
Services
Society

British Columbia
www.legalaid.bc.ca

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About this manual

This manual is designed as a training and orientation resource for community partners working with the Legal Services Society (LSS) in communities throughout BC. Community partners are part of LSS's community engagement initiative. The way community partners support the work of LSS will vary, but each partner needs the same core information about LSS. The information and resources provided here will support you in the outreach work you're doing on behalf of LSS.

Topics covered in the manual include:

- / basic information about LSS and its services, and links to the LSS website for more complete information;
- / important policy and procedural information for you;
- / useful resources and contacts available to you;
- / suggestions about how you can connect with your community; and
- / guidelines about making presentations in your community.

Some information in this manual is highlighted as a note or with a question mark in the margins, or as a tip as follows:

Note

Summarizes important information about an issue or procedure.

? Identifies where you can find more information about a topic.

Tip — Provides specific resources, links, or practical information to help you connect your community to LSS services and resources.

If you're unfamiliar with any of the legal terms used in this manual, there are several sources for definitions.

- / The definitions page on LSS's Family Law in BC website at familylaw.lss.bc.ca/resources/definitions.php
- / The legal dictionary on the Justice Education Society website at justiceeducation.ca/legal-dictionary

If you want to explain a term to someone in their own language, you could look for help in the Multilingual Legal Glossary, where you can enter a legal term in English and get a translation in many different languages. See legalglossary.ca/dictionary/index.asp.

Feedback

If you have suggestions for information to add to the manual, or any corrections or changes, email the community engagement coordinator at communitypartnerships@lss.bc.ca.



About LSS

The Legal Services Society (LSS) provides legal aid in BC, including legal information, legal advice, legal representation, and referrals to other services.

Tip — The LSS website provides a lot of information about its services and resources. See legalaid.bc.ca.

The items in the top navigation bar on the homepage quickly take you to different parts of the website:

- / *Legal Aid* goes to information about our services.
- / *Lawyers* details information about the LSS tariff and what types of services are paid for on different legal issues.
- / *Community workers* contains resources for community workers, and includes a link to the LSS publications section.
- / *LSS news* includes facts about LSS, our recent news, and evaluations of our services and programs.
- / *About us* explains LSS structure and governance.

There are links to our other three websites at the bottom of the homepage.



LSS organization

Governance

The legislation that governs LSS is the Legal Services Society Act. LSS was created in 1979 as a non-profit organization accountable to the public and funded primarily by the provincial government. It's governed by a board of nine that includes members appointed by the government (five) and by the Law Society (four). The chief executive officer (CEO) and the executive management committee (EMC) are responsible for managing LSS.

Under the LSS Act, the society has a mandate to:

- / help people solve their legal problems and facilitate access to justice,
- / establish and administer an effective and efficient system for providing legal aid to people in BC, and
- / provide advice to the attorney general about legal aid and access to justice for people in BC.

The society's mission statement says that LSS is to "provide innovative and integrated services that enable clients to effectively address their legal issues in a broad social context."

LSS is guided by the following principles:

- / to give priority to identifying and assessing the legal needs of people with low incomes in BC,
- / to consider the perspectives of justice system service providers and the general public,
- / to coordinate legal aid with other aspects of the justice system and community services, and
- / to be flexible and innovative in the manner in which it carries out its mandate.

? More information about the governance and organization of LSS, its board, and executive is on the LSS website at legalaid.bc.ca/about.

Note

Each year, LSS develops divisional plans that outline actions we'll take to advance our goals.



Scope of LSS services

LSS provides legal help on a continuum that runs from legal information through brief legal advice to legal representation. Eligibility for advice and representation services depends on LSS policies and the circumstances of each case. See the LSS website for details.

? The LSS website lists legal information sources at legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/legalInformation.php. Another useful resource is the Links page at legalaid.bc.ca/general/Links.php.

Legal information

Even when LSS doesn't provide legal representation, its goal is to provide some level of legal help to all people who apply for legal aid, or make a referral to a service that can help.

- / Information in LSS publications and websites is available for free to all British Columbians.
- / LSS staff, called legal information outreach workers (LIOWs) and Aboriginal community legal workers (ACLWs), are available in some offices to guide people in the use of these resources.
- / Other LSS Regional Centre staff (intake legal assistants [ILAs]) and local agents (LAs) also refer people to resources.

As one of our community partners, you play an essential role bringing information about LSS resources to people in rural, remote, and isolated communities across BC.

The following sections of this manual will give you more information about the various resources available to you and the people you help.

Tip — The Clicklaw website lists legal resources created by a number of public legal education and information groups in BC. See page 32, or go to clicklaw.bc.ca.

Note

People applying for legal advice services are allowed to have a higher monthly net income than those applying for legal representation.

Legal advice

LSS provides legal advice in certain areas of law to people who qualify financially. In these cases, the lawyer gives some advice about the legal issue the person is dealing with, or appears for them in court, but doesn't take the person on as a long-term client, or take responsibility for managing the case.



Briefly, LSS advice services include:

- / Duty counsel lawyers who may provide brief legal advice in criminal and family matters (at most courthouses), and for immigration issues (at Canada Border Services Agency's enforcement centre).
- / Family advice lawyers (at some courthouses and at Justice Access Centres).
- / Family LawLINE (available through the LSS Call Centre for some low income clients who aren't eligible for legal representation) where, over the phone, family lawyers give brief "next step" advice about family law issues including parenting time, custody, access, support, and agreements.
- / Brydges Line (1-866-458-5500) that provides initial legal advice for people who have been arrested, detained, or are under active investigation by a law enforcement agency and in custody but not yet charged.
- / Advice counsel (1-888-595-5677) who give legal advice outside of regular hours (weekends, evenings, holidays) to someone awaiting a bail hearing while in custody at a police lock-up.

Legal representation

Legal representation may be available to clients who are financially eligible and need help with a legal issue that is covered by LSS.

The main issues for which LSS may provide legal representation are:

- / criminal charges
- / serious family problems
- / child protection matters
- / immigration problems
- / mental health and prison charges

If a person receives approval for legal representation from LSS, they're assigned a lawyer through LSS intake staff or one of the local agents.

? Information about legal advice services listed here is on the LSS website at legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/legalAdvice.php.

? The LSS website has more information about legal representation services at legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/legalRepresentation.php.

Link to financial guidelines from that page, or go to legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/dolQualifyRepresentation.php.



Applying for legal aid

LSS uses a variety of intake methods to make our services accessible to as many people as possible.

Intake at LSS offices

LSS has offices called regional centres in Vancouver and Terrace. The Vancouver office has in-person intake services as well as legal information outreach workers (LHOWs). Vancouver is the base for the LSS Call Centre that takes applications for legal aid over the phone (see below). LSS administration and other departments are based in Vancouver.

The Terrace office has intake services, staff lawyers for criminal and family matters, and an LHOW. Terrace also runs a satellite office in Prince Rupert that has intake services and an LHOW (see page 30 for more information about LHOWs).

? Current information about the address, phone number, or hours of operation for any LSS or local agent office is on the LSS website at legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/legalAidOffices.php.

Intake by local agents

In other parts of BC, LSS contracts with lawyers to provide intake services. These lawyers act as local agents for LSS. They and their staff:

- / assess applications for legal aid,
- / issue legal aid contracts to lawyers,
- / schedule duty counsel appointments,
- / establish links with the community to promote legal aid, and
- / distribute public legal information.

Local agents are located in over 30 communities around BC. In some communities, they provide intake outreach to Aboriginal bands.

Note

When you refer people to the LSS Call Centre, explain that they'll go through a brief, user-friendly phone tree and may have to wait to talk to someone. It's a priority for us to keep the wait time to only a few minutes.

LSS Call Centre

People can also apply for legal aid over the phone. If they want to do so refer them to the LSS Call Centre:

- / 604-408-2172 (Greater Vancouver)
- / 1-866-577-2525 (elsewhere in BC, call no charge)

The LSS Call Centre operates at the following times:

- / 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays
- / 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Wednesdays



Legal Aid immigration line

People who want to claim refugee status, or are facing an immigration proceeding that might result in their removal from Canada, can get a lawyer to represent them in their immigration law case. If they want to claim refugee status and they qualify, they can get a lawyer to help them fill out forms, prepare for their refugee claim hearing, and represent them at their hearing.

Refer them to the Legal Aid immigration line for more information, or to apply:

- / 604-601-6076 (Greater Vancouver)
- / 1-888-601-6076 (elsewhere in BC, call no charge)

Clients can also visit the legal aid office in Vancouver.

Interpretation services

- / The phone message on the LSS Call Centre is available in several languages. If someone wants to hear information in a language other than English, they should wait until they hear their language mentioned (in that language) and follow the instructions in the message.
- / Clients are expected to bring a friend or relative to help interpret at an intake interview, or a professional interpreter who can bill LSS for interpretation services. Relatives or friends may be used as interpreters where no professional interpreter is available only if they're competent to interpret the full contents of an intake interview. Some intake staff may speak the language a client speaks but may not be available to interpret when needed.
- / LSS has an interpreter service available through the LSS Call Centre for clients who don't speak English or have such a limited understanding of English that it's difficult to conduct an interview. These clients may phone the call centre and ask for interpreter services in their language. Welcome messages in several languages explain the process.



