

The Law Society
of British Columbia



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

lawsociety.bc.ca

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Our Mandate

The Law Society is created by the *Legal Profession Act*, which gives the authority to determine the qualifications required to practise law in BC, to establish rules and a code of conduct for lawyers, and to enforce those rules. But importantly, the opening lines of the Act specify that all of these responsibilities fall under a broader mandate “to uphold and protect the public interest in the administration of justice.” Beyond its core mandate of setting standards and enforcing rules, the Law Society speaks out on behalf of the public on issues affecting the justice system in BC and the delivery of legal services in this province.



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President's Message

I began my year as president with what I would consider an ambitious agenda to pursue change to practices and processes that often stand in the way of more and better service for the public. I had set goals, tasks and issues that were reflected in mandate letters to advisory committees, task forces and working groups, and pictured what the governing board of Benchers and Law Society staff might accomplish over the coming year. I soon learned, like several presidents before me, that I would have to deal with the unexpected. As all will know, by mid-March the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic arrived in our province, closing our courts, forcing many people to move quickly to remote workplaces, and bringing many other large challenges, difficulties and disappointments.

Before I go on to summarize the actions we took over the year to respond to the pandemic emergency, let me take a moment to acknowledge the people in our province who have experienced immense hardship, suffering and loss. None of this ought to be overlooked or forgotten. I would like to thank everyone who has worked hard to keep us safe and to keep us going—doctors, nurses and hospital staff, delivery people and store clerks, government officials, judges, court staff and of course, the legal profession. Thank you for all that you do that kept essential services running throughout the year.



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President's Message *...continued*

As I look back over the past year, I am pleased to say that the Law Society managed to move ahead on many of the goals we set despite the challenges of the pandemic. We have shaken things up and demonstrated incredible agility for a profession that is typically known for sticking to long-held practices and traditions. I believe we have moved the dial in terms of Law Society functions, and we have done the same for how the practice of law will be organized going forward.

Here are just some of our achievements in 2020. We adopted a Futures Report and a transparent unauthorized practice policy. We approved the creation of a regulatory innovation sandbox to test pilots for the delivery of legal services to the significant segment of the public who cannot or will not see a lawyer. We opened the door to exploring alternatives to articles. We passed an access to justice vision, a revised vision on legal aid, a diversity action plan and recommendations to address mental health challenges in the profession. Work on developing the Indigenous intercultural competency course is well underway to prepare for launch 2021. We have also introduced the Rule of Law Matters podcast to bring dialogue on the rule of law to the public square.

We approved and implemented measures to make it a little easier for members of the legal profession to weather the pandemic storm, including allowing lawyers to pay their practice fees by instalments and creating a targeted COVID-related fee reduction plan. We reviewed our discipline process and adopted a number of recommendations that are aimed at improving proportionality and encouraging early resolution, so that lawyers can address practice issues sooner and return to providing access to high quality legal services. We created a better tribunal process. We enhanced the institutional separation between the Law Society and the Lawyers Indemnity Fund. We did all of this in the context of participating in the Cullen Commission and, of course, we have done all of this during a pandemic.

Change is difficult. The status quo is always easier. Isaac Newton taught us that the theory of inertia is that it takes a lot of energy to get something started, but once it is started it will continue unless something else intervenes. What we have done is not finished and we must keep pushing forward. With a 2021-2025 strategic plan in place to guide us over the next five years, I am confident that the Law Society is well-positioned to continue this momentum.

As regulator of the legal profession, the Law Society has an obligation to be the best regulator it can be. We should never lose sight of the fact that we impact the lives of the people we regulate and that our procedures should respond to users of the justice system. We need to be willing to embrace outcomes that are a bit more risky, a bit less certain. We need to accept that some of the changes we try may fail. None of that means that we should not try or that we should not be bold. Our ultimate goal of protecting the public is too important.



Craig Ferris, QC
President

CEO's Message

I remember March 13, 2020 vividly. It was the last time the Law Society held our larger ceremonies to welcome candidates for admission to the practice of law. A sign that what began as a typical year was about to change came a day earlier, when provincial health officials issued directives that limited the size of public gatherings, prompting us to divide one large ceremony into two smaller ones. Throughout the day, there were several meetings to see to new arrangements and several telephone calls to let candidates know the schedule, offer accommodations to those who still felt uncomfortable about gathering and to answer questions about guests attending. Right up until the morning of the ceremonies, everyone moved quickly to keep things running.



This is the story of the Law Society in 2020.

On a regular basis since the provincial health emergency was declared on March 17, and following the declaration of a state of emergency the next day, the staff of the Law Society was called upon to respond to new challenges with creativity and an unwavering commitment to help the public and members of the legal profession through the pandemic crisis. Where solutions required directions of the governing board of Benchers, the time between advice and implementation was swift. And many solutions were required to overcome the legacy of paper and in-person processes for everything from affidavits and documents to our bar admission course, trust audits, application forms and Tribunal hearings.

