

Mission statement

The Law Society serves the public interest by regulating the competence and integrity of legal service providers, promoting the rule of law and lawyer independence, and improving access to justice.

Vision

To be a leading regulator that promotes a culture of innovation and inclusivity in responding to the challenges and opportunities in the delivery and regulation of legal services

Values

Integrity – We act honestly and ethically.

Transparent – We are open in our processes and communications, and report publicly on our decisions in a timely manner.

Inclusive – We embrace and promote equity, diversity, inclusion and cultural respect within our leadership and staff, and in the legal profession, justice sector and with the public.

Objective – We apply data-driven solutions, evidence-based decision-making and measure our results.

Innovative – We are adaptive in our approach to regulation with the goal of achieving efficient, fair and appropriate outcomes.

Responsive – We are aware of the changing needs of the public and profession and respond to such change.

Fair – We treat the public and legal profession respectfully and are consistent in the application of our policies, procedures and practices.

Strategic objectives

LEADING AS AN INNOVATIVE REGULATOR OF LEGAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

GOAL:

Continuous improvement of regulation and education of lawyers, the legal profession and legal services in the public interest.

Policy, Rules and Governance

- Continuously improve regulatory structures to keep up-to-date with evolving money laundering risks, guided by regulatory best practices and constitutional imperatives
- Revise regulatory processes to support and promote mental and physical health
- Clarify and strengthen governance to support our mandate
- Revise the rules to permit innovations in alternate business structures and reduce the complexity of our current multi-disciplinary partnership rules
- Ensure policy development is data-based, evidence-driven, and informed by the views of the public and the profession

Training and Education

- Introduce alternative pathways for entry into the legal profession
- Create new training on managing the business of practising law
- Develop resources to improve support for in-house counsel and government lawyers

WORKING TOWARD RECONCILIATION

GOAL:

Implementation of initiatives to take meaningful action toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in the justice system.

Reconciliation within the Justice System

- Support increased representation and retention of Indigenous lawyers in senior positions throughout the justice system
- Address the unique needs of Indigenous people within our regulatory processes
- Update our Rules and Code to reflect Indigenous law and experiences
- Support the advancement of the principles set out in the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the implementation of the First Nations Justice Strategy and support the continued implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Training and Education

- Introduce cultural competency training to foster understanding of Indigenous perspectives
- Work with K-12 education providers, including First Nations Schools Association, the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the Métis, to increase awareness within Indigenous communities of careers in law and the wider justice system

TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO JUSTICE

GOAL

Greater availability of affordable legal services and better access to the courts, administrative tribunals, other dispute resolution providers, and our regulatory processes.

Access and Innovation

- Reduce regulatory barriers to improve delivery of legal services
- Develop and implement an innovation sandbox for provision of a wider range of legal services and providers, including licensed paralegals
- Increase the availability of legal services to people in the communities where they live

Access and Collaboration

- Engage government to create an improved network for the provision of legal aid, including the provision of "triage hubs"
- Enhanced engagement with governments, courts and other stakeholders to identify improvements in the delivery of legal services

Access and Advocacy

- Advocate for greater access to non-adversarial dispute resolution in family law matters
- Advocate for funding of services that address gaps in the delivery of legal services
- Maintain and enhance measures adopted in response to the COVID pandemic that have improved the access to legal services and access to the justice system

PROMOTING A PROFESSION THAT REFLECTS THE DIVERSITY OF THE PUBLIC IT SERVES

GOAL:

Greater diversity and inclusion in the legal profession with equitable treatment of every individual who interacts with the Law Society.

Policy Development

- Implement and communicate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion work plan
- Ensure current and future regulation and policy development accords with equity, diversity and inclusion principles
- Develop and deliver cultural competency training, as well as training addressing implicit or explicit biases in the profession
- Revise the language of forms and publications to ensure they conform to current principles of inclusion
- Update the demographic data of BC legal professionals to inform policy initiatives

Collaboration

- Partner with community organizations to educate youth from diverse and equity-seeking groups about the role of lawyers and to encourage entry into the legal profession
- Collaborate with organizations to increase the recruitment, retention and advancement of diverse lawyers

INCREASING CONFIDENCE IN THE LAW SOCIETY, THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW

GOAL:

Greater public confidence in the ability of the Law Society to regulate in the public interest and greater public awareness of the importance of the rule of law and lawyer independence.

Law Society Processes

- Increase timeliness of Law Society processes, decisions and communications
- Obtain legislative changes to increase fines and recover investigation costs
- Clarify authority to obtain an order of restitution where misconduct has resulted in a loss to a party
- Increase use of victim impact statements in disciplinary processes
- Enhance the independence of the Law Society Tribunal through further administrative separation from the Law Society
- Update disclosure and privacy policies relating to Law Society processes

Communication and Collaboration

- Increase the Law Society's engagement with the profession and public about initiatives, regulatory developments and other relevant information, including the basis for decisions affecting regulation
- Engage the Ministry of Education to incorporate more information about rights and obligations, the rule of law and the role of lawyers and judges into school curricula
- Improve communication and outreach explaining the role of the law society in the justice system, the importance of the rule of law in a civil society and the role of an independent, self-governing legal profession in preserving the rule of law