Support for Aboriginal clients

LSS supports Aboriginal clients through the following services and resources:

- / Intake services outreach
Local agents in some communities provide intake outreach to Aboriginal bands. To find locations, see legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/legalAidOffices.php.
- / Aboriginal community legal workers (ACLWs)
ACLWs provide information and limited advice services, available in Duncan and Nanaimo. Find out more at legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/aboriginalCommunityLegalWorker.php.
- / Advice services
 - + Family law advice clinics
Family law advice clinics are available in some communities. To find locations, dates, and hours, see legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/legalAidOffices.php#aboriginalServices, or contact the Indigenous Services manager or community engagement coordinator. Email Aboriginal@lss.bc.ca or communitypartnerships@lss.bc.ca.
 - + First Nations Court duty counsel
First Nations Court is held in several locations of the province, and duty counsel is available in each location. Find out locations at aboriginal.legalaid.bc.ca/rights/firstNationsCourt.php or email Aboriginal@lss.bc.ca.
- / LSS resources
 - + Indigenous Services manager
Aboriginal@lss.bc.ca
Communities can consult with our Indigenous Services manager about services, appropriate resources, and other issues.
 - + Aboriginal Legal Aid in BC website
aboriginal.legalaid.bc.ca
This website helps Aboriginal people across BC understand their legal rights. It has information about Aboriginal legal issues, Gladue and other rights, and First Nations Court. It also provides links to free publications, such as *Your Gladue Rights*, and to community resources.



About community partners

LSS is pleased to work with a wide range of community partners around BC. We look to you to help us connect with people in your community who may take advantage of legal aid services they might not otherwise know about or be confident accessing.

Your role as a community partner is to provide access to public legal education and information (PLEI) materials, act as a link between LSS and people who need to apply for legal aid services, and raise awareness in the community of legal aid and other resources that can help resolve legal issues. In your role, you can provide support to make legal aid more effective. For example, you can:

- / tell people about the services LSS provides (see the tip below);
- / provide contact information for various legal advice, representation, and advocacy services;
- / provide access to print and online resources produced by LSS;
- / educate other service providers, professionals, or volunteers in your community about the services LSS provides;
- / demonstrate how some of the online resources are used; and
- / introduce people to various legal information resources and services that can be accessed throughout BC.

Note

Though you can't provide legal advice or representation services, you can provide information about relevant LSS resources, and/or refer people to other services or agencies.

Tip — LSS provides the following services:

- / Legal information available in print and online
- / Legal advice to assess a client's particular situation and inform about the legal process involved
- / Legal representation to present information and an argument on legal issues (often to a court or tribunal) on behalf of a person wanting help



Note

For more information about your role and responsibilities, see the Quick reference guide on page 48.

Your role and responsibilities

As a community partner for LSS, you're the face of LSS in your community. Whether people come to your office for legal information or you're doing outreach work to promote LSS resources and services, you'll have contact with the public on behalf of LSS.

You provide public access to legal information resources and help to connect people to publicly available services. Legal information includes:

- / legal and procedural definitions and knowledge about the legal process, but not legal advice about the process;
- / information about the resources available for a particular problem, including print publications, brief advice services, advocacy, and representation services, but not the provision of services to solve the problem;
- / providing access to forms and written instructions on completion of forms, but not completing blank sections of forms;
- / information about legal options, but not opinions about the best course of action; and
- / information that clearly answers a specific question, but not the exercise of professional judgment.

You're not responsible for making decisions on eligibility or coverage, processing legal aid applications, referring approved clients to lawyers, or receiving and keeping confidential information about LSS clients.

Don't keep files or documents for people that you help. Keeping files or documents isn't necessary to carry out your work. If you feel that you have an exceptional situation, please contact the community engagement coordinator to discuss the circumstances.

You're not required to act as a lawyer. You don't provide legal advice and don't have clients. Giving legal advice is helping someone formulate options or choose among options when a problem has a substantial legal component.

Don't provide legal advice, including:

- / interpreting legal information such as legal terminology, clauses, and documents;
- / providing legal opinions and recommendations about specific cases;

? For more details about what work is in and out of scope for community partners, see the Quick reference guide on page 48.



- / filling out a form or telling someone what to say in a form; and
- / recommending specific types of arguments, techniques for presenting evidence, or what to say in court.

Some partners have contracts with other agencies for outreach or advocacy, and responsibilities that go beyond the services that LSS funds through this project. If you have such a contract, you must make sure that the public and intermediaries know when you're providing a community partner service and when you are providing services funded by other agencies. If you ever feel that there could be a conflict between your role as a community partner and in providing other services, or that one service could have an effect on another, you should discuss it with the community engagement coordinator.

Contracts and Standards of Conduct

Community partners all sign a service contract which includes the LSS Standards of Conduct (SOC). The SOC apply to you as an employee when carrying out community partner work. If you have not seen the contract or SOC, ask your supervisor, manager, or executive director for a copy. The community engagement coordinator can also provide you with a copy and answer any questions you may have about it.

Confidentiality

It's important that the people you deal with are comfortable talking with you and are confident that you won't tell others about the issues they discuss with you. You have a responsibility to respect the privacy of the people you help and to keep their information confidential.

If you feel uncomfortable talking with someone because of your other knowledge of that person's situation or family life, or because your organization has a contract with a government ministry or other agency that might require you to disclose information about your conversation, you can't talk with them about their issue. You can briefly help them in other ways.

- / You can refer the person to the LSS Call Centre or another legal aid office for assistance.
- / You can give them a publication or online resource to take away and review on their own.

Talk to the community engagement coordinator if you have questions about this situation.

Note

If you have questions about your role, you can email the community engagement coordinator at communitypartnerships@lss.bc.ca.



Tip — Your responsibility to respect confidentiality means that you can't share any information that someone has disclosed to you while seeking your help as a community partner without LSS permission, unless required by law. One possible response if you're facing such questions is "I'm sorry I can't answer that question — my work is confidential."

Conflicts

Because of the nature of your work, you probably won't encounter conflicts. (For lawyers and LSS employees, a conflict might arise if they've helped a person on one side of a legal dispute and then are asked for help by the person on the other side.)

Conflicts of interest can arise when you have divided loyalties. As a community partner, you generally provide information, not advice or representation, so the problem of conflicts shouldn't arise. If your agency has a contract that might put you in a conflict of interest with the interests of someone who has approached you for help, or is advocating for someone who is in a conflict of interest with that person, discuss the matter with the community engagement coordinator before helping that person.

Tip — It isn't a conflict for your office to provide legal information, such as a booklet or information about a website, or how to apply for legal aid, to both people in a legal dispute.

Monthly reporting

To help you and LSS do our work, you'll be asked to complete a Community Partner Monthly Report (designed and provided by LSS). The monthly report is completed in an online platform. The community engagement coordinator will send you a link to the survey at the beginning of each month. You'll be asked to complete the survey by the 10th of the month. If the 10th of the month falls on a weekend, you can complete it on the next business day. If you aren't able to complete your monthly report by the 10th of the month, please let the community engagement coordinator know as soon as possible.

The community engagement coordinator will provide you with a tracking sheet to help you record the community partner work you do each month.

The report captures information such as:

- / how many clients consulted you in your role as a community partner, and an indication of their legal issues (child protection, civil, criminal, family, etc.);
- / how many clients you referred to LSS to apply for legal aid (that is, to apply for a legal aid lawyer);
- / how many clients you referred to other legal services and resources (both LSS and non-LSS);
- / how and where you distributed LSS publications (in person, libraries, hospitals, etc.); and
- / the number and type of outreach activities you participated in to promote both your community partner services and LSS services and resources.

LSS captures this information for a variety of reasons, including reporting to our funders, improving services to you and the public, and helping us understand more about the community where you work. Any questions or concerns about monthly reporting can be directed to the community engagement coordinator.

Community feedback

One of the benefits LSS gets from partnering with you is hearing quickly and clearly about any problems your community has with LSS services, or receiving suggestions for ways LSS can better serve your community. Let us know what you're hearing from your community about LSS services. Keep us updated about these issues in your reports — or as needed between reports by emailing communitypartnerships@lss.bc.ca.

Tip — If you receive a complaint about LSS, you don't need to wait to put it in your monthly report. You can send it to the community engagement coordinator right away. Please be as specific as possible to help us follow up on the issue.



Your skills and support

This section offers some guidelines to help you provide the best support to people and determine the most appropriate legal information and referrals for them.

Communicate effectively

One of your most important skills is being able to communicate effectively with people seeking information so that you can:

- / understand what information the person wants, and
- / convey clearly what resources and services are available that may be helpful.

Physical factors, such as the tone of your voice or how you connect with a person, can affect a conversation. If the person you're helping feels comfortable, it'll be easier for you to obtain relevant information. Also, the person is likely to better understand your explanation of processes.

Active listening will help you obtain information from people you're assisting. Key elements of active listening are:

- / encouraging the person to give information, and
- / acknowledging that you understand what the person has told you.

Tip — In our society, making eye contact is usually a good way to connect with someone. However, in some cultures, looking directly at a person in authority may be considered disrespectful. What may appear to you as a reserved manner may be a sign of respect.

Explain your role

It's very important that you explain that you can't provide legal advice. It's also important to explain that you don't process legal aid applications, don't make any decisions about legal aid eligibility, and don't assign lawyers. The person you're helping also needs to know that you're a professional and will keep confidential all information that's discussed.



Ask questions

While you're not expected to gather information for LSS, you'll need to have a conversation with the person to identify the resources and services that may help. After you've explained your role and what you can and can't do, it often helps to ask an open question, such as "tell me what brought you here" or "tell me what you want help with." When you have an idea of the issue, you can ask more specific questions that will help you make an appropriate referral.