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CEO's Message *...continued*

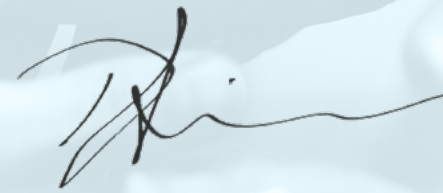
Throughout the pandemic, overall productivity levels remained stable. While health and safety guidelines meant closing the Law Society building, our team continued to serve the needs of the public and the legal profession while working remotely, in-office with strict health and safety measures in place, or through a combination of both. We managed to put office safety plans and systems in place to enable people in every department to come into the office on a rotating basis, some more regularly and others, to collect files and the work they needed to work remotely.

This meant practice advisors continued to receive and respond to calls from lawyers. The public was still able to reach our intake team if they had a complaint. PLTC overcame initial challenges to resume delivery of the program and keep on track to graduate almost as many students as the years prior. Our trust assurance, professional conduct and Lawyers Indemnity Fund teams maintained or even increased service levels year over year. We issued over 30 communications to the

profession that offered pandemic response information and guidance for providing legal services safely, as well as updates to the public that answered their questions about visiting lawyers offices or reaching us. Everyone throughout the organization was, and continues to be, supported by our superb Information Systems team.

By the end of 2020, and despite the need to draw resources for implementing pandemic response measures, the Benchers and staff of the Law Society fully implemented initiatives as contemplated in Strategic Plan 2018-2020. We supported the Benchers in the development of the next strategic plan, including doing the policy work for new initiatives such as the innovation sandbox and setting the table for a deeper exploration of alternative pathways to articling, both of which have the potential to transform our regulatory processes and improve the public's access to legal services. Most importantly, we continued to deliver on our core mission and mandate of protecting the public interest through our regulation of the legal profession.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with President Ferris this past year, and excited about the groundwork we laid for what I hope will be a productive—but hopefully less eventful—2021. We could not have achieved all that we have in 2020 without the Benchers, the significant contribution of volunteers who serve as members of committees, task forces or working groups, guest instructors or authors of our course materials, fee mediators, panellists of virtual events and advisors on special projects. As I look to 2021, I am delighted to welcome Dean Lawton, QC as president and to making progress on key priorities in our new strategic plan.



Don Avison

Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director

Strategic Plan Progress 2020

The Law Society is governed by the *Legal Profession Act*, which requires it:

- protect the rights and freedoms of all persons;
- ensure the independence, integrity, honour and competence of lawyers
- establish standards and programs for the education, professional responsibility and competence of lawyers;
- regulate the practice of law; and
- support lawyers in fulfilling their duties in the practice of law.

Strategic Plan 2018-2020 identified areas within this mandate that require particular attention, set out goals, and outlined initiatives aimed at achieving those goals. In 2020, the Law Society reached the following milestones in regard to those goals.

GOAL: Ensuring the public has better access to justice

Today, legal advice and assistance available to the public is generally provided by more than 12,000 practising lawyers in British Columbia. Yet, the Law Society recognizes that recent surveys have shown that the legal profession does not meet the needs of everyone who could use legal services, and there are many British Columbians who will not see a lawyer for help.

To respond to the unmet need of consumers, the Law Society established the innovation sandbox in September 2020 to pilot the provision of legal services and assistance by individuals, businesses and organizations that are not lawyers or law firms, or which may require relaxing regulatory requirements of lawyers to enable them to innovate. The innovation sandbox is a similar approach as other jurisdictions, such as Utah, Washington, Oregon, California, Ontario and Saskatchewan, that have allowed paralegals and others to provide a limited scope of legal services that are monitored by the regulator to ensure public protection.

When the state of emergency was declared in April, 2020, President Craig Ferris, QC stated, “We need to separate principle — the things that we believe in — from practice, which is the way that we do things. Principles are important.”

Significant changes to how law is practised were adopted in response to the pandemic. Centuries-old procedures were adapted to make it possible to commission affidavits virtually. Significant work was done to enable the courts to restore operations. Old orthodoxies were scrutinized as part of an effort to keep the system running for British Columbians, whose need to access justice did not stop because of the health emergency.

In 2020, the Futures Task Force reviewed the current marketplace for legal services and considered what changes to regulation and the delivery of services may be needed to take advantage of innovation and avoid disruption. Its final report to the Benchers made 23 recommendations for change in regulation and modernization, including to: embrace and improve positive changes implemented in response to COVID-19; amend regulatory structures to allow innovation and alternative business structures; improve resources for in-house and government lawyers; update legal education and accreditation; and ensure current and future regulation reflects Indigenous and diverse perspectives.



