



**NEWS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

April 29, 2025

**Audit makes recommendations to improve legal representation services  
for people on low incomes**

VICTORIA – Legal Aid BC didn’t have the processes and information to help ensure timely, high-quality legal representation services for people with low incomes, the Office of the Auditor General concluded in an audit report delivered today to the Legislative Assembly.

Legal Aid BC is a Crown corporation that offers legal advice, information, and representation in criminal, family, child protection, and immigration and refugee law for people who can’t afford a lawyer. In 2023/24, Legal Aid BC had a budget of just over \$140 million, with most of its funding coming from the Ministry of Attorney General.

“Timely, high-quality legal representation can reduce time in custody, resolve cases faster, and protect people sooner, through things like restraining orders,” said Sheila Dodds, Acting Auditor General. “Our audit found that Legal Aid BC could take additional steps to improve how it oversees its legal representation services.”

Between 2021/22 and 2023/24, demand for legal aid representation increased nearly 28 per cent. The audit found that Legal Aid BC determined short- and long-term funding needs based on what demand had been in the previous year, but it did not consider the impact of rising demand in its long-term budget planning.

Legal Aid BC relies on contracted lawyers to provide legal representation services. As of March 31, 2024, there were roughly 1,360 lawyers under contract with the organization, a figure which hasn’t changed much since 2021/22.

The audit found that Legal Aid BC had taken steps to expand its roster of available lawyers through recruitment initiatives and financial incentives but hadn’t determined the number of lawyers it needed to meet demand. It also hadn’t monitored the quality of legal representation services provided by contracted lawyers.

The audit found that Legal Aid BC didn’t ensure staff followed policies when they assessed and reviewed applications for legal representation or responded to complaints. It also found staff didn’t ensure complaints were addressed in a timely way.

The audit has seven recommendations and Legal Aid BC has committed to implement all of them.

**Related links**

Report: <https://www.oag.bc.ca/ensuring-the-quality-of-legal-aid-representation-services/>

Audit at a glance: <https://www.oag.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/963/2025/04/OAGBC-202504-LABC-final-AAG.pdf>

Acting Auditor General’s summary (video): <https://youtu.be/hFoLAKnF4Eg>



Office of the  
**Auditor General**  
of British Columbia

**Photo files**

High-resolution images of Acting Auditor General Sheila Dodds:

<https://www.oag.bc.ca/sheila-dodds>

**For general questions and interview requests**

Nicholas Johnson, Communications Director

Office of the Auditor General

[njohnson@bcauditor.com](mailto:njohnson@bcauditor.com)

250-419-6117

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