

**Legal Aid BC**

**2026/27 – 2028/29  
Service Plan**

**February 2026**



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## Board Chair's Accountability Statement



The 2026/27 – 2028/29 Legal Aid BC Service Plan was prepared under the Board's direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. This plan is consistent with the government's strategic priorities and fiscal plan. The Board is accountable for the contents of this plan and is responsible for the validity and reliability of the information presented.

All significant assumptions, policy decisions, events and identified risks, as of February 4, 2026 have been considered in preparing the plan. The performance measures presented are consistent with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*, Legal Aid BC's mandate and goals, and focus on aspects critical to the organization's performance. The targets in this plan have been determined based on an assessment of Legal Aid BC's operating environment, forecast conditions, risk assessment and past performance.

Signed on behalf of the Board by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Allan Seckel". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Allan Seckel, KC  
Board Chair, Legal Aid BC  
February 4, 2026

# Table of Contents

Board Chair's Accountability Statement.....	3
Strategic Direction.....	5
Purpose of the Organization and Alignment with Government Priorities.....	5
Performance Planning .....	7
Financial Plan .....	20
Appendix A: Mandate Letter from the Minister Responsible .....	23

## Strategic Direction

In 2026/27, the public sector organizations will do their part to support the Government of British Columbia's prioritizing support for people by taking action to make life better for everyone.

Despite a challenging fiscal environment due to global uncertainty, trade relationship reordering, and low resource prices, over the past year Government made significant progress on efforts to reduce costs for British Columbians, hire more doctors and nurses, and build more homes, hospitals and schools, faster. Crown Agencies will continue to advance these key priorities even as tariffs, trade policies, and instability outside of the province's borders continue to put pressure on the province's finances.

Ongoing fiscal pressure means all parts of Government, including Crown Agencies must continue to do their part to maximize efficiencies and make sure every dollar counts.

To respond to these extraordinary times, Crown Agencies will support Government's focus on expanding trade and investment both within Canada and abroad and delivering major projects that offer good jobs and opportunities for people and communities. This focus on economic growth and prosperity is critical to delivering the revenue needed to provide services and infrastructure.

Good relationships and mutually beneficial partnerships with First Nations are critical to building a better future for everyone in British Columbia. Crown Agencies will continue supporting efforts to implement the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan. Through collaboration and open dialogue, we aim to foster trust, stability and certainty for all.

This 2026/27 service plan outlines how Legal Aid BC will support the Government's priorities and selected action items identified in the Minister's most recent [Mandate Letter](#).

## Purpose of the Organization and Alignment with Government Priorities

Legal Aid BC (LABC) provides legal aid in British Columbia. Our mission is to strengthen client-centred legal help for British Columbians experiencing barriers to accessing the legal system. Our clients' barriers to exercising their legal rights include things like low income, addictions, and mental health challenges. Each year, tens of thousands of British Columbians rely on us for legal advice, representation and information services in the areas of criminal, family, child protection and immigration law.

Created by the [Legal Services Society Act](#) in 1979, we are a provincial Crown Corporation with a mandate to assist individuals in resolving their legal problems, administer an effective and efficient system for providing legal aid, and provide advice to the Attorney General respecting legal aid and access to justice. We are funded by the Ministry of Attorney General (the

Ministry), with additional support from the Department of Justice Canada, the Law Foundation of BC and the Notary Foundation of BC.

Our vision is aspirational: BC's legal system transformed, by the way LABC represents our clients, into one that is more equitable and inclusive. Our core beliefs reflect our employees' compassion, and have Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) at their centre. These beliefs guide us to be client-focused, advance Truth and Reconciliation, find strength in EDI, and demonstrate leadership that supports positive changes to the legal system.

In 2026/27, LABC will support key priorities identified by the Ministry, including: working with the Ministry and stakeholders to identify the best ways and tools to improve access to justice for low-income families; aligning legal aid service delivery approaches with transformative changes in the justice sector focussed on efficient, timely, and accessible legal services; and continuing to work with Indigenous communities and leadership consistent with the BC First Nations Justice Strategy and Métis Justice Strategy, to reduce Indigenous overrepresentation in the justice system.

LABC will also advance the government's priority of building a sustainable supply of skilled and committed legal professionals who can deliver high-quality legal services to legal aid clients over the long term.

# Performance Planning

## Goal 1: LABC clients achieve better outcomes

Improving outcomes for our clients is LABC's primary goal, and we will focus on delivering high quality core services to support it. Recognizing that a client could receive excellent services but not be satisfied with an outcome, we will collaborate with service providers and clients to define meaningful quality measures that reflect diverse perspectives and allow us to track our performance against clear targets over time.

### Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
1a Percent of clients provided LABC services for interrelated needs, or referred to other services for interrelated needs <sup>1,2,3</sup>	32%	33%	34%	34%

Data source: LABC client information system and other operational data (reported by fiscal year as an annual measure).

<sup>1</sup> In 2023/24, LABC shifted this metric from a raw number to a percentage to provide a better picture of LABC's performance.

The percentage is calculated by dividing a) the number of unique individuals who received an LABC service to address an interrelated need or who were referred to another service for an interrelated need by the total number of unique individuals who applied for or received LABC services. This includes the total number of applicants for representation services, approved or not, plus the total number of Parents Legal Center (PLC) and Family Law Center (FLC) clients, expanded family duty counsel clients, and Family LawLINE clients.