MORE INFORMATION

2018-2020 Law Society Strategic Plan

GOAL: Ensure the public has greater confidence in the rule of law and the administration of justice

In Fall 2020, the Law Society launched a new initiative aimed at engaging the public in a way that makes some of the complexity of the law and legal issues more accessible. The Rule of Law Matters podcast draws on current events happening around the world and here at home to foster greater awareness of the importance of the rule of law in protecting our rights and freedoms. Episodes included a look at the pandemic and the rule of law, the rise of global authoritarian states, arbitrary detentions and more. Since its launch, the podcast series has been downloaded thousands of times by listeners in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and beyond. Episodes — including transcripts — are available on our [website](#), on [Spotify](#) and on [Apple Podcasts](#).

GOAL: Identify and implement appropriate responses to the calls to action from the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The Law Society made progress on the development of the Indigenous intercultural competency course that was mandated by the Benchers at the end of 2019. While the course was originally set to launch in January 2021, work on some parts of the course was disrupted by the pandemic and the course is now expected to be finalized in Spring 2021. Once launched, lawyers will be given up to two years to complete all modules, and it will be free of charge, available online, and eligible for continuing professional development credits.

GOAL: Develop initiatives to improve the retention rate of lawyers in the profession, including in particular Indigenous and women lawyer

The Law Society adopted a [Diversity Action Plan](#), which includes 30 action items and short, medium and long-term measures to support diversity in the legal profession, identify and remove discriminatory barriers, enhance intercultural competence education, improve outreach and collaboration, foster diversity within the Law Society, and track and report progress.

GOAL: Improve our standards for effective professional education, practice standards and practice advice

The Law Society recognized the challenges lawyers may face in completing their continuing professional development during the pandemic, both for financial reasons and because of a lack of in-person learning courses. To assist, the Law Society offered a number of free opportunities for lawyers to meet their requirements, and published a list of free online programs on the website.

GOAL: Improve the mental health of the legal profession

The Law Society took measures to destigmatize mental health issues in the legal profession and encourage lawyers who are struggling to seek support. Measures included collaborating with law schools to ensure a seamless transition in services and supports for law students and future lawyers, holding a forum for lawyers and law firms to learn what more they and the Law Society can do to improve mental health, and revising the Law Society Admission Program application form by removing questions about medical fitness.

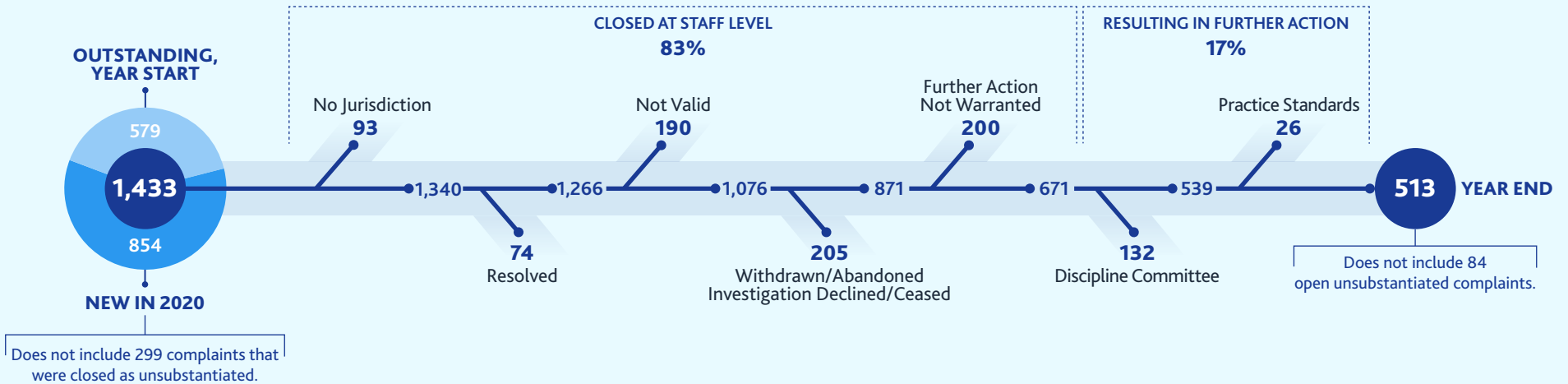
To help lawyers manage the health and social impacts of COVID-19, President Craig Ferris, QC made a video statement to the legal profession about staying healthy while managing their practice. The Law Society also regularly encouraged lawyers to make use of the resources and support are available, including LifeWorks — an employee assistance program funded by the Law Society that offers free, confidential, 24/7 support, and the Lawyers Assistance Program — which offers peer support and referral services for issues including alcohol and drug dependence, stress, anxiety and depression.

Key Performance Indicators

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Key performance indicators provide a statistical snapshot of outcomes in key areas relating to the Law Society’s regulatory mandate.

