



**A message from TLABC CEO Shawn Mitchell**  
**April 12, 2020**

On March 16, I announced that TLABC would be operating virtually pursuant to direction from the Provincial Health Officer. It is hard to believe that almost a month has since gone by. And while we have been communicating with members throughout this time on a range of matters, this newsletter provides me with a good opportunity to circle back with everyone.

*This is hard*

It's an understatement to say that the pressures that the pandemic has placed on society — on everyone — goes well beyond most individual experience. The word unprecedented has begun to lose all meaning.

Given this reality, TLABC remains focused on ensuring that staff are safe, our members continue to be served, precious financial resources are stewarded judiciously, and that we continue to contribute positively to the communities where we operate.

On a personal note, I hope and trust that TLABC members, their families, and staff are healthy and safe. At the same time, I know that the pandemic is putting an incredible pressure on practices and on livelihoods. Please know you are not alone, and that we are here to help.

*What we have done*

In addition to having staff work remotely during this time, we are operating all programs and are adjusting existing plans and budgets for the coming year. Here's what you will be seeing in the weeks ahead:

1. Preparation for *the Verdict* is well in hand, with much of the content for the next issue now being edited and reviewed by our volunteer editorial board. For now, *the Verdict* will be distributed electronically only, with a return to print versions at the appropriate time in the future.
2. In-person seminars have been postponed to future dates, and wherever possible we have shifted topics and delivery to webinar format. Join us on an upcoming webinar!
3. Our advocacy work — engaging with government and other legal institutions such as the Law Society — has continued uninterrupted. You will have already seen letters sent by President John Rice to the Attorney General, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, the Chair of the Civil Resolution Tribunal, and the CEO of ICBC, to name a few. Our goal is to work collaboratively with all institutions to ensure our members can continue to practice law and serve their clients' needs.
4. The *No to No Fault* campaign is currently quiet, although significant planning work continues behind the scenes.

### *Direct support to members*

We are hosting a series of live information sharing sessions via videoconference to help you through the COVID-19 crisis. These sessions are for members only and are available to you at no cost. They will also be available on-demand. The first two (*Online Mediations* and *Technology: Adobe Acrobat*) had more than 200 participants! Future topics include:

- Online Arbitrations
- Conducting IMEs via video
- Employment prospects in a time of crisis
- Microsoft Teams
- Stress and Anxiety
- Working from Home

We are also adding new online webinars. These virtual seminars provide timely, practice-relevant information. Visit [TLABC.org/Programs](https://TLABC.org/Programs) to see what's available now. We continue to add to our library of archived seminar materials for your reference – another member benefit.

We are encouraging members to stay connected on the complimentary [TLABC Trial listserv](#). It truly is a unique online community where members share knowledge and advice. Additionally, if you wish to join a specialty listserv, we are offering a reduced fee subscription to take you through to the end of the membership year.

Finally, we are posting regular updates at [TLABC.org/COVID](https://TLABC.org/COVID). This is where we will update everyone on Association news, COVID-related updates, and other news relevant to members. I encourage you to bookmark this page and check it regularly.

### *One last thing*

I hope this information is helpful and reassuring. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please get in touch. Personally, as shell-shocked as I sometimes feel with everything that is going on: unrelenting COVID news; an organization that needs the best version of me now more than ever; the challenges of working from home with a spouse who is also working from home and two children who require activity and home-schooling; a young dog that must be exercised; and the constant worry about everyone I care about — I'm still starting each day by getting up, getting a bit of socially-distanced exercise, making coffee, and starting work wearing something other than my pajamas. I hope you are too.

Stay healthy!

Shawn