



**A.L.L. Reaches Settlement with the Province on Increased Legal Aid Tariff Rates
and other Remuneration Related Issues**

Announcement from the Board of A.L.L.- Association of Legal Aid Lawyers

Introduction:

A.L.L.- Association of Legal Aid Lawyers (ALL) is the exclusive agent for negotiating tariff rates on behalf of legal aid lawyers. For the past year, ALL has been involved in negotiations with the Ministry of Attorney General (AG) and Legal Aid B.C. (LABC) about Tariff Rates for legal aid lawyers, as well as about policy engagement on legal aid issues between the AG, LABC and ALL going forward.

A) Tariff Agreement

The Board of ALL is pleased to announce that a settlement has been reached that has now been approved by the AG, the Board of LABC, and the Board of ALL.

The agreement provides for:

Tariff Increases:

- For 2022/23, the Tariff Rates will increase by 3.24% as well as an additional 25 cents per hour effective April 1, 2022;
- For 2023/24, the Tariff Rates will increase by a minimum of 5.5% effective April 1, 2023. This amount may be increased to up to a maximum of 6.75%, depending on inflation;
- the Tariff Rates will increase by a minimum of 2% effective April 1, 2024. This amount may be increased to a maximum of 3% depending on inflation.

Notes re Tariff Increases:

- **The end result of the agreement is an increase to the tariff of between 11.34% and 13.76% over the three year term of the agreement.**
- Rates for lawyers with less than 4 years call will increase to a minimum of \$126.25 over the term of the agreement (from the current \$113.39).
- Rates for lawyers with 4 to 10 years call will increase to a minimum of \$132.57 over the term of the agreement (from the current \$119.07).
- Rates for lawyers with 10 or more years call will increase to a minimum of \$138.88 over the term of the agreement (from the current \$124.74).
- **Block fee rates will increase by the same percentage.**
- **Retroactive payments will be made for services provided from April 1, 2022.**

Other Payments/Flexibility Allocation

In addition to the tariff increases, a number of other items totaling \$989,000 were agreed, including:

- A one time payment of \$150 to 550 eligible lawyers (those who take a minimum 20 legal aid contracts a year or who have \$50,000 in billings) for use on CPD materials or programming;
- An annual allocation of \$20,000 per year for an Indigenous Travel Bursary Fund;
- A one time payment to ALL to support the bargaining process;
- An allocation of \$360,000 for years two and three of the agreement to provide \$30,000 to each of 12 eligible firms to contribute to the costs of engaging an articulated student, with priority given to firms located outside of Vancouver, the Fraser Valley and the Capital Regional Districts.
- Any excess amounts will be added to the LABC Bursary Fund for professional development for legal aid lawyers.

B) Policy Engagement;

A separate agreement has been reached with the AG and LABC, continuing the formal consultation process between the AG, LABC and ALL about legal assistance policy, to ensure that the perspectives of legal aid lawyers help inform the development of new government policy.

Over the past three years, the previous consultation process led to submissions from ALL on a number of matters, including:

- Junior Counsel,
- Experts,
- Criminal Legal Aid Coverage

- Immigration Legal Aid Coverage,
- Family Legal Aid Coverage,
- Children’s Lawyer,
- Family Duty Counsel,
- FMEP, and
- Mediation.

A number of these consultations have resulted in enhancements including increased funding for junior counsel, easier access to experts, increased funding for children’s lawyers (through the Society for Children and Youth), increased rates for mediators etc.

C) Thank you

ALL wishes to thank the members of its Negotiating Team: ALL Directors Marilyn Sandford KC, Chris Johnson KC, Sean Davidson and Michelle Silongan, and our Chief Negotiator Carol Baird Ellan, who have worked tirelessly over the past year to make this agreement possible.

ALL also wishes to thank the others who participated in the negotiations and helped them reach a successful conclusion: for the AG: Wendy Jackson, Tanya Munro and negotiator Keith Evans; for LABC: Heidi Mason, Sherry Poirier, David Griffiths, Olga Volpe, Kathryn Spracklin and Salman Azam.

D) Questions

There will be more information in the near future from LABC about issues such as the timing of retroactive payments etc. In the meantime, if you have any questions about these important developments, please do not hesitate to contact Wayne Robertson KC, A.L.L. Executive Director at 778-838-7360 or wrobertson@bclegalaidlawyers.ca.