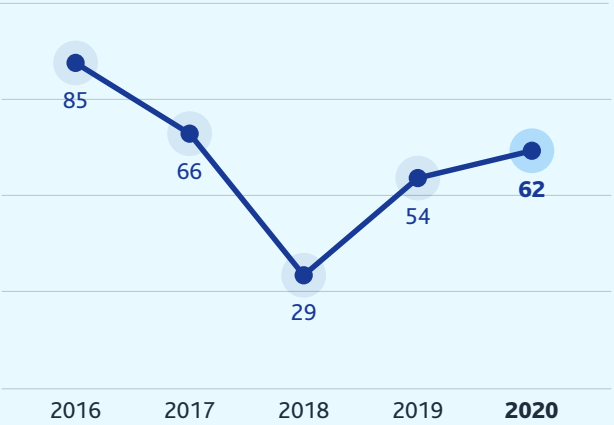
2020 COMPLAINTS RESULTS



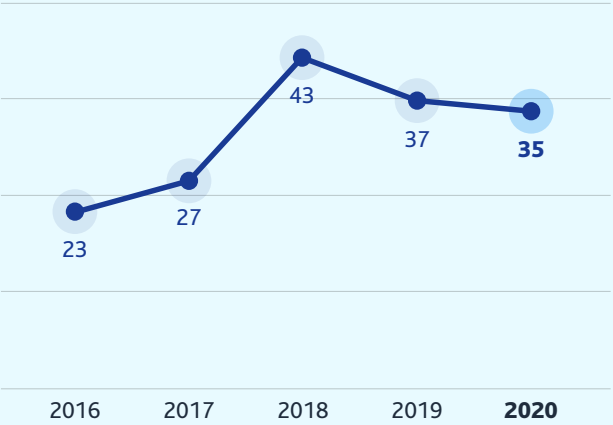
Key Performance Indicators

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

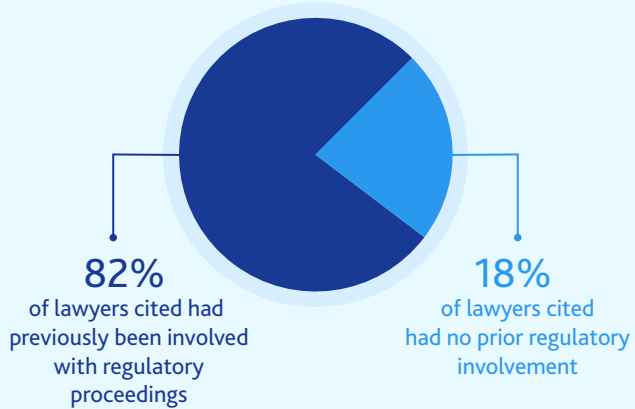
OPEN COMPLAINTS OLDER THAN ONE YEAR



CITATIONS AUTHORIZED



PRIOR REGULATORY INVOLVEMENT*



*prior regulatory involvement includes: interim proceedings, administrative suspensions, Custodianship involvement, Credentials involvement, referrals to Practice Standards, and referrals to the Discipline Committee. Also included are interim undertakings given during the course of an investigation

Key Performance Indicators

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

REFERRALS TO DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

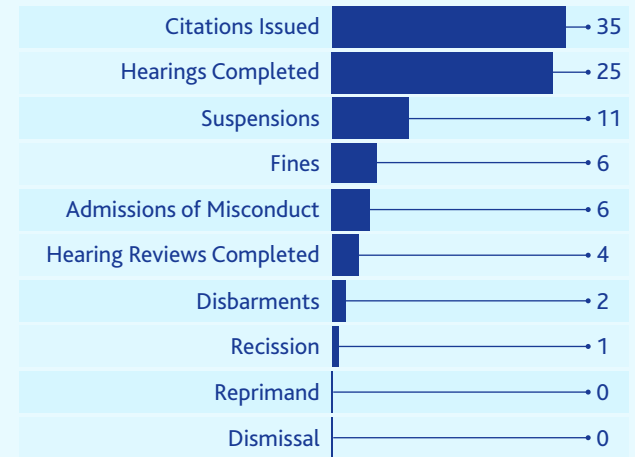


DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE RESULTS



There was also one referral to Practice Standards on its own arising out of 132 files referred to the Discipline Committee.