<sup>2</sup> Interrelated needs are non-legal needs, such as health, housing, and debt, that are connected to legal issues that may either arise from or contribute to those issues. Addressing interrelated needs alongside legal assistance can improve client outcomes and reduce client use of legal, health, and social services over the long term.

<sup>3</sup> The baseline for this measure will be established by March 31, 2026, to reflect the expanded scope of the measure, which now includes expanded family duty counsel and Family Law Centre clients.

### Discussion

This is a composite measure across different LABC service types. It reports the percent of applicants for LABC representation services, Parents Legal Centres (PLCs), expanded family duty counsel services, and Family LawLINE who received information or referrals to other service providers to assist with their interrelated needs. This measure also includes support for interrelated issues provided directly to PLC clients by advocates and Indigenous community legal workers at the PLCs, as well as the percentage of clients who receive information or referrals from Legal Aid Navigators. With the launch of the Family Law Centre (FLC) program in December 2024, support provided for FLC clients is also included. LABC considers increasing our clients' access to wrap-around services an important measure of quality. A higher percentage of clients being referred indicates that more clients are getting the help they need to get better outcomes.

Performance Measure	2020/21 Baseline	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
1b Percent of clients who say LABC made it easy for them to deal with their issues <sup>1</sup>	60%	70%	70%	75%	80%

Data source: LABC client information system with corresponding LABC client survey (reported by fiscal year as annual measure).

<sup>1</sup> Data for this metric is captured on an ongoing basis at the close of key interactions. The survey is issued by email and LABC will report a weighted score from different types of interactions annually.

Performance Measure	2020/21 Baseline	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
1c Percent of clients who say their legal aid lawyer explained things in a way they understood <sup>1</sup>	70%	78%	80%	82%	82%

Data source: LABC client information system with corresponding LABC client survey (reported by fiscal year as an annual measure).

<sup>1</sup> Data for this measure is captured on an ongoing basis, and at key milestones in a client's case. The survey is issued by email and captures data from clients who receive representation services from lawyers (including clinic-based staff lawyers) and clients who receive services from expanded family duty counsel and Family LawLINE lawyers.

## Discussion

Clients' reporting ease of dealing with legal issues: This measures clients' perception of how easy LABC made it for them to deal with their issues and serves as an important indicator of overall service accessibility and effectiveness. It is a widely used metric in multiple sectors, and external benchmarks support its relevance for assessing client experience. Supporting metrics will provide results by service type and by area of law. Targets are informed by a review of comparable performance measures used by legal aid plans in Canada and reflect LABC's desired service level, with 80% identified as the standard we aim to achieve over time.

Clients' reporting clear communication from their lawyer: This measure reflects clients' experiences with their lawyer's communication, including whether information was clear and whether clients felt informed about what they needed to do to help resolve their legal problem. Future years targets have been revised based on results from the new survey methodology, LABC's desired service standard, and benchmarking against similar measures used by other legal aid plans across Canada.

Improvements in these measures will indicate an increase in service quality – key to achieving better client outcomes

## Objective 1.1: Provide high-quality legal services.

High-quality legal services are essential to clients achieving better outcomes. Continuous improvement in service quality, linked to outcomes, will lead to better results for our clients.



## Key Strategies

- Review family legal aid services to identify opportunities to improve access, quality and outcomes for clients
- Improve the capacity of legal professionals to meet current and future demand for legal aid services by introducing targeted recruitment and retention strategies in key regions
- Expand program delivery of Impact of Race and Culture Assessments (IRCAs) for Black, Asian, and South Asian clients by December 2027 to improve equitable access to culturally informed resolution and sentencing supports

## Discussion

Providing high-quality legal services requires ongoing assessment of how services are delivered and how well they meet client needs. The review of family legal aid services will determine whether current models remain accessible, responsive, and aligned with client needs. As demand increases and client circumstances become more complex, the review will identify what is working well and where gaps exist, and develop client-centred recommendations. The findings will inform decisions on how best to balance services with available resources and support improved outcomes for family legal aid clients.

A reliable and skilled roster of lawyers is central to effective service delivery. In 2026/27, LABC will introduce at least three targeted recruitment and retention strategies to address regional shortages and respond to areas where demand for legal aid services is increasing. Strengthening roster capacity will support timely access to legal assistance and help maintain the quality of services available to clients across the province.

LABC will also expand the IRCA program to better support Black clients as well as support Asian and South Asian clients. IRCAs are expert reports prepared by social workers that outline the systemic and background factors shaping a person's experiences, including racism, discrimination, poverty, and other systemic factors that may relate to a person's circumstances before the court. This information assists the court in assessing moral blameworthiness and in determining a proportionate sentence that reflects the client's circumstances. Work in the coming year will focus on increasing assessor capacity and strengthening community-based delivery within Black, Asian, and South Asian communities so that IRCAs are available to more clients. By providing the court with relevant social-context information and recommendations that may support underlying needs, IRCAs contribute to better outcomes for Black, Asian and South Asian legal aid clients.

## Goal 2: LABC employees are engaged

Goal 2 recognizes that LABC needs engaged staff to deliver high-quality, client-centred services. While our dedicated employees are our strength, high turnover and retirements make recruitment and retention a growing priority. Objectives 2.1 and 2.2 will ensure we are innovative in our recruitment, foster equitable opportunities for training and advancement, and work to build the inclusive culture that creates a diverse, skilled and committed team.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2022/23 Baseline	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
2a Employee retention rate	86%	85%	85%	86%	86%

Data source: Operational data (reported by fiscal year as an annual measure).

### Discussion

Employee retention rate is an objective and highly reliable measure of employee engagement, and the calculation follows best practices. It is our key performance indicator for assessing sustainable workforce planning, building organizational capacity, and limiting operational risk. Target setting for this measure is informed by sector benchmarks, including data from the Conference Board of Canada, indicating that Crown corporations experience comparatively higher voluntary turnover rates. This context supports LABC's target of maintaining retention at 85% in 2026/27 and progressing toward the 86% baseline established in 2022/23.

A key feature of this metric is the ability to disaggregate the data. The results on this measure will be reported on an organization-wide basis, but LABC will also track retention rates for specific employee groups, including by departments, managers compared to non-managerial staff, client-facing roles and non-client-facing roles, and staff self-identifying as inequity-experiencing. Analysis of results will consider the range of internal and external factors that might affect retention rates.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2024/25 Baseline	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
2b Employee engagement score	69% <sup>1</sup>	69%	69% <sup>2</sup>	TBD <sup>3</sup>	TBD

Data source: Operational data (reported by fiscal year as an annual measure).

<sup>1</sup> Baseline set using "overall employee engagement" results from the LABC Employee Engagement Survey conducted in Q4 of 2024/25.

<sup>2</sup> Target established based on benchmark data from Sentis' 2024 National Workforce Study, which reports an average engagement score of 54% among government and public sector employees.

<sup>3</sup> Future years targets will be set following the administration of the new Employee Engagement survey.

### Discussion

LABC needs engaged staff to deliver high-quality, client-centred services. High employee engagement in the public sector is linked to increased staff retention and improved services for clients. In 2023/24, LABC changed survey methodology and increased frequency.

Similar to the employee retention data, employee engagement results will be reported on an organization-wide basis, but LABC will also track results for specific employee groups, including by department, management/non-managerial staff, and staff self-identifying as inequity-experiencing. These changes will enable LABC to target responses when and where they are most needed.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2022/23 Baseline	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
2c Percentage of internal promotions or lateral changes <sup>1</sup>	37%	35%	35%	36%	37%

Data source: Operational data (reported by fiscal year as an annual measure).

<sup>1</sup> A lateral change is when an employee is successful in their application for another LABC position that is not considered a “higher” job class. Originally expressed as “Percentage of internal promotions compared to externally hired,” we expanded the metric to include lateral position changes.

## Discussion

Tracking internal promotions or lateral changes is an objective measure that will be strongly influenced by leadership training, internal communications, and employee engagement.

Targets for this measure are informed by the internal opportunities available in a given year and by the proportion of roles that can be reasonably filled from within the organization. Our historical data show that internal movement accounts for about one-third of staffing changes, and the targets reflect a level of mobility that is achievable.

Hiring will continue to be conducted on a merit basis, considering both internal and external candidates; nevertheless, internal advancement is an important measure to track.

Improvement on this measure will demonstrate that LABC is rewarding performance and creating the career paths that boost engagement and retention. In addition to this quantitative measure, LABC will assess employees’ perceptions about opportunities for advancement and reasons for lateral moves to capture the full picture of employee engagement and commitment.

## Objective 2.1: Create a work environment that strengthens employee commitment.

Commitment to the mandate and values of LABC is a key driver of employee engagement. Creating a work environment that strengthens employee commitment will promote Goal 2.

## Key Strategies

- Review and implement improvements to the LABC Employee Recognition Program by March 2028
- Improve frontline staff retention by expanding career pathways and strengthening day-to-day and wellbeing supports
- Increase Indigenous representation from 4% to 8% of LABC staff, by March 2029, through targeted recruitment and retention initiatives

## **Discussion**

LABC will continue strengthening the workplace factors that influence employee commitment, including recognition, workload supports, and opportunities for growth. Improving the Employee Recognition Program is one way to reinforce the value of employees' contributions and encourage a more consistent culture of acknowledgement across the organization.

Strengthening the frontline experience is an organizational priority identified by LABC. Work in this area will focus on improving day-to-day supports for frontline employees, reviewing caseload guidelines and addressing pressures that impact retention. These efforts are intended to improve stability in key service areas and sustain the capacity needed to deliver client-centred services.

Increasing Indigenous representation in the overall employee population is also a significant priority for LABC. A representative workforce helps build trust with Indigenous clients and communities and supports more culturally informed services. LABC will work with the Truth and Reconciliation department and the EDI council to align recruitment and retention strategies with this commitment and ensure that our workforce better reflects the communities we serve.

## **Objective 2.2: Develop future leaders.**

Job satisfaction and organizational satisfaction are key drivers of employee engagement. Creating equitable opportunities for training, leadership development, and advancement within LABC will build leadership capability and readiness across the organization, increase job and organizational satisfaction, and support the development of future leaders in alignment with Goal 2.

### **Key Strategies**

- Develop and launch a leadership pathway program by March 2028
- Identify leadership competencies across the Legal Strategy, Legal Operations, and Corporate Services divisions and execute targeted leadership development by March 2028

## **Discussion**

LABC needs strong, committed leaders to deliver high-quality services. Building a leadership pathway program and identifying shared competencies across divisions will help develop individual leaders and strengthen LABC's overall leadership capacity, now and into the future.

## **Goal 3: LABC has strong collaborative relationships**

People in need of LABC services benefit from client-focused collaboration across legal service organizations. LABC is one of many providers of legal services to people facing barriers to accessing the legal system in British Columbia. Goal 3 recognizes that strong collaborative relationships with service providers and stronger partnerships with others in the legal system

will enable LABC to deliver sustainable, comprehensive client-centred legal services – with fewer gaps and overlaps.

Lawyers are key providers of quality legal aid services to clients and one of LABC's primary service provider relationships, which is reflected in two of the performance measures related to this Goal.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2022/23 Baseline	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
3a LABC tariff lawyer retention rate <sup>1</sup>	84%	85%	85%	85% <sup>2</sup>	85% <sup>2</sup>

Data source: LABC client information system (reported by fiscal year as annual measure).

<sup>1</sup> New performance measure introduced in the in 2023/24 Service Plan. The metric calculation was determined during 2023/24, and the baseline was set in 2023/24 using 2022/23 data. Tariff lawyers are lawyers in private practice who (1) accept contracts from LABC to represent clients with court cases involving criminal, family, child protection and/or immigration law and/or (2) accept contracts from LABC to provide legal advice services to clients.

<sup>2</sup> LABC will review and refine targets for future years based on findings from the lawyer roster, recruitment and retention review, and the quality service standards to be developed by LABC.

## Discussion

A higher retention rate for tariff lawyers is a key indicator that LABC's collaborative approach, working closely with lawyers to address their needs and provide support, effectively enables them to deliver high-quality services to clients. Beyond reporting the aggregated retention rate, LABC will track retention by categories like area of law, lawyer gender and lawyer age. This will generate deeper insights into targeted tactics that will help us drive higher retention where we need it most. Analysis of results will consider the range of internal and external factors that might affect retention rates.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
3b Percent of tariff lawyers who said LABC was easy to work with on behalf of the client <sup>1</sup>	52%	TBD <sup>2</sup>	TBD	TBD

Data source: LABC Tariff Lawyer Survey (reported by fiscal year as an annual measure).

<sup>1</sup> New performance measure introduced in the 2023/24 Service Plan. The survey was administered through a third-party organization in 2024/25. Moving forward, the survey will be administered internally, and the baseline will be set after the second administration of the survey.

<sup>2</sup> LABC will set targets for future years following the implementation of the new Tariff Lawyer Survey.

## Discussion

LABC strives to make it as easy as possible for lawyers to administer their legal aid files so that they can focus on providing quality services to clients. This performance measure tracks lawyers' perception of our administrative efficiency and effectiveness and closely mirrors the measure of clients' experience with LABC.

Data for this new performance measure will be captured on an ongoing basis at the close of a specific transaction (such as when a case is closed), making this metric more reliable and timely, and providing LABC with the information it needs to drive continuous service and process improvements. LABC will also track secondary measures that flag, for example, specific case types or areas of law where LABC is receiving low or high scores from both lawyers and clients.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
3c Percent of agencies who say that LABC was easy to work with on behalf of the client <sup>1,2</sup>	55%	60%	65%	75%

Data source: Proposed annual survey of agency stakeholders (reported by the fiscal year as an annual measure).

<sup>1</sup> New performance measure introduced in the 2023/24 Service Plan.

<sup>2</sup> Performance measure was first reported in 2024/25. Survey improvements will be made prior to the second administration, and a baseline will be set by March 31, 2026.

## Discussion

This measure identifies how easy it is for service providers and partners to work with LABC in support of their clients. It mirrors the similar measures that track clients' and lawyers' perceptions. This year, LABC will review and refine the survey methodology used and work with agencies to better understand their experiences. Feedback from this process will help LABC better understand how agencies experience the relationship and how collaboration can be strengthened.

## Objective 3.1: Collaborate with service providers to benefit our clients.

Lawyers are a primary provider of legal aid services. At the same time, many LABC clients must navigate a complex, multi-provider environment to get the services they need to address their legal issues. More client-focused collaboration should enable clients to move between legal and other service providers with greater ease and efficiency – increasing the likelihood of a better outcome.

## Key Strategies

- Collaborate with justice system partners to better align and strengthen how legal aid services operate alongside them as part of LABC's review of family legal aid service delivery models

## Discussion

LABC engages with a range of service providers across BC to collaborate in service delivery to our shared clients. Collaboration with justice system partners strengthens LABC's ability to deliver integrated, effective legal aid services. By working closely with key partners, LABC can gain shared insights into client needs, reduce service gaps, and coordinate support more efficiently. This collaboration helps ensure clients receive the right mix of legal help and

related services, streamlining their path through the justice system and improving their overall outcomes.

### **Objective 3.2: Strengthen our relationships with partners in the legal system.**

Our partners in the legal system include government ministries, Indigenous organizations and communities, and a variety of other organizations and professionals, including the Association of Legal Aid Lawyers. By strengthening these relationships and working together, we can help clients achieve better outcomes.

#### **Key Strategies**

- Build strong collaborative relationships with BC First Nations Justice Council and Métis Nation BC by supporting the implementation of the First Nations Justice Strategy and the Métis Justice Strategy
- Engagement with the Association of Legal Aid Lawyers (ALL) to implement recruitment and retention strategies
- Develop co-location arrangements for Legal Aid Navigators in service settings designed for marginalized and equity-seeking clients to expand access to legal aid services and streamline the client experience

#### **Discussion**

During 2026/27, LABC will continue working with the Ministry of Attorney General, and with Indigenous leadership, organizations and communities to support implementation of Indigenous justice strategies, such as the First Nations Justice Strategy and the Métis Justice Strategy, and Indigenous justice initiatives. Providing timely and effective support as requested will build the strong, collaborative relationships needed to deliver better outcomes for clients. Information sharing will be central to the successful transition of services and supporting better client outcomes.

Building on work started in 2024/25, LABC will continue to strengthen its ongoing engagement with ALL to develop and implement tariff lawyer recruitment and retention strategies. Working together on this strategy will help build collaborative relationships while creating mutually beneficial results to build a healthy roster of legal aid lawyers.

LABC will also continue to find opportunities for new co-location arrangements for Legal Aid Navigators in service settings designed for marginalized and equity-seeking clients. Locating Navigators within community agency settings reflects a commitment to streamlining the client experience and strengthens the relationships needed to improve access to legal aid in underserved regions.

### **Goal 4: LABC is a responsive organization**

In a fast-changing environment, LABC must have agile systems and processes to deliver quality services to clients when and where they need them. We also need the right data to

drive continuous improvement. We invest in direct client services and organizational infrastructure to achieve the best outcomes for our clients. Objectives 4.1 and 4.2 highlight modernization of our Information Technology and data management as essential to serving our clients better over the long term.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2020/21 Baseline	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
4a Percent of clients who say the application process was straightforward <sup>1</sup>	71%	85%	85%	85%	85%

Data source: Ongoing LABC Client Survey (reported by fiscal year as annual measure).

<sup>1</sup> New performance measure introduced in the in 2023/24 Service Plan. Baseline set using results from the biennial LABC client survey conducted in 2020/21.

## Discussion

Individuals seeking legal aid services can apply to LABC through our call centre, with the help of a third-party advocate or their lawyer, via email, or at one of our in-person legal aid intake locations around the province. Intake personnel interview and assess each applicant to determine if they are eligible for legal aid services. In our 2020 client survey, the application process was identified as one of the top drivers of client satisfaction and a top priority metric. It serves as an indirect measure of the responsiveness of the systems and processes involved in obtaining legal services. Positive change in the client application experience offers a subjective measure of improvement in those systems and processes.

In 2023/24, LABC changed our client survey methodology to track progress on this measure. Data is captured on an ongoing basis from clients after they initiate the application process. The survey is issued by email. Overall results are reported annually. Supporting metrics will show results by area of law and type of inquiry, to provide more detailed operational insights about where the application process causes friction for clients.

## Objective 4.1: Assess and demonstrate our impact to continuously improve our services.

Reliable data on the impact of LABC services on client outcomes is essential to identify what's working, what isn't, and why. Assessing and sharing results with service providers, partners, and the public will build accountability, demonstrate value, and guide improvements.

## Key Strategies

- Develop and implement key performance indicators for at least three existing programs to accurately track progress, assess effectiveness, and drive continuous improvement across our services
- Strengthen frontline services by implementing monthly application file reviews with action plans and introducing dashboards to track results



## **Discussion**

In 2026/27, LABC will develop and implement program-level key performance indicators to measure and report on the impact of its services. These key performance indicators will guide decision-making, track progress, and identify opportunities for improvement.

Continuous improvement is central to strengthening LABC's frontline services, one of the organization's priorities. In 2026/27, LABC will embed this approach by implementing monthly application file reviews for end-to-end quality assurance and introducing dashboards to track results.

## **Objective 4.2: Leverage technology to optimize our operations and service delivery.**

In an era of hybrid service delivery and flexible workplaces, the importance of technology to internal process efficacy as well as service quality has never been greater. By investing in our IT infrastructure, LABC will be better able to support our justice partners to modernize the court system and expand the digital delivery of services for clients.

## **Key Strategies**

- Implement and launch an online client application solution by October 2026 to streamline service delivery and expand accessible application options for clients

## **Discussion**

LABC's Digital Transformation program is a five-year strategic initiative that will advance Goal 4. Through the program, LABC is investing in people, process, and technology to improve our services and to help strengthen the digital capabilities of the justice sector. Looking ahead to 2026/27, a priority project includes developing an online application process to streamline and digitize the client application process. This solution is intended to make legal aid more accessible, responsive, and easier to navigate for all clients.

## **Goal 5: LABC has a culture of Truth and Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

Building a culture of Truth and Reconciliation and EDI is integral to living our core beliefs, fulfilling our mission to strengthen client-centred legal help for British Columbians experiencing barriers accessing the legal system, and advancing our vision of a more equitable and inclusive legal system in BC. LABC will advance this work by implementing initiatives and measuring our progress against Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (GDEIB) Benchmarks as prioritized by the EDI council; the Manager, Truth and Reconciliation; and the Manager, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

## Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
5a Employee Equity Variance <sup>1, 2, 3</sup>	$\geq 0^4$	$\geq 0$	$\geq 0$	$\geq 0$

Data source: LABC HR system and employee survey conducted by a third-party research firm.

<sup>1</sup>The employee equity variance compares workplace outcomes for employees with historically privileged identities (White, straight, not disabled, cisgender men, or binary conforming people) and those with historically underrepresented identities (Indigenous, racialized, cisgender women, gender diverse, 2SLGBTQIA Plus, and disabled employees). This reflects the examples of approaches taken by other BC employers cited in the toolkit of [BC Human Rights Commissioner](#) on the use of demographic data to advance employment equity. LABC tracks organization-wide differences in the rate of hiring, retention, promotion, exits, and employee experience.

<sup>2</sup>Employees are defined as full-time employees.

<sup>3</sup>A positive variance will indicate that LABC's workplace practices are more equitable for underprivileged employees, and a negative variance will indicate that our workplace practices are more equitable for privileged employees. The goal is to achieve a zero or higher variance.

<sup>4</sup>In 2024/25, LABC began collecting expanded employee experience and demographic data needed to calculate the Employee Equity Variance. Data completeness will continue to be monitored over the next two years, and a baseline will be set once sufficient data is available.

Performance Measure	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Target	2027/28 Target	2028/29 Target
5b Client Equity Variance <sup>1, 2</sup>	$\geq 0^3$	$\geq 0$	$\geq 0$	$\geq 0$

Data source: LABC client information system.

<sup>1</sup>The client equity variance compares outcomes for clients with historically privileged identities (White, straight, not disabled, cisgender men, or binary conforming people) and those with historically underrepresented identities (Indigenous, racialized, cisgender women, 2SLGBTQIA Plus, gender diverse, and disabled clients). The different factors tracked among clients include positive legal outcomes, service experience, and wait time to be given a representation contract (where eligible).

<sup>2</sup>A positive variance will indicate that, on average, underprivileged clients get more positive outcomes, better experiences, and lower number of days to receive a contract representation contract. A negative variance will indicate that, on average, privileged clients get more positive outcomes, better experiences and lower number of days to receive a contract. The goal is to achieve a zero or higher variance. The approach of measuring size of disparities in access to service and outcomes across race, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability, is a strategy of using data to reduce disparities and improve service quality, advanced in the healthcare sector ([advancinghealthequity.org](#)).

<sup>3</sup>In 2024/25, LABC began collecting client experience and demographic data needed to calculate the Client Equity Variance. Data completeness and quality will continue to be monitored over the next two years, and a baseline will be set once sufficient data is available.

## Discussion

To measure progress toward embedding Truth and Reconciliation, and EDI throughout every aspect of LABC, we will calculate the Employee and Client Equity Variance measures based on race, Indigenous identity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and diverse abilities. The Employee Equity Variance measures differences in hiring, retention, promotion, exits, organizational-level representation, and workplace experience. The Client Equity Variance measures differences in client experience and outcomes across LABC services and interactions.

Building on the collection of disaggregated demographic data, LABC will advance the quality and completeness of employee and client demographic data in 2026/27. These updates will provide clearer insights into the causes of variance and inform targeted interventions to

achieve equitable outcomes in workplace practices, policies, and client services, including increased voluntary self-disclosure and data-informed continuous improvement in equity, diversity, inclusion, and Truth and Reconciliation initiatives.

### **Objective 5.1: Embed Truth and Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion throughout every aspect of LABC.**

Integrating Truth and Reconciliation and EDI throughout every aspect of the organization is critical to building that culture within LABC, and we prioritize ongoing resources to achieve that.

#### **Key Strategies**

- Build towards and sustain a [proactive stage](#) of development for the following GDEIB categories: Leadership and Accountability, Vision, Strategy, and Business Impact, Structure and Implementation, Work-Life Integration, Flexibility and Benefits, and Learning and Development by March 2028
- Complete integration of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) across all service design, evaluation, and decision-making processes by March 2027
- Advance prioritized actions identified in the LABC Truth and Reconciliation Impact Plan (TRIP)

#### **Discussion**

The GDEIB is a recognized international system that supports organizations to assess their progress in making EDI an integral part of the organization. In 2026/27, LABC will take steps to strengthen EDI using this framework, building on lessons learned from earlier work. The GDEIB Steering Committee which consists of employees from equity-denied groups will guide this work and provide oversight. Progress will be monitored through milestone reviews and quarterly reporting to leadership to track measurable improvements over time.

In 2026/27, LABC will implement its developed GBA Plus approach, ensuring client-related policies, programs, and initiatives consider how different genders with intersecting identities (including race, gender, sexual orientation, and disabilities) access, experience, and benefit from LABC services. The Truth and Reconciliation and EDI departments will lead the development of structures and approaches to embedding GBA Plus across committees and departments, supporting the integration of gender equity-focused analysis and client service design. Milestones, departmental reporting, and review of outcomes will provide insight into the effectiveness of these practices in promoting gender equity in service delivery.

Building on the 20 actions outlined in the Reconciliation Action Plan in 2018, LABC updated its strategy through the TRIP, which identifies 11 prioritized actions across the goal areas of Education, Equity, and Empowerment. In 2026/27, LABC will advance the following priority actions: uplifting Indigenous justice strategies with key partners and increasing client access to legal aid, particularly in family through the Indigenous Community Legal Worker Program and partnerships with community partners.

# Financial Plan

## Financial Summary

\$000s	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Budget	2027/28 Plan	2028/29 Plan
<b>Revenues</b>				
Provincial Government	147,310	140,187	140,187	140,187
Federal Government	9,717	12,257	12,257	12,257
Other Income & Recoveries <sup>1</sup>	7,688	9,606	12,432	12,583
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>164,715</b>	<b>162,050</b>	<b>164,876</b>	<b>165,027</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Criminal tariff <sup>2</sup>	70,482	70,172	71,605	71,685
Family tariff <sup>2</sup>	45,952	40,517	41,642	41,705
Child protection tariff <sup>2</sup>	8,514	6,649	6,791	6,799
Immigration and Refugee tariff <sup>2</sup>	9,717	12,257	12,257	12,257
Justice Initiatives <sup>3</sup>	11,229	13,268	13,268	13,268
Community Engagement	2,260	2,176	2,176	2,176
Publications	497	495	495	495
Administration <sup>4</sup>	16,064	16,516	16,642	16,642
Justice Initiatives	<b>164,715</b>	<b>162,050</b>	<b>164,876</b>	<b>165,027</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Annual Surplus (Deficit)</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Debt</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>939</b>
<b>Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>3,014</b>	<b>22,981</b>	<b>11,120</b>	-
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>				

Note: The above financial information was prepared based on current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

<sup>1</sup> Other Income & Recoveries includes funding from the Law Foundation, the Notary Foundation, Investment Income, and Federally Funded Cases by the Department of Justice (DOJ) Canada.

<sup>2</sup> Direct costs are allocated to the tariffs based on the budgeted figures.

<sup>3</sup> Justice Initiatives include Family LawLINE, Parents Legal Centres, Family Law Centres and other justice services initiatives.

<sup>4</sup> Commencing in 2024/25, all head office lease costs are included in Administration, previously allocated to all departments.

## Key Forecast Assumptions, Risks and Sensitivities

The tariff budget is based on tariff model projections of contract volumes, average case costs, and billing patterns taking into consideration any known changes to fees, policies, initiatives, and historical trends.

### External Risk Factors

1. Approximately 36.6 percent of 2026/27 Service Plan's non-government revenue (\$3.5 million) is interest-rate sensitive (i.e. revenue from the Notary Foundation, and investment income). This revenue is used to fund information technology projects and administrative support costs.
2. Material changes to forecasts may be caused by changes in government policies, the justice system, the economy, and the geopolitical situation.
3. Complex criminal trials are taking longer because of police investigation techniques, disclosure challenges, undercover operations, and gang-related prosecutions. These factors result in higher costs to LABC, including case preparation and court attendance. Fixed budgets mean LABC must allocate resources prudently, often impacting the level of service provided to other areas to manage these cost pressures.
4. Changes in service demand and billing patterns, including increases in contract volumes and cost per contract because of government policies and requirements and other factors, may result in lower or higher costs. Changes to financial eligibility and unexpressed demand also impact total cost of service.
5. A risk LABC continues to face is the recruitment and retention of key staff. LABC is exploring options with the Provincial government on ways to mitigate this risk.

## Management's Perspective on Financial Outlook

LABC is dependent on provincial and federal government funding to finance most of its expenditures. LABC also receives revenue from non-government sources which are tied to interest rates. Due to those contingencies, LABC will provide services based on the available revenue.

## Risk Mitigation Strategies

1. LABC will use models for budgeting and forecasting and revenue estimates.
2. LABC will monitor client demand, case costs and billing times to advise the Ministry of the Attorney General. In case of a projected deficit, LABC will request additional funding and/or deficit authorization with the Ministry. In case of a projected surplus, LABC will follow MOU protocols. LABC will consider revising policies related to annual billing caps, more stringent financial eligibility assessments, and other measures to contain costs.
3. LABC will use data analytics, trend analysis, and seek timely access to other justice system data (for example, government, courts, and judiciary).

4. With its Digital Transformation Program, LABC will invest in equipment and services to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our programs and services.
5. LABC will pursue increased collaboration and discussions with the Federal and Provincial governments, as well as other justice system stakeholders.
6. LABC has implemented a Management Succession Plan to ensure continuity of leadership.

## Appendix A: Mandate Letter from the Minister Responsible



May 23, 2025

Allan P. Seckel, KC, Chair  
Legal Aid BC  
400-510 Burrard Street  
Vancouver BC V6C 3A8

Dear Allan Seckel:

On behalf of Premier Eby and Executive Council, I would like to extend my thanks to you and your board members for your organization's leadership, dedication, and expertise in which you serve the people of British Columbia.

Public sector organizations—including Crown corporations, Health Authorities and Post-Secondary Institutions—support British Columbians by delivering vital public services and are accountable to the public through their Minister responsible. Your continued leadership in advancing and preserving the public interest strengthens trust in public institutions.

This mandate letter, which I am sending in my capacity as Minister responsible for Legal Aid BC, communicates our government's priorities for the entire public sector and provides specific direction and expectations of your organization for the duration of Government's term.

Government's priority is to make a tangible difference in people's lives through growing the economy, creating good paying jobs, strengthening health care and making our communities and neighbourhoods safer for British Columbians. British Columbians expect public sector organizations to deliver responsible, quality services equitably in all regions across the province. This includes strategic stewardship in planning, operations, financial, risk, and human resource management including information security and privacy protection. Providing equitable service requires due consideration of the diverse needs of local communities with specific attention to the unique needs of rural, remote and First Nation communities.

In the current economic and fiscal context including the threat of U.S. tariffs and other global economic challenges affecting British Columbian families, your organization is to work with ministry staff to review all existing programs and initiatives to ensure programs remain relevant, efficient, sustainable, grow the economy, and help keep costs low for British Columbians. Public sector organizations are expected to adhere to the principles of: cost consciousness, accountability,





appropriate compensation, service, and integrity. This includes following the spirit and intent of core government fiscal management practices to make all efforts to achieve administrative and operating efficiencies while delivering core programs and services.

Strategic stewardship requires public sector organizations keep up-to-date systems and implement effective cybersecurity practices, including maintaining information management and cybersecurity policies, guidelines, and standards; assessing enterprise risk for high-value information and services, including confidential and sensitive data; and continuously evaluating and updating security practices to align with industry standards. The [Office of the Chief Information Officer](#) within the Ministry of Citizens Services is available to support and offer guidance to your organization in any of these areas including communication protocols with core government.

As required by the *Climate Change Accountability Act*, you must ensure your organization implements plans and strategies for minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and managing climate risk. Your organization is expected to work with my ministry to report out on these plans and activities as required by legislation. Public sector organizations will continue to take action on climate change, a commitment that remains foundational and key to a healthy and prosperous British Columbia for future generations.

Underlying all this work is our partnership with Indigenous peoples and our commitment to advancing reconciliation. I expect your organization to comply with the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, including implementing existing commitments made under it. I expect your organization to work in partnership with First Nations rights-holders to advance shared interests.

Public sector organizations must also adhere to government direction provided through the [Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat](#) (PSEC) with respect to public sector compensation and bargaining mandates. Your organization's compensation decisions must be consistent with policy direction provided through PSEC. Please coordinate closely with PSEC before finalizing compensation decisions for existing CEOs or Presidents and Vice Presidents and in the recruitment of new CEOs or Presidents. PSEC consultation is also encouraged prior to hiring for Vice President positions.

The Crown Agencies Secretariat (CAS) in the Ministry of Finance supports public sector organizations to operate effectively, in the public interest, and aligned with government's strategic direction and priorities. Within CAS, the [Crown Agencies and Board Resourcing Office](#) will continue to support



your board on recruitment, appointments and professional development by ensuring board composition and governance reflects the diversity of our province.

I expect you to ensure the important priorities and areas of focus listed in this letter are incorporated into the practices of your organization and as you develop plans to address the following priorities:

- *Indigenous Justice* – Work with Indigenous communities and leadership consistent with the BC First Nations Justice Strategy and Metis Justice Strategy to reduce Indigenous overrepresentation in the justice system and promote safety and security in Indigenous communities across the province.
- *Family Law* – Work with the Ministry of Attorney General, affected ministries and stakeholders to identify the best ways and tools to improve access to justice for low-income families. This includes the continued implementation of the family legal aid expansion, and support for the expansion of the Early Resolution Process and any related strategies or initiatives.
- *Justice Innovation* – Work with Ministry of Attorney General, affected ministries and relevant stakeholders to align legal aid service delivery approaches with transformative changes in the justice sector focussed on efficient, timely and accessible legal services, leveraging technology and new efficiencies where possible.
- *Sustainable Service Delivery* - Take actions to build a sustainable supply of skilled and committed legal professionals who can deliver high-quality legal services to legal aid clients over the long term, including leveraging opportunities presented by the new *Legal Professions Act*, and opportunities for multidisciplinary service delivery.

Each board member is asked to sign this letter to acknowledge this direction from government to your organization. The signed letter is to be posted publicly on your website by June 2025.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and your board colleagues to ensure the sustainable delivery of the services the public relies on.



Sincerely,

Niki Sharma, KC  
Attorney General and Deputy Premier

Date: May 23, 2025

cc: Honourable David Eby, KC  
Premier

Shannon Salter  
Deputy Minister to the Premier, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the BC Public Service

Doug Scott  
Deputy Minister and Secretary to Treasury Board  
Ministry of Finance

Elenore Arend  
Associate Deputy Minister, Crown Agencies Secretariat  
Ministry of Finance

Barbara Carmichael, KC  
Deputy Attorney General  
Ministry of Attorney General

Donna M. Turko, KC  
Director  
Legal Aid BC



Tracy Porteous, OBC, LLD (h.c)  
Director  
Legal Aid BC

Brenda Knights,  
Director  
Legal Aid BC

Sarf Ahmed  
Director  
Legal Aid BC

Thomas Arbogast, KC  
Director  
Legal Aid BC

Salima Samnani,  
Director  
Legal Aid BC

Andrew Norman Thomas Crabtree  
Director  
Legal Aid BC

Jill Kot  
Director  
Legal Aid BC  
Wendy Jackson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Legal Aid BC



Allan Seckel

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Allan P Seckel, KC

Chair, Legal Aid BC

Date: May 29, 2025

Donna M. Turko

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Donna M. Turko, KC

Director, Legal Aid BC

Date: June 3, 2025

Tracy Porteous

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Tracy Porteous, OBC, LLD (h.c.)

Director, Legal Aid BC

Date: May 29, 2025

Brenda Knights

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Brenda Knights

Director, Legal Aid BC

Date: June 2, 2025

Sarf Ahmed

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Sarf Ahmed

Director, Legal Aid BC

Date: May 29, 2025

Thomas Arbogast

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Thomas Arbogast, KC

Director, Legal Aid BC

Date: May 29, 2025



Salima Samnani

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Salima Samnani

Director, Legal Aid BC

Date: May 29, 2025

Andrew Crabtree

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Andrew Norman Thomas Crabtree

Director, Legal Aid BC

Date: May 29, 2025

Jill Kot

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Jill Kot

Director, Legal Aid BC

Date: May 29, 2025