Be professional

Be cautious about developing an ongoing relationship with a person who doesn't qualify for a Legal Aid contract. The person could return for more information or a referral to other services for help with another situation or legal issue. Be alert to someone who returns repeatedly for information specific to the same situation. This could lead to your providing legal advice accidentally as the facts presented become increasingly complex. It's not your role to provide legal advice.

If you feel that someone's becoming too dependent on your guidance, refer the person to duty counsel, an advocacy program, or another more appropriate service. There may be circumstances where you'll have to explain that you've provided all of the help you can.

If you refer someone to another service, it's appropriate to provide information such as a card with an address, phone number, and interview date.

Your training

LSS provides the following training for all community partners.

Annual in-person training

Once a year, usually in the fall, LSS brings all the community partners together for one and a half days of in-person training in Greater Vancouver. This gives you an opportunity to connect and share with other community partners, as well as to meet LSS staff and learn more about our services and resources.

We welcome your suggestions for topics you'd like to see included in this annual training event. Email your ideas to the community engagement coordinator at communitypartnerships@lss.bc.ca.

Note

Be *very* clear right at the start that you can help with information and referrals, but that you can't give legal advice or represent someone. This will clarify your role for the person you're trying to help at an early stage and avoid potential misunderstandings later.

For more information about your role and responsibilities, see the Quick reference guide on page 48.



Note

You'll be notified of upcoming webinars through an email invite from the community engagement coordinator.

Webinars

LSS hosts regular webinars for community partners, to provide ongoing training/education opportunities. Webinars are interactive sessions presented via live broadcast through a web-based software program. The webinars are on a variety of topics and are presented every four to six weeks, from September through June. Past topics have included Aboriginal resources and publications, literacy and PLEI, and innovative outreach ideas. Each webinar is taped so that the recording can be viewed by community partners who are unable to attend at the time of the live broadcast.

If you have a webinar topic that you'd like to see presented, email your suggestion to the community engagement coordinator at communitypartnerships@lss.bc.ca.

Other training and support

This manual is a core reference for you to use in your work as an LSS community partner. We encourage you to refer to it if you have any questions about your role, LSS services or resources, or any issue that arises in your work. You can also email the community engagement coordinator at communitypartnerships@lss.bc.ca with your questions or requests for training or support when your agency has new staff members. The community engagement coordinator can usually arrange one-on-one training for individual community partners by remote online connection, phone, or in-person during a community partner site visit.



LSS resources

This section provides information about LSS resources and how to access them.

An important part of your job is to provide legal information to people who come to your office for help with a particular legal issue — whether or not the person is applying for legal aid or any other LSS service.

Publications

All LSS publications — booklets, brochures, fact sheets, posters, and more — are available online. Many are available for free in print. Several publications are produced in a variety of languages.

Publications development

LSS's publications development coordinator is responsible for connecting with people in the community to find out what publications are needed and how publications are received and used by the intended audience.

LSS publishes different publications for different audiences. Some publications are complicated and intended for use by intermediaries (such as community partners) to help people understand the law. We also have a wide variety of publications aimed at the general public. Sometimes we have multiple publications on the same topic, but they have been designed for different audiences with differing capabilities when it comes to reading and using legal information.

Part of your role as a community partner is to help connect people to the publication that is best for them. We created a Readability List to help you understand more about which publications are best for people with differing capabilities. It can be found at legalaid.bc.ca/publications/reading.php.

? For further information about publications development and understanding our target audiences, see the LSS resources *Reaching Your Readers* at legalaid.bc.ca/assets/communityWorkers/reachingYourReaders.pdf and Legal Services Society PLEI Resources Accessibility Initiatives at legalaid.bc.ca/assets/aboutUs/reports/PLEI/pleiResourcesAIReport.pdf.



Note

If you have any feedback on or corrections to LSS publications, email the publications development coordinator at publications@lss.bc.ca.

In 2012, LSS prepared an accessibility initiative report to help us understand the different reading capabilities of our target audiences. That report can be found on the LSS website, under About us at legalaid.bc.ca/assets/aboutUs/reports/PLEI/pleiResourcesAIReport.pdf.

As a community partner, you play a key role in our publications development and distribution. When we create new publications or update existing materials, your feedback helps us to ensure our publications meet the target audience's needs, regardless of any barriers such as literacy and accessibility.

The publications development coordinator uses the following field testing methods to gather feedback on publications and to identify information gaps.

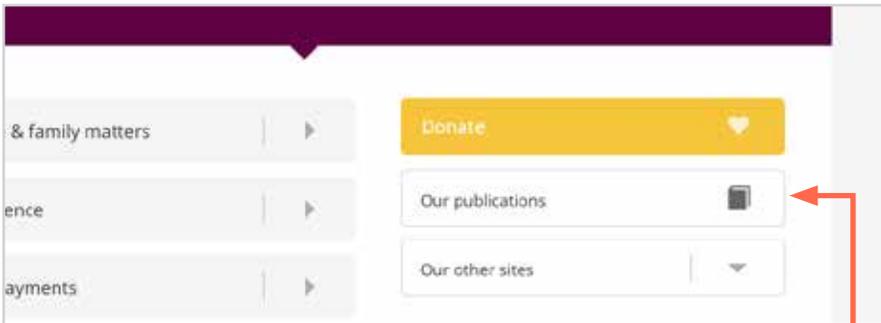
Usability testing focuses on the content and organization of the material, and its purpose is to determine whether the test participants can use the information. As a community partner, you'll have more contact with the target audience, so sometimes we'll invite you to conduct usability tests and send the results to the publications development coordinator for analysis.

Focus groups are held to get stakeholders together to review material and to brainstorm the purpose, identify the target audience, and determine the format and key content. We conduct focus groups at the beginning of a publishing project or prior to a publication update, and often include community partners and local agents. Sometimes focus groups are conducted by phone, through Skype for Business, or by webinar.

Online surveys are used to gather feedback from intermediaries and the public on a particular publication to find out whether it meets its purpose. We usually send our online publication surveys directly to community partners, and often post PDF versions of our new publications on the LSS website with a link to the survey.

Consultations sometimes take place as part of outreach activities in your community. We use the information we gather to recommend improvements to existing publications and to develop new ones. As a community partner out in the field, you can observe people's behaviours when they choose publications, and report your observations to the publications development coordinator or outreach team as thoroughly and objectively as possible.

Finding publications



You can access our publications from the homepage of the MyLawBC website at mylawbc.com:

- / On the homepage, click *Our publications*.

Once on the publications page, you can choose to search by:

- / subject, or
- / title of a specific publication.

Looking at publications listed under a particular subject can help you make sure that you've thought of all the publications that might be helpful. If you're not familiar with a legal topic, looking under these subject headings can give you a starting point.

Once you click *Get PDF*, you'll see what languages that publication is available in.

Ordering publications

All LSS print publications are free.



Almost all LSS print publications are distributed through Crown Publications and are listed at crownpub.bc.ca.

Note

If you have questions about ordering our publications, or need additional copies for a workshop, email the publications production coordinator at distribution@lss.bc.ca.



As a community partner, you'll receive a customer number from us along with ordering instructions. Your office can order up to 50 copies of each publication at a time. If you'd like to be able to order more than 50 copies at a time, please contact the community engagement coordinator.

Once you receive your customer number, go to the Crown Publications website and log on by entering your customer number and postal code and clicking the arrow next to the logon screen or clicking Enter.

Next, under Quick Links, click *BC Public Legal Education & Information* to view all the currently available LSS (and People's Law School) publications.

Logging on allows you to order up to 50 copies of each publication.

Tip — When you check out using your customer account your address will automatically be filled in. You can always change this address to have publications sent directly to a person you're helping, or to a location where you're doing a presentation.

If any community groups that you're working with would like to set up a customer account to order multiple copies of LSS publications, direct them to the Order in bulk page of the MyLawBC website at mylawbc.com/pubs/order-bulk.php or have them email distribution@lss.bc.ca.

Tip — To help someone order a single copy of a publication you don't have, find the publication on the LSS website and click *Order this publication from Crown Publications in* (select language).

Websites

LSS website

legalaid.bc.ca



The LSS website provides information about LSS and our legal aid services. It also includes:

- / legal aid locations
- / how to apply for legal aid and who qualifies
- / links to our publications
- / links to our social media

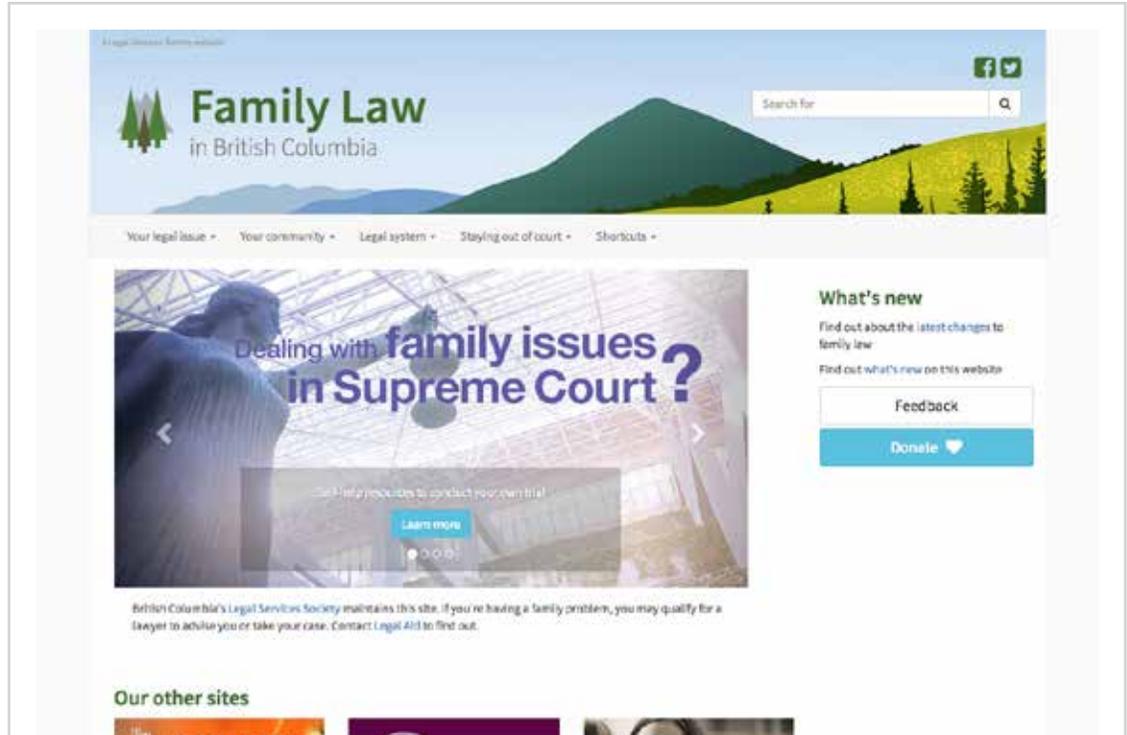
Note

If you have any feedback on our website content, email the online outreach coordinator at socialmedia@lss.bc.ca.



Family Law in BC website

familylaw.lss.bc.ca



Note

You can get to the Family Law in BC website at familylaw.lss.bc.ca or from the LSS website homepage by clicking the Family Law in BC link at the bottom of the page.

The Family Law in BC website (FLWS) is a good resource on family law issues. You can:

- / read family law publications, self-help guides, and online fact sheets
- / find information about in-person services
- / watch videos about family law
- / get links to resources, such as:
 - + court forms
 - + definitions
 - + legislation
 - + frequently asked questions

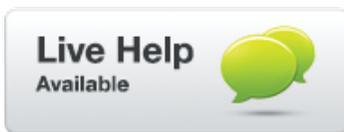


It'll be important in your work as a community partner that you're familiar with the FLWS. The best way to become familiar with the website is to use it.

- / Take some time to find out where each item on the top navigation menu takes you.
- / Pretend someone who has no money and wants a divorce comes to your office for legal information. Navigate through the information and the steps the person would have to take to get a divorce.

People who are comfortable using a computer and reading information online will find the self-help guides on the website useful in resolving their family law problems.

LiveHelp



LiveHelp, available on the FLWS, allows users of that site to have an online conversation with volunteer law students. The law students are there to help FLWS visitors find the information

on the site that they need to answer their questions, as well as to direct them toward any other resources that may be helpful. This service is monitored by family law lawyers and all information is confidential. To use the service, click the LiveHelp button located on the pages of the FLWS when the service is available.

Tip — A very useful part of the LSS and FLWS websites is the *Search* box located near the top of the page. When you have problems finding information or don't have enough detail to get to the information, use the *Search* box.

? The Family Law in BC website contains links to BC Supreme Court forms for the convenience of clients. Feedback from clients indicated that the forms are challenging to use so we added a video called How to Use the Supreme Court Family Forms at familylaw.lss.bc.ca/resources/video.php#howToUseForms.

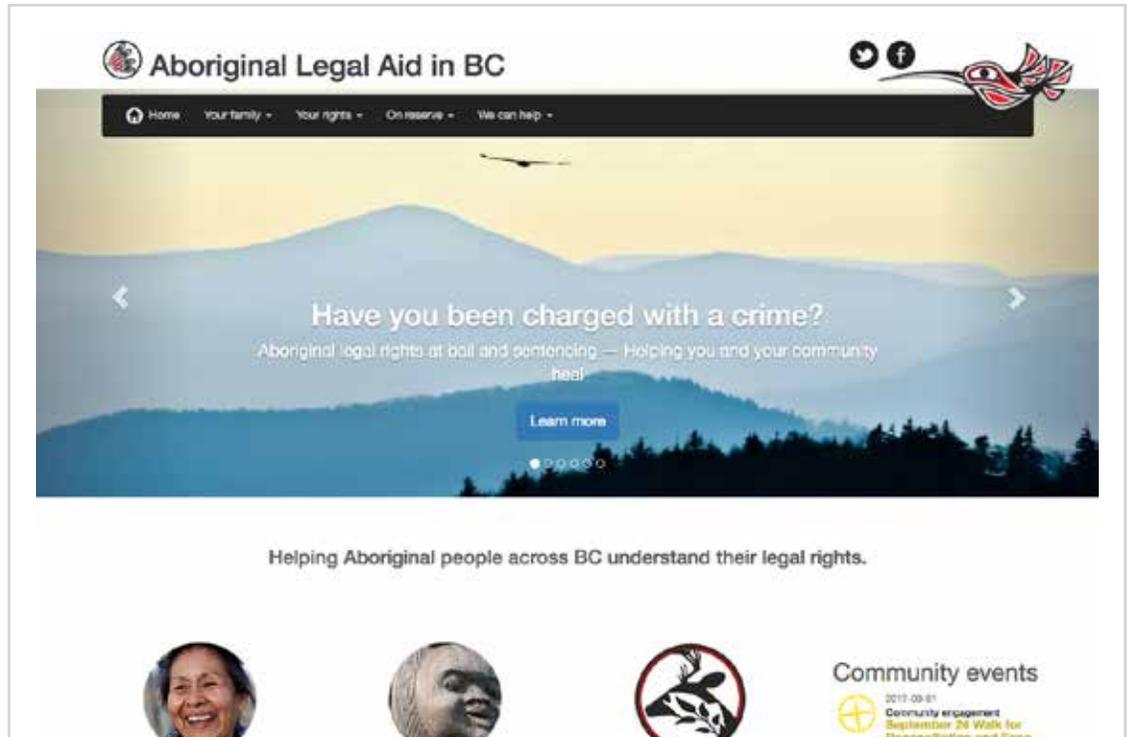
The video explains how the fillable forms work. Refer clients to the video and watch it yourself if you'd like to understand how the forms work.

The video only explains the technical aspects of how to physically fill out the form. For instructions about content, clients can use the self-help guides. See also familylaw.lss.bc.ca/resources/fact_sheets/technicalQuestionsAboutCourtforms.php.

The FLWS also has a link to the Supreme Court's *Online Help* guide at supremecourtbc.ca.

Aboriginal Legal Aid in BC website

aboriginal.legalaid.bc.ca



Note

If you have any questions about using online tools or have any suggestions of Aboriginal resources, stories, or events to share, you can email the online outreach coordinator at socialmedia@lss.bc.ca.

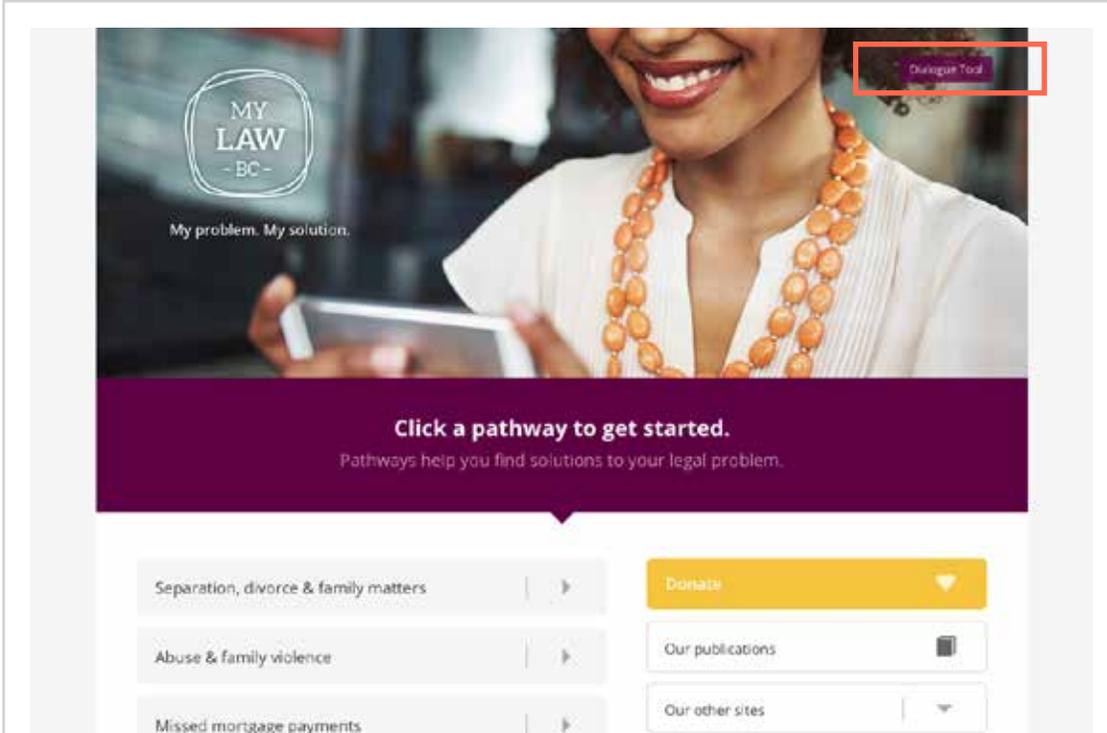
The Aboriginal Legal Aid in BC website helps Aboriginal people across BC understand their legal rights. It's for anyone who identifies as Aboriginal. The site contains information about and resources for the issues that are important to Aboriginal people, such as:

- / Aboriginal Gladue rights
- / child protection
- / social assistance
- / First Nations Court

MyLawBC website

mylawbc.com

The Dialogue Tool is located on the MyLawBC homepage.



The MyLawBC website helps users find solutions to common legal problems. It's an interactive site where users follow guided pathways that diagnose their legal problem, then identify the next steps needed and the resources and services available to help them resolve their legal issue. They can even use the site to get a simple will.

MyLawBC pathways cover topics that include:

- / divorce and separation
- / abuse and family violence
- / foreclosure
- / wills and planning for the future

The interactive Dialogue Tool helps couples write a fair and lasting separation agreement that addresses their family's needs.

Note

If you have any questions or feedback about MyLawBC's pathways or Dialogue Tool, you can email the MyLawBC project manager at mylawbc@lss.bc.ca.

Tip — You can download a Communication Kit which will help you explain MyLawBC to others in your community from the MyLawBC About us page at mylawbc.com/info/lss.php.

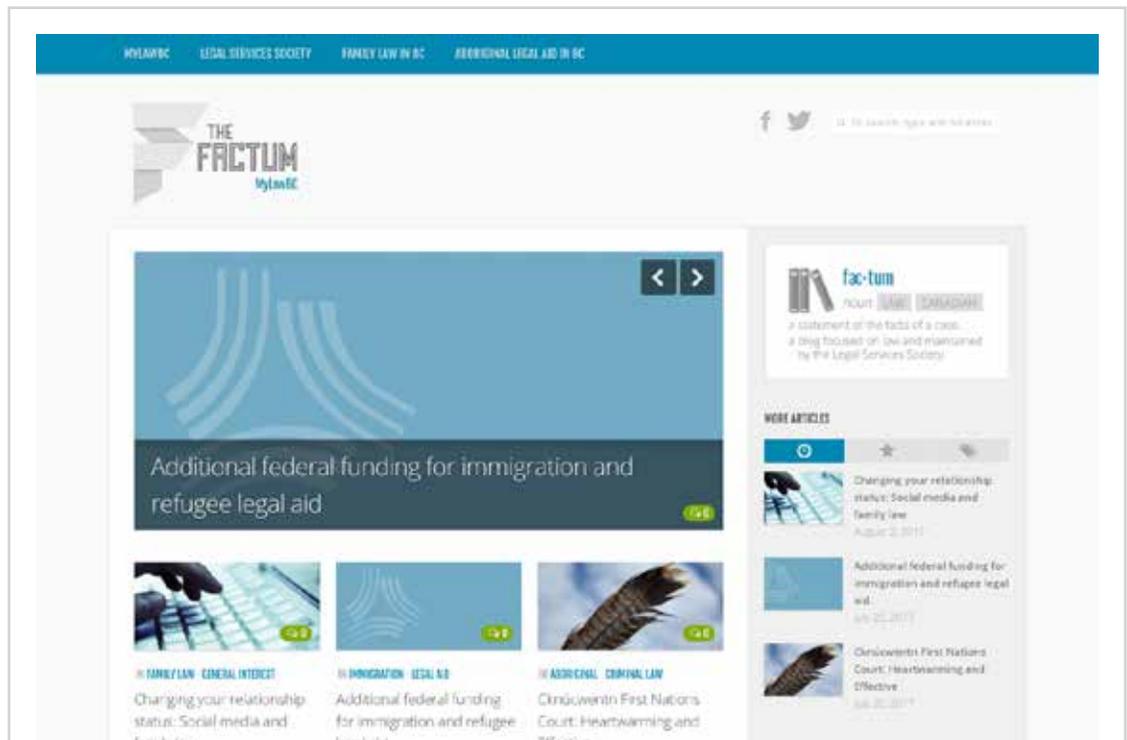


Social media

LSS's online outreach coordinator is responsible for using social media tools to keep people up to date on PLEI resources. Through our blog (The Factum), our Facebook and Twitter accounts, and other online avenues, you can find out about our new and revised print and online publications.

The Factum blog

factum.mylawbc.com



Note

It's also important to update printed documents by checking the online version regularly. If we update any publication, we will post this information on The Factum.

The Factum is LSS's blog for community partners, advocates, and intermediaries.

The Factum will keep you updated on LSS services and resources, and how they can help you. We'll also post occasional entries on new legal information, events, and other non-profit organizations that deliver legal-aid-related services. Entries are kept short and are posted on an as-needed basis so we can get news to you quickly.

Tip — You can subscribe to The Factum’s newsletter for the important stories and updates from the past few months. Sign up at factum.mylawbc.com.

LSS on Twitter

twitter.com/legalaidbc

LSS maintains a Twitter account to update the public on new resources and services, changes to the law, and to share news stories related to legal aid. We send out quick updates, links to external sites, and images. If you have a Twitter account, you can follow [@legalaidbc](https://twitter.com/legalaidbc) to receive all our updates.



LSS on Facebook

facebook.com/LegalAidBC

Our Facebook page contains content to help keep followers up to date on LSS services, publications, and other legal news. In addition to the type of information we post on Twitter and The Factum, we also share pictures and stories about conferences and other community events throughout the province, news stories of interest, job postings, and more.





Note

You can contact an LIOW for information and assistance with legal services and resources, and referrals at **604-601-6166** or **1-866-577-2525**.

In-person services

Legal information outreach workers

Legal information outreach workers (LIOWs) might be able to help if you're having trouble finding a resource on a certain topic to help someone in your community. These workers provide information and referral services when legal intake staff aren't able to help. LIOWs can help people find information and guide them through some of the LSS resources mentioned in this manual.

LSS has LIOWs in the following locations:

- / Downtown Community Court in Vancouver
- / Vancouver Regional Centre
- / Terrace Regional Centre
- / LSS satellite office in Prince Rupert
- / Part of our LSS Call Centre (see page 8)

Our workshops and conferences

Our workshops and conferences are designed for community workers, and not the general public. Our intention is to reach out to intermediaries who will pass the information on to their clients.

Workshops

We hold workshops for community workers throughout the province on legal aid services and resources. If your community group is interested in working with us to hold a workshop in your community, please email us.

Conferences

We organize multi-day conferences for community workers around BC. In general, our conferences are by invitation only.

Tip — We rely on community partners to help us coordinate workshops and conferences in your community. We may reach out to you to help us understand the legal needs of your community, help out with hosting a conference or workshop, and/or to invite intermediaries in your network to attend.



Other PLEI resources

This section provides guidance about how to find resources from other public legal education and information (PLEI) providers.

Publications

In addition to LSS, the other two main groups that produce legal information materials on a variety of topics and in various formats are:

- / Justice Education Society at justiceeducation.ca
- / People's Law School at peopleslawschool.ca

Some groups focus their education on particular areas of law such as housing or disability issues. Two examples are listed below, and many more can be found on Clicklaw at clicklaw.bc.ca (see the next page for more information).

- / TRAC Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre provides information for tenants and landlords about housing issues at tenants.bc.ca. Their *Tenant Survival Guide* is a very useful resource that touches on most housing issues you'll encounter.
- / Disability Alliance BC has advocacy services for people with disabilities and many useful resources at disabilityalliancebc.org.

Some publications cover more than one legal topic. These are useful resources because they provide basic information about legal issues as well as listings of appropriate referral services. For example:

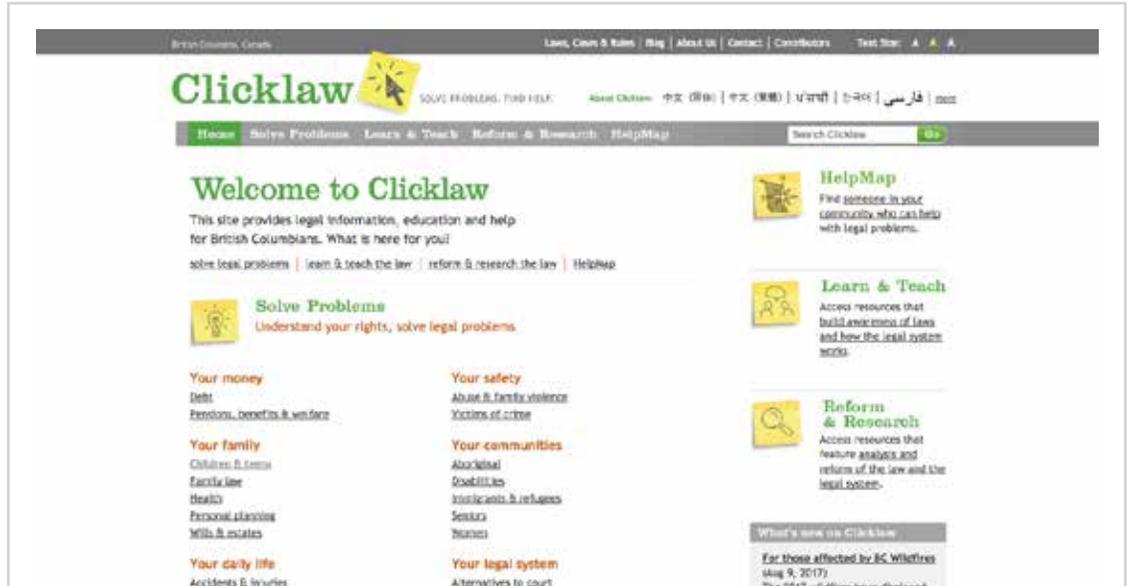
- / *Legal Help for British Columbians* (4th edition, 2013) provides an overview of several legal topics, what issues people might want help with, and what resources are in each area. It's a Clicklaw Wikibook and is available at wiki.clicklaw.bc.ca (see page 33).
- / The *LSLAP (Law Students' Legal Advice Program) Manual* — created by UBC law students that describes the basic laws and procedures for dealing with a variety of legal issues at lslap.bc.ca/manual.



Web resources

Clicklaw

clicklaw.bc.ca



Note

Clicklaw has a HelpMap with information about advocacy and referral services around BC. You can learn how to use the HelpMap by watching a short video linked to from the bottom of every page on the Clicklaw website. Select *Using Clicklaw (videos)* where you'll find Tips on Using Clicklaw's HelpMap and several other useful videos.

The most comprehensive listing of legal information resources and referral services is in the online portal Clicklaw. It'll be invaluable in helping you make appropriate referrals.

You can search Clicklaw by:

- / legal topic
- / audience
- / geographical area
- / language
- / type of resource

Using these filters in combination can give you a more exact search for relevant resources. You can also look under the Common questions section as a starting point for finding legal information.

You can stay informed about what's new at Clicklaw by subscribing to the Clicklaw blog at blog.clicklaw.bc.ca.

If you have suggestions for common questions or new resources, email Clicklaw at editor@clicklaw.bc.ca.

Clicklaw Wikibooks

wiki.clicklaw.bc.ca



Clicklaw Wikibooks are a series of plain language legal publications written by a group of qualified contributors. They're available online where you can read or search the publications, and in print where a "book creator" helps you print sections or the whole book. Wikibooks can be easily updated by the contributors as the law changes, and they include alerts for major upcoming changes to the law.

The publications *Legal Help for British Columbians* and *JP Boyd on Family Law* are available in a bound print format in all public libraries in BC.

? For tips on navigating Wikibooks, see wiki.clicklaw.bc.ca/index.php/Clicklaw_Wikibooks_User_Guide.



? Your local public library has legal information resources in print, as well as public access computers, evening and weekend hours, and librarians to help people search for information. Find your local public library at commons.bclibraries.ca/library_location_map.

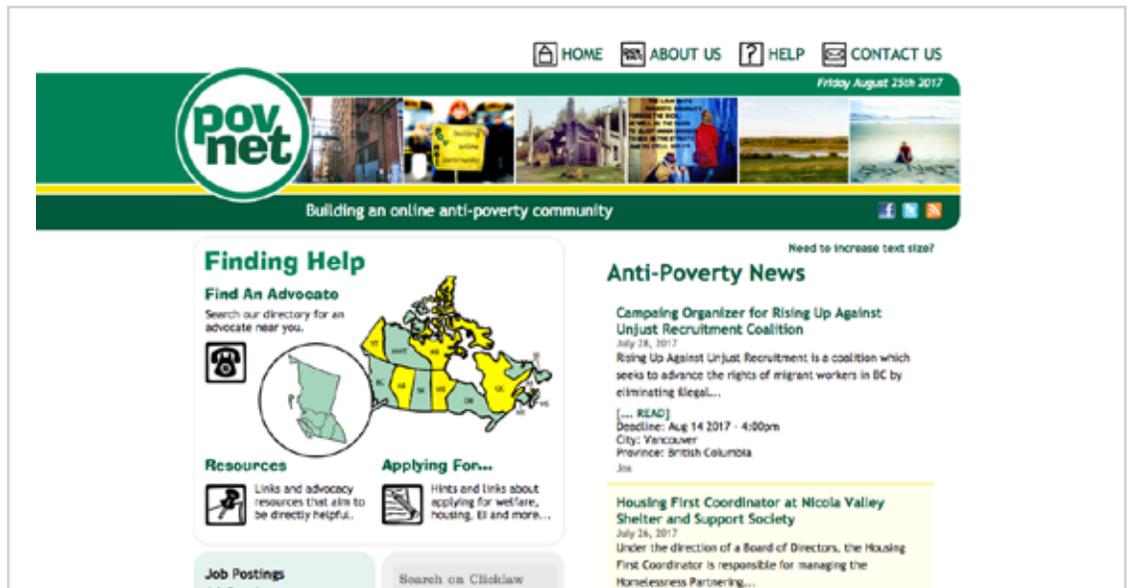
LawMatters blog

bclawmatters.blogspot.com

This resource is designed for public librarians, but often has useful information about new resources and services from a variety of organizations that would be useful for you. You can read current or archived blogs. You can also find out how to subscribe to this service.

PovNet

povnet.org



PovNet is an online community that provides support for community advocates, social justice lawyers, and front line workers about poverty law issues (welfare, housing, debt, disability, etc.). Contact them at povnet.org/contact to see how they can support you through their email lists, online courses, and legal wiki.

PovNet's *Find An Advocate* map can be very useful if you're trying to find services for clients who are dealing with issues not covered by legal aid. This map has information about advocates throughout BC who might be able to help.



Referrals

You're a key element in the legal aid continuum provided by LSS. A large part of your work as a community partner will be referring people to the appropriate LSS service or resource. Your work will help people who might not otherwise access our services.

LSS is also part of a wider continuum of services that are available to people with lower incomes. It's important for you to consider which non-LSS resources or services might be helpful and to make those referrals.

This section describes legal advice and legal representation available in BC — from LSS and other sources.

LSS services

Duty counsel advice

Generally, LSS duty counsel provide free advice services about criminal, family, or immigration law matters.

- / **Criminal duty counsel** work in Provincial Courts throughout BC. They're available to provide advice about the charges against a person, court procedures, or a person's legal rights. They may also be able to represent a person at a bail hearing. A person doesn't have to be financially eligible to use these services.
- / **First Nations Court duty counsel** help Aboriginal people apply to the court, find a lawyer, and find someone to write their Gladue report. You can contact First Nations Court duty counsel at **604-601-6074** (Greater Vancouver) or **1-877-601-6066** (elsewhere in BC, no charge).
- / **Family duty counsel** work in both Provincial and Supreme Court. Clients who are financially eligible may receive assistance in court and up to three hours of legal advice.

Note

Services available as of October 2017 are described here. Update your information regularly.

? To be sure you have the most up-to-date information about available services, see legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/criminalAndImmigrationDutyCounsel.php (criminal and immigration law), and legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/familyDutyCounsel.php (family law).

Information about financial eligibility for family duty counsel and other advice services is at legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/dolQualifyAdvice.php.



- + In Provincial Court, family duty counsel provide advice on family matters, speak on a person’s behalf in court on simple matters, and attend family case conferences at some courts. Duty counsel won’t take on a whole case and represent someone at their trial.
- + In Supreme Court, family duty counsel may provide advice on certain issues (parenting time or contact/access, guardianship/custody, child support, some property issues, possible settlement agreements, and court procedures), or assist in simple Chambers applications or judicial case conferences.
- + Clients who aren’t financially eligible can still receive 20 to 45 minutes of general assistance from family duty counsel (depending on their availability), an initial 45-minute appointment with a family advice lawyer (with a referral from a family justice counsellor, see below), and some assistance in court.
- + In some areas of BC, people must make appointments to see family duty counsel, but other services are available on a drop-in basis.

Tip — You can best help anyone interested in using duty counsel services by providing up-to-date information about the extent of services.

If a person is looking for help with a family law matter, it’s important to check when duty counsel is available and what arrangements your community has for consulting duty counsel. For information about how to access duty counsel services in different areas, see legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/familyDutyCounsel.php.

? Up-to-date information about these services is at legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/familyAdviceLawyers.php.

Family advice lawyers

Family advice lawyers can provide up to three hours of free advice about parenting time or contact/access, guardianship/custody, child support, property division (limited advice), tentative settlement agreements, and court procedures. They’re available in Kamloops, Kelowna, New Westminister, Prince George, and Surrey. Family advice lawyers are available in Justice Access Centres in Nanaimo, Vancouver, and Victoria.



Family LawLINE

The Family LawLINE is a telephone advice service that provides brief next-step help for people representing themselves. Lawyers will help clients prepare documents for court and other legal processes, and provide coaching and guidance to help clients represent themselves more effectively.

Qualifying clients with a family law issue can access this service through the LSS Call Centre, talk with a lawyer over the telephone, and share documents by email or fax. Lawyers work from their own offices across the province and engage with clients through a free remote access telephone system.

This service is available through the LSS Call Centre at the following times:

- / 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursday, Fridays
- / 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Wednesdays

To find out more about this service, view our website: legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/FamilyLawLINE.php.

Advice services for people in custody

The Brydges Line and advice counsel line are available for people in custody, and they're informed of these services when in custody.

Legal representation

LSS may provide legal representation in these main areas:

- / criminal charges,
- / serious family problems,
- / child protection matters,
- / immigration problems, and
- / mental health and prison issues.

If a person wants a legal aid lawyer to represent them, provide information about:

- / LSS websites and publications,
- / financial eligibility criteria for legal representation,
- / which legal issues are covered, and
- / where and how to apply for legal representation.

? More details of this service are at legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/FamilyLawLINE.php.

? More detailed information about representation services is on the LSS website at legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/legalRepresentation.php.

Details of financial guidelines for legal representation services can be reached from that page or go directly to legalaid.bc.ca/legal_aid/dolQualifyRepresentation.php. Refer people to the appropriate intake service to apply — you don't calculate financial eligibility.

Note

Details of representation services in each of these areas change from time to time so it's important that you stay informed about current services.



Tip — You can help people make the best use of their time with any advice or representation service by reminding them to take all relevant paperwork, including financial, with them. It's also helpful for a person to write out a summary of what happened to help the lawyer get this information efficiently. If you'd like further training on how to assist people in gathering their paperwork, please contact the community engagement coordinator.

Note

Services and the location of services often change so check with offices before making a referral.

Other legal service providers

There are also other legal advice and representation services that you might consider referring people to.

Advice services

Two other BC-wide services provide limited legal advice.

- / Access Pro Bono has clinics throughout BC where volunteer lawyers are booked to provide clients with up to a half hour of free legal advice. Information is online at accessprobono.ca or phone **604-878-7400** (Greater Vancouver) or **1-877-762-6664** (elsewhere in BC, no charge).
- / The Canadian Bar Association (CBA) Lawyer Referral Service can connect clients with a lawyer to provide a 30-minute legal consultation to determine if they have a legal issue worth pursuing. The cost is \$25 plus taxes. Information is online at cba.org/bc/initiatives/main/lawyer_referral.aspx or phone **604-687-3221** (Greater Vancouver) or **1-800-663-1919** (elsewhere in BC, no charge).

Advocacy and support

Throughout BC, a variety of agencies provide advocacy and support services. The level of service can vary depending on the group and the staff. For example:

- / Legal advocates may be able to help a person with issues such as welfare, housing, employment, and some family problems. Advocates may represent clients at tribunals that decide disputes in areas such as welfare and housing. You can find information about legal advocates on the Clicklaw and PovNet websites (see pages 32 and 34).



- / Other groups, such as transition houses, some churches, immigration services, or friendship houses, may have advocates. Staff might be helpful in other ways if they can't provide advice or representation.
- / Aboriginal clients might find it helpful to contact a Native courtworker if there's one in your area. Information is online at nccabc.ca/index.php/our-services/native-courtworkers.
- / Grandparents or other relatives raising a family member's child can get information and advice from the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Line. Information is online at parentsupportbc.ca/grandparents_raising_grandchildren or phone 604-558-4740 (Greater Vancouver) or 1-855-474-9777 (elsewhere in BC, no charge).

Legal representation

Access Pro Bono

Volunteer lawyers provide brief legal advice at legal clinics throughout the province. Information is online at accessprobono.ca or phone 604-878-7400 (Greater Vancouver) or 1-877-762-6664 (elsewhere in BC, no charge).

Access Pro Bono offers some representation programs such as the Employment Standards Program, Mental Health Program, and the Residential Tenancy Program. For more information, visit accessprobono.ca/programs.

Community Legal Assistance Society (CLAS)

CLAS provides legal advice and representation to people with low and modest incomes who are facing *particular* legal issues. Information is online at clasbc.net or phone 604-685-3425 (Greater Vancouver) or 1-888-685-6222 (elsewhere in BC, no charge).

Law Students' Legal Advice Program (LSLAP)

(Greater Vancouver) Law students at the University of BC run clinics that provide some in-person representation services and legal advice. Information is online at lslap.bc.ca or phone 604-822-5791.

Parents Legal Centre

(Greater Vancouver) The centre helps eligible parents in Vancouver and Burnaby settle their child protection matters early on and collaboratively. For more information, contact the local legal aid office or call the LSS Call Centre. Note: it only accepts child protection cases from Vancouver and Burnaby.

? BC Family Law Unbundling Roster unbundling.ca

Lawyers on this list provide some services to clients who can handle some legal tasks on their own but need help with others.



Community outreach

An important part of the work you do for LSS is to inform the community about the services and resources available through legal aid.

Your value in educating people about legal aid is your connection with the community where you're promoting the services. LSS depends on your knowledge of your community and region to determine the most effective way to engage with community members and encourage them to take advantage of legal aid services.

Keeping in mind that the best strategy for promoting legal aid will vary among communities, this section proposes some issues to consider and possible approaches to community outreach.

Tip — An important element of community outreach is gathering information from the community. It's important to stay current on what different organizations are doing in your community. If your office knows what services each group provides, you'll be able to make helpful referrals.

Developing contacts

Work with known contacts

You'll have contacts in your community to work with to promote LSS services and resources. For instance, you or your organization may already have connections with:

- / LSS local agents or regional centres
- / Friendship centres
- / court staff
- / staff in government offices
- / lawyers, health professionals, teachers, librarians, and other professionals
- / probation officers
- / religious groups
- / literacy outreach coordinators (a contact list is available at decoda.ca/decoda-lpc)
- / agencies that work with groups in the community (such as Native courtworkers, seniors support groups, immigrant-serving groups, women's groups, advocacy groups, youth groups)

Is there an inter-agency group in your community that meets regularly to share information? This can be an effective way to share information with a large group of agencies. If there's no inter-agency in your community, why not start one?

You may also want to consider the connections in your community that you make in other parts of your life, such as through volunteer work, schools, or sports activities. It's sometimes helpful to consider if these connections would be interested in information about legal aid.

Tip — The Law Foundation of BC funds approximately 70 advocates in BC to do legal advocacy work on poverty law and some family law issues. Other advocates work for groups such as women's groups, friendship centres, and women's centres. You can find information about advocates online.

- / The Clicklaw HelpMap provides a helpful list of advocates at clicklaw.bc.ca/helpmap.
- / PovNet lists advocates on their *Find an Advocate* map at povnet.org/find-an-advocate/bc.



Consider new opportunities

Special events

In most communities, there are several events each year where legal aid services can be promoted. For example, your office could arrange to have information or displays about legal aid at:

- / National Aboriginal Day celebrations (June 21)
- / Law Day events
- / workshops about legal issues organized by other groups in your community
- / community health forums
- / open house events by groups with whom your office works
- / multicultural events
- / events organized by the Aboriginal community
- / school or college events
- / library events

Tip — Contact our community training and outreach coordinator about ideas for events or other outreach activities (email outreach@lss.bc.ca). In some cases, LSS can provide additional support for a special event.

Promotion

In addition to handing out publications to people who visit your office, think about where you can:

- / advertise with posters, cards, and brochures,
- / display publications outside of your office, and
- / regularly stock the information racks in libraries, community centres, etc.

Ongoing contacts

LSS has been successful in promoting legal aid services within new constituencies.

One example of an effective program was an information clinic held once a month at the local hospital. New parents and single mothers

found it very helpful to know about the legal information resources produced by LSS on family law issues, and to get up-to-date information about legal representation services that are available for family law clients.

It may take time to find the right contact to start a new initiative and get people to participate. If you meet frequently, community members are likely to engage. Some possible long-term community outreach initiatives include:

- / Regular presentations or resource displays in hospitals, community centres, and courthouses.
- / Regular presentations to university classes of groups who may later work with people who might need to apply for legal aid (for example nurses, social workers, paralegals, and lawyers).
- / Regular contact with the offices of members of parliament (MPs) and members of the legislative assembly (MLAs). Constituency assistants often deal with people who might be eligible for legal aid so it's important they be kept up to date about legal aid services and publications.
- / Information meetings on LSS services. Noon hour or evening meetings will attract different groups of people.
- / Regular updates to community contacts about legal aid publications to keep in touch with groups who might not have much contact with your office.
- / Regular visits to band offices to stock publications and provide updates.

Tip — Outreach work with Aboriginal communities requires an investment of time, respect for the community, and patience. If you already have contacts in the Aboriginal community, it's usually more effective if you work with those contacts when approaching other Aboriginal groups to promote information about legal aid. Email the Indigenous Services manager at Aboriginal@lss.bc.ca for assistance with these issues.



Making outreach easier

Materials

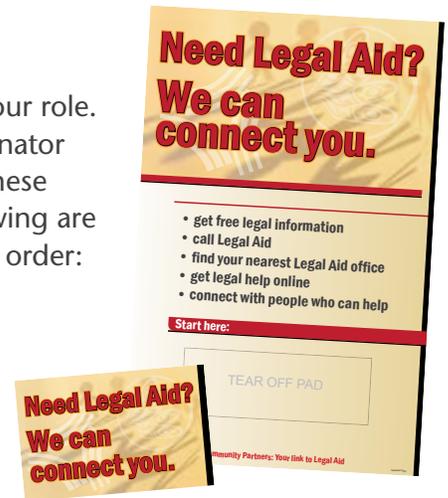
You'll find the job of making presentations in the community or having a display much easier to do if you have a standard package of materials and functional display equipment. Though LSS can't provide these items, it's often helpful to have such things as:

- / display boards
- / stands to hold materials such as the clear plastic ones available at most office supply stores (for example: officemaxcanada.com/EN/search/pages/browse.aspx?Ntt=display+pockets+clear+plastic&Ntk=All)
- / banners or posters that bring attention to your display
- / business cards so that interested people can easily contact you

Promotional materials

LSS provides you with customized promotional items to help you in your role. The publications production coordinator collects and places your order for these items about twice a year. The following are examples of what you might like to order:

- / laminated sign
- / poster
- / pads for the poster
- / wallet cards



Presentations

If you need to prepare a PowerPoint presentation, you can contact the community engagement coordinator to get LSS images to include and/or get general help with putting it together.

An effective PowerPoint presentation:

- / limits the details on each slide,
- / consists of easy-to-read slides,
- / is a reasonable running time, and
- / avoids technical difficulties.



- Tip** — Technical difficulties with PowerPoint presentations can be avoided. Consider the following when you're preparing one:
- / Rehearse your PowerPoint presentation before the event.
 - / If you're taking your own laptop, arrive ahead of time to connect it and work out any problems without feeling pressured.
 - / If you're downloading your presentation to someone else's computer, send the presentation to the person ahead of time to download.
 - / Know the different ways to solve connection problems between a laptop and a projector.
 - / Know the commands for setting up the slides in different versions of PowerPoint.

Good records

It's important that you keep good records of the groups you contact and establish a good system for keeping track of community groups who are, or might be, interested in getting information about legal services.

The best record includes contact information and information about the event or activity. It's important that you keep track of each outreach activity as you do it, and ensure that you do the follow-up work promptly after the event.

Feedback

As mentioned previously in this manual, LSS is very interested in receiving any feedback about its services or resources that you hear in the course of your work as a community partner.

Complaints

Sometimes clients complain about legal aid lawyers or about LSS staff or policies. Complaints can be made to:

Audit & Investigation Department

Legal Services Society
 400 – 510 Burrard Street
 Vancouver, BC V6C 3A8
 Fax: 604-682-0979
 Email: complaints@lss.bc.ca

Note

It's important to understand the limits of your responsibility as a community partner.

For example, if someone wants to complain to you about the service they received from an LSS office, local agent, or the LSS Call Centre, your role is to provide them with information about how to make a complaint — not to take the complaint or respond to it.

More information is provided under *Make a Complaint* at legalaid.bc.ca/about/contactUs.php.



LSS contact list

Community engagement coordinator

communitypartnerships@lss.bc.ca

Your primary contact at LSS is the community engagement coordinator (CEC). Contact the CEC for information about our community engagement initiative and with questions about your role, training, LSS services and resources, or any issues that arise in your work.

Community training and outreach coordinator

outreach@lss.bc.ca

Contact the community training and outreach coordinator for information about training and outreach activities, or for questions about or support for training/outreach events and opportunities in your community.

Indigenous Services manager

Aboriginal@lss.bc.ca

Our Indigenous Services manager is available to consult with communities about services, appropriate resources, and other issues.

Intake Department

intake@lss.bc.ca

Contact our Intake Department for information and assistance regarding legal aid applications and referrals.

Legal information outreach workers

604-601-6166 / 1-866-577-2525

Contact a legal information outreach worker (LIOW) for information and assistance with legal services and resources, and referrals.

Online outreach coordinator

socialmedia@lss.bc.ca

Contact our online outreach coordinator to get help with using LSS's social media tools. You can also submit your ideas for resources and events to share online, or send your feedback, input, and ideas about LSS websites.

Publications development coordinator

publications@lss.bc.ca

Contact the publications development coordinator with your feedback on LSS publications, or your input and ideas about publications that could be developed in the future.

Publications production coordinator

distribution@lss.bc.ca

Contact the publications production coordinator for any questions or issues about LSS publications, or about your customer account, customer number, or log-in password.

Supervisor, print, web, and multimedia

[604-601-6000](tel:604-601-6000)

Contact the print, web, and multimedia supervisor for any questions you may have about the production of LSS print materials and websites.



Quick reference guide

LSS community partner role and responsibilities

Note

Some partners have contracts with other agencies for outreach or advocacy, and responsibilities that go beyond the services that LSS funds through this project. If you have such a contract, you must make sure that the public and intermediaries know when you're providing a community partner service and when you're providing services funded by other agencies.

If you ever feel that there could be a conflict between your role as a community partner and in providing other services, or that one service could have an effect on another, you should discuss it with our community engagement coordinator.

Your role

As an LSS community partner, you provide

- / legal information to the public, and
- / legal information and outreach to other intermediaries in the community.

The following guidelines define your role by providing direction on the work that is in and out of scope for community partners.

In-scope services

Legal information

What is legal information?

Legal information isn't specific to a set of facts or situation. It includes general materials and resources about the law to help identify legal issues and the options available to address those issues.

Out-of-scope services

Legal advice and legal representation

What is legal advice?

Legal advice is specific to a set of facts. It involves applying the law to a particular situation, and providing a legal opinion and specific advice about the best course of action for that situation.

Giving legal advice is helping someone formulate options or choose among options when a problem has a substantial legal component.



What is legal representation?

Legal representation involves representing the interests of a client in a legal matter through oral or written communications with a third party, or appearing on their behalf in a court or before a tribunal or other hearing.

Your responsibilities

When helping people to find legal information, always say that:

- / you're not a lawyer,
- / you can help them find legal information and other resources,
- / you do not give legal advice, and
- / to get legal advice, they must talk to a lawyer.

To clarify your role, you may also need to say that:

- / the other party could also ask for help and get the same information from you, and
- / you won't keep an open file for them — they need to look after their information.

Depending on the type of issue, you can also refer people to other places for help, such as legal aid intake, duty counsel, advice lawyers, other LSS resources, a Law Foundation-funded advocate, family justice counsellor, Native courtworker, or a pro bono clinic.

Note

When in doubt about the boundaries between information and advice, talk to the community engagement coordinator who can refer you to an appropriate LSS staff person to answer your question.



Community partner services dos and don'ts

Can I help people find legal information?

You can

- / Point people in the right direction to find legal information in the form of public legal education and information (PLEI) print and web materials, and other community resources that can help them.
- / Give brief help to find legal resources and assistance.
- / Refer people to the local courthouse librarian for in-depth research and to legal advisors (pro bono, duty counsel) when they need more detailed research.

You can't

- / Research case law and legislation that isn't available in PLEI materials.
- / Guess — if in doubt, refer the person to another service or resource.
- / Develop an ongoing relationship where the person may view you as a legal advisor, rather than a source of information and referral.
- / Keep open files or notes for people you've helped.

Can I provide information about how to qualify for legal aid?

You can

- / Describe general coverage policy and financial guidelines from information in LSS publications or websites, or from additional materials that we give you to help you explain policies and procedures.
- / Refer to LSS intake for complete assessment where the person has a criminal, family, or immigration (refugee or possible deportation) law problem that might be covered by legal aid.
- / If intermediaries need more information about intake processes, contact LSS for support. LSS may be able to help with training sessions and may be able to collaborate with you to hold a workshop.

You can't

- / Provide a copy of manuals that LSS staff use. (Direct any requests for policies to your LSS contact.)
- / Offer an opinion that the person will or will not qualify for legal aid.
- / Guess. (If in doubt, refer to legal aid intake.)
- / Keep copies of any documents you help someone send to LSS. Make sure the person takes all their documents with them when they leave your office.

Can I help with court forms?

You can

- / Tell them generally what kind of information they can put on the form, and where — for example: "this is where you would say what you want the court to order", not "this is what you should say in that box."
- / Refer them to duty counsel or advice lawyers when help is needed to fill out forms — for example, because they can't read or write.

You can't

- / Choose or recommend the words for the person to use.
- / Fill out forms even if the person is self-represented/not legally trained/unable to read or write.
- / Fill out a form because of a language barrier. (See notes on the next page about free interpreter/translator services.)



Community partner services dos and don'ts

Can I help people to deal with lawyers and the court?

You can

- / Organize people before they go to see the lawyer — Do they have their papers ready? Do they know what to expect when they meet the lawyer?
- / Help them find services at court and a local agent or other LSS service.
- / Tell people about existing PLEI resources and services that may be useful.

You can't

- / Make notes of legal advice — duty counsel and advice lawyers should provide notes to their clients if needed.
- / Check with lawyers about conflicts of interest.
- / Recommend a particular lawyer.
- / Explain a lawyer's letter. (Refer the client back to the lawyer for explanation.)
- / File documents for people at court registry.
- / Provide secretarial/legal assistant services to a lawyer or a client.
- / Communicate messages back and forth between lawyers and clients.
- / Schedule duty counsel/advice lawyer appointments.
- / Recommend arguments to make in court or to the other party.
- / Talk to the other party or their lawyer on behalf of someone you have helped.
- / Appear in court for a person.

Can I use my language skills?

Remember that you can refer people to the LSS Call Centre or a legal aid office if they need an interpreter or translator. Intake can provide immediate access to an interpreter over the phone if needed, free of charge. LSS has access to professional interpreters and translators for people who apply for legal aid and for legal aid clients.

You can

- / Help people to contact others — for example, by reading or writing a short note, such as an address, phone number, documents needed, contact information. or a court date.
- / Help with a brief conversation when making a referral to another agency.
- / Help the person to get a qualified interpreter or translator.

You can't

- / Provide extended interpretation or translation services, such as:
 - + attending a lawyer/client interview to interpret, or
 - + translating legal or other documentation.



Community partner services dos and don'ts

Can I plan community events — information sessions, workshops, and conferences?

You can

- / Provide information sessions/presentations on LSS services and resources, and other PLEI services and resources, based on information that is publicly available.*
- / Help people to find general legal information and provide information on how to use the LSS, Family Law in BC, Aboriginal Legal Aid in BC, MyLawBC, and Clicklaw websites.*
- / Present PowerPoints and other presentations that are pre-approved by LSS.*

You can't

- / Draft legal content yourself that's based on material or information that isn't available from PLEI materials.*