HEARING OUTCOMES



Key Performance Indicators

TRUST ASSURANCE

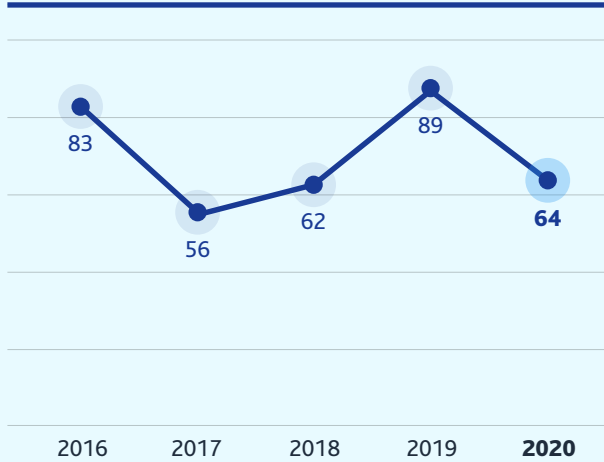
All law firms are subject to accounting and reporting standards set out in the Law Society Rules. Every firm must file an annual trust report and is subject to compliance audits.

Every law firm that handles trust funds is audited at least once every six years, or every four years for areas of practice considered to be at elevated risk. Except for a brief period shortly after the provincial health emergency was declared in March 2020, the Law Society was able to fulfil this important part of its public interest mandate through remote audits and the use of virtual technologies.

TRUST COMPLIANCE AUDITS CONDUCTED



AUDITS REQUIRING FOLLOW-UP*



TRUST REPORTS AND AUDITS REFERRED FOR PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT INVESTIGATION



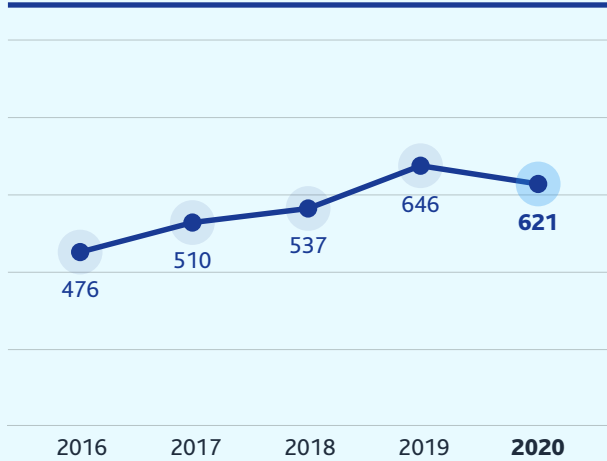
* As the result of an audit, further action may be required, including a request for further documentation, a visit to the firm, or a requirement to complete an accountant's report.

Key Performance Indicators

PROFESSIONAL LEGAL TRAINING COURSE

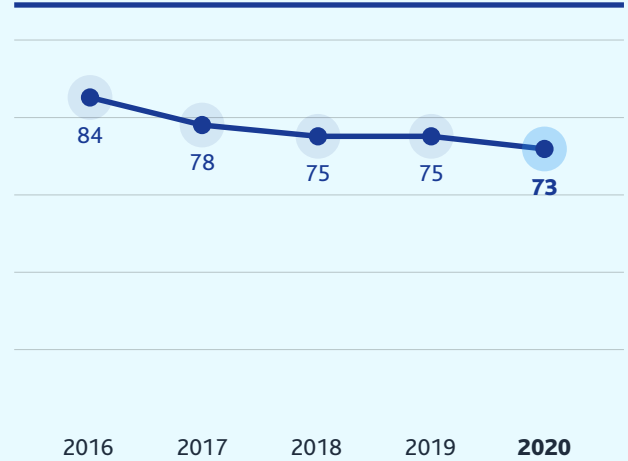
The Professional Legal Training Course (PLTC) is a full-time, ten-week program that emphasizes practical skills and training in core competencies, practice management, and the Law Society’s practice rules and professional standards. Students must pass four skills assessments and two qualifying examinations that demonstrate they have achieved the level of knowledge and competency required to be able to solve client problems responsibly and professionally.

NUMBER OF PLTC STUDENTS



The majority of students who enrol in PLTC each year are graduates of BC law schools. In recent years, the number of foreign-trained referrals from the National Committee on Accreditation has been growing and, in 2020, exceeded other Canadian law graduates to represent our second largest cohort.

PLTC FIRST-TIME PASS RATE

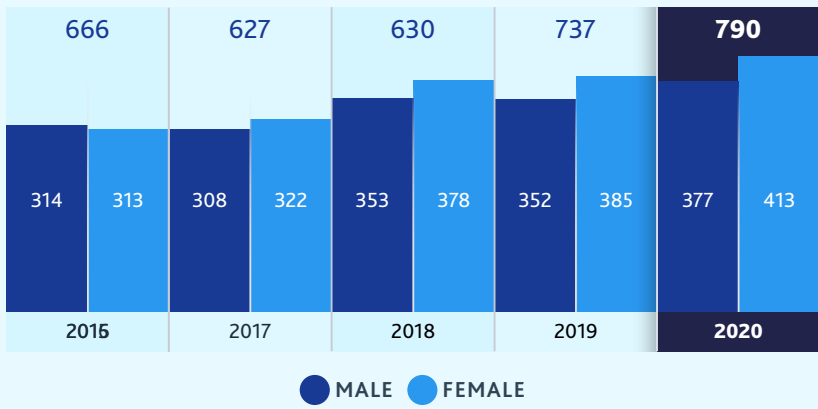


In 2020, the pandemic required PLTC to shift its operations from in-person classes to remote learning, which it did while maintaining the standards for admission to the bar and without a significant change in the number of students who were successful in qualifying to practise law.

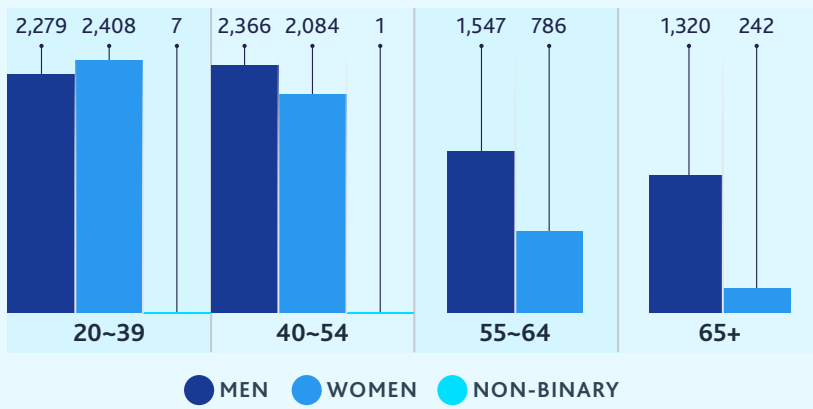
Legal Profession in BC...continued

In 2020, the Law Society adopted a *Diversity Action Plan* to address discrimination in the legal profession and ensure the profession reflects the diversity of the British Columbia public. This is the first year that we have added a new category to our report on gender in the profession that is based on the information that lawyers voluntarily provided. In 2021, we will be taking steps to actively encourage lawyers to respond to our anonymous and voluntary self-identification survey to improve our ability to identify additional concrete measures that advance equity, diversity and inclusion.

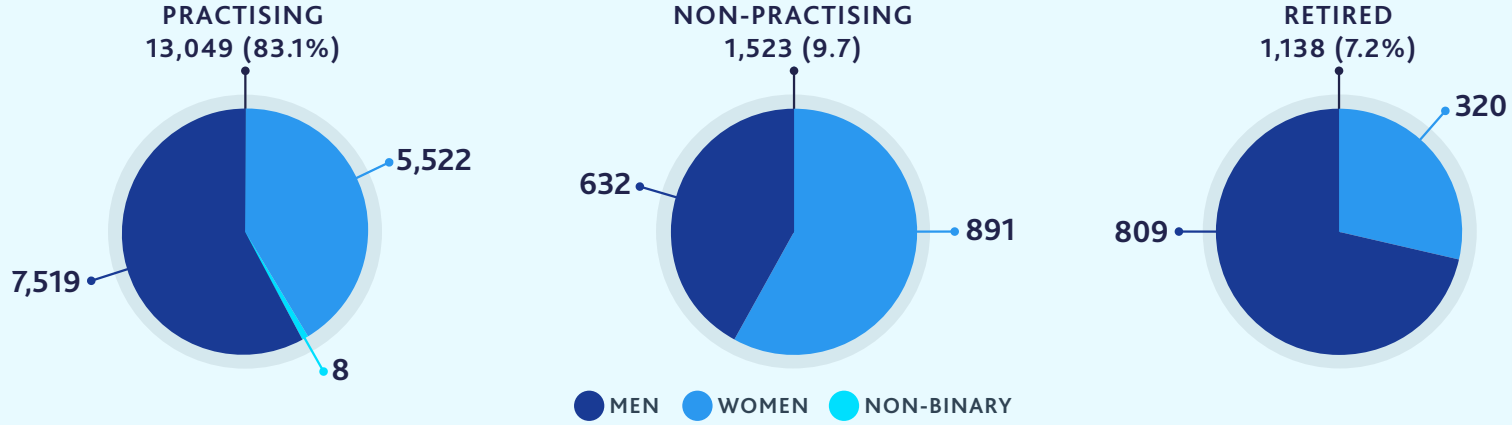
NEW BC LAWYERS



AGE DEMOGRAPHIC OF PRACTISING BC LAWYERS



STATUS OF LAWYERS REGISTERED WITH THE LAW SOCIETY



Legal Profession in BC *...continued*

AREAS OF LEGAL PRACTICE IN BC: Number of lawyers who reported performing any work in the following areas

Civil litigation – plaintiff <i>(including commercial, other non-motor vehicle)</i>	3,573
Corporate	3,203
Civil litigation – defendant <i>(including commercial, other non-motor vehicle)</i>	2,796
Administrative <i>(including labour, immigration, regulatory bodies)</i>	2,621
Wills and estates	2,563
Commercial – other	2,193
Family <i>(excluding incidental real estate, wills and estates)</i>	2,051
Real estate – residential <i>(including lending)</i>	2,024
Motor vehicle – plaintiff	1,699
Real estate – commercial <i>(including development)</i>	1,487
Commercial lending transactions – borrower <i>(may include a real estate component)</i>	1,327
Criminal	1,143
Creditors' remedies – plaintiff <i>(including builders' liens, foreclosure, insolvency)</i>	1,098
Commercial lending transactions – lender <i>(may include a real estate component)</i>	960
Motor vehicle – defendant	751
Mediation/Arbitration	694
Creditors' remedies – defendant <i>(including builders' liens, foreclosure, insolvency)</i>	662
Securities <i>(reporting companies)</i>	533
Intellectual property	470
Tax	407
Property Management – residential or commercial	197

Legal Profession in BC *...continued*

DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2020, the Law Society developed a *Diversity Action Plan* that includes 30 action items meant to support diversity in the legal profession, identify and remove discriminatory barriers, enhance intercultural competence education, improve outreach and collaboration, foster diversity within the Law Society, and track and report progress. Progress on the *Diversity Action Plan* is ongoing.

Lawyer demographics	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Indigenous	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%
Racialized/person of colour	13.7%	14.6%	15.3%	16.4%	17.5%
Lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender	2.8%	3.2%	3.1%	3.5%	3.8%
Person with a disability	1.8%	1.9%	1.9%	2.2%	2.3%
Do not identify with characteristics	58.4%	55.8%	53.9%	51.7%	52.5%
Choose not to answer	20.6%	21.8%	23.1%	23.5%	21.2%

Data for the demographic background of the legal profession is provided by lawyers who volunteer their information in an anonymous self-identification survey that is part of the Annual Practice Declaration. The purpose of the survey is to assist the Law Society in considering programs and policies that encourage greater inclusion and diversity within a legal profession that reflects the diversity of our province.

Over the past five years, the data shows increases in the percentages of BC lawyers who identify as diverse. The largest shift can be seen in the growing number who identify as a person of colour, although the percentages who identify as Indigenous, LGBT or as a person with a disability, have all increased slightly. There is some indication that increases in diversity may be attributable to new lawyers joining the profession. However, diversity within the profession continues to fall short of the diversity within the province.

Benchers

The members of the Law Society's governing board are called Benchers. The Benchers are responsible for the Law Society Rules, the *Code of Professional Conduct for British Columbia*, and governance policies for the administration of the Society. Twenty-five Benchers are elected by members of the legal profession and six are members of the public who are appointed by the provincial government. The president of the Law Society is a Bencher and serves a one-year term.



PRESIDENT
Craig A.B. Ferris, QC
(Vancouver County)



FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT
Dean P.J. Lawton, QC
(Victoria County)



SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT
Lisa Hamilton, QC
(Vancouver County)

Elected Benchers:

Jasmin Ahmad, QC
(Vancouver County)

Jeff Campbell, QC
(Vancouver County)

Pinder K. Cheema, QC
(Victoria County)

Jennifer Chow, QC
(Vancouver County)

Barbara Cromarty
(Kootenay County)

Jeevyn Dhaliwal, QC
(Vancouver County)

Cheryl S. D'Sa
(Vancouver County)

Lisa Feinberg
(Prince Rupert County)

Martin Finch, QC
(Westminster County)

Brook Greenberg, QC
(Vancouver County)

Julie K. Lamb, QC
(Vancouver County)

Jamie Maclaren, QC
(Vancouver County)

Geoffrey McDonald
(Cariboo County)

Steven McKoen, QC
(Vancouver County)

Christopher McPherson, QC
(Westminster County)

Jacqueline McQueen, QC
(Vancouver County)

Elizabeth J. Rowbotham
(Vancouver County)

Karen Snowshoe
(Vancouver County)

Thomas L. Spraggs
(Westminster County)

Michelle D. Stanford, QC
(Kamloops District)

Michael F. Welsh, QC
(Okanagan District)

Chelsea D. Wilson
(Nanaimo County)

Heidi Zetzsche
(Cariboo County)

Appointed Benchers:

Paul Barnett

Sasha Hobbs

Dr. Jan Lindsay

Claire Marshall

Mark Rushton

Guangbin Yan

Committees, Task Forces and Working Group

Law Society committees have specialized roles that carry out many of the regulatory functions of the Law Society and assist with policy development. Committees and task forces are composed of Benchers and lawyers from all over BC, all of whom volunteer their time to the Law Society.

COMMITTEES

Act and Rules Committee

Recommends to Benchers amendments to the *Legal Profession Act* and Law Society Rules.

Elizabeth Rowbotham (*Chair*)
Barbara Cromarty (*Chair*)
Julie Lamb, QC

Geoffrey McDonald
STAFF CONTACT
Jeff Hoskins, QC

Complainants' Review Committee

Upon complainants' request, reviews complaint files closed by staff lawyers to determine if the decision to close the file was appropriate in the circumstances.

Martin Finch, QC (*Chair*)
Claire Marshall (*Chair*)
Barbara Cromarty

Cheryl D'Sa
Lisa Feinberg
Geoffrey McDonald
Daniele Poulin
Mark Rushton
Puneet Sandhar
Karen Snowshoe
Chelsea Wilson

STAFF CONTACT
Karen Mok

Credentials Committee

Oversees the enrolment, education, examination and call to the bar of articulated students, the transfer of lawyers to BC and the reinstatement of former lawyers.

Jeff Campbell, QC (*Chair*)
Jeevyn Dhaliwal, QC (*Chair*)
Mark Rushton (*Vice-Chair*)
Michelle Casavant
Pinder Cheema, QC
Lisa Feinberg
Lisa Fong, QC
Michael McDonald
Thomas Spraggs

STAFF CONTACT
Lesley Small

Discipline Committee

Reviews opinions concerning lawyers or articulated students that are referred by Law Society staff, the Complainants' Review Committee or the Practice Standards Committee, and determines appropriate disciplinary outcomes, if any.

Jasmin Ahmad, QC (*Chair*)
Lisa Hamilton, QC (*Chair*)
Claire Marshall (*Vice-Chair*)
Barbara Cromarty
Karen Dawson
Julie Lamb, QC
Elizabeth Rowbotham
Marnie Westbury

STAFF CONTACT
Natasha Dookie

Ethics Committee

Identifies current professional responsibility issues and makes recommendations on changes to the *Code of Professional Conduct* for British Columbia for consideration by the Benchers.

Pinder Cheema, QC (*Chair*)
Martin Finch, QC (*Vice-Chair*)
Brook Greenberg, QC
Sasha Hobbs
Thomas Spraggs
Michelle Stanford, QC
K. Michael Stephens
Marko Vesely
Chelsea Wilson

STAFF CONTACT
Lance Cooke

Executive Committee

Provides direction and oversight for the strategic and operational planning of the Law Society and develops agendas for Bencher meetings to ensure that the Benchers exercise their oversight, regulatory and policy development responsibilities.

Craig Ferris, QC (*Chair*)
Dean Lawton, QC (*Vice-Chair*)
Jeevyn Dhaliwal, QC
Lisa Hamilton, QC
Steven McKoen, QC
Christopher McPherson, QC
Mark Rushton

STAFF CONTACTS
Kerryn Holt
Avalon Bourne

Finance and Audit Committee

Provides oversight over the financial affairs of the Law Society, makes recommendations on annual fees, reviews annual budgets and periodically reviews financial and investment results. Oversees the external audit process and provides oversight over the internal controls and enterprise risk management of the Law Society.

Dean Lawton, QC (*Chair*)
Lisa Hamilton, QC (*Vice-Chair*)
Jasmin Ahmad, QC
Jeff Campbell, QC
Dr. Jan Lindsay
Christopher McPherson, QC
Guangbin Yan

STAFF CONTACTS
Andrea Langille
Janette McPhee

Governance Committee

Assesses the Law Society's current governance structure and practices to identify areas for improvement.

Lisa Hamilton, QC (*Chair*)
Pinder Cheema, QC
Jennifer Chow, QC
Dr. Jan Lindsay
Jamie Maclaren, QC
Linda Parsons, QC
Karen Snowshoe

STAFF CONTACTS
Adam Whitcombe, QC
Kerryn Holt
Avalon Bourne

Practice Standards Committee

Recommends standards of practice, develops programs to help lawyers practise competently and recommends remedial measures for lawyers who do not meet accepted standards.

Jacqueline McQueen, QC (*Chair*)
Jennifer Chow, QC (*Vice-Chair*)
Cheryl D'Sa
Jamie Maclaren, QC
Geoffrey McDonald
Chelsea Wilson
Guangbin Yan
Heidi Zetzsche

STAFF CONTACT
Natasha Dookie

Unauthorized Practice Committee

Considers and makes policy decisions with respect to the unauthorized practice of law and the relevant provisions of the *Legal Profession Act*.

Jamie Maclaren, QC (*Chair*)
Elizabeth Rowbotham (*Vice-Chair*)
Paul Barnett
Clifford Proudfoot, QC
Heidi Zetzsche

STAFF CONTACT
Gavin Hoekstra

SUBCOMMITTEES

Indemnity Subcommittee

Reviews actuarial reports, claims data, fee recommendations, changes to scope of coverage, and other insurance matters as required, and provides recommendations to the Finance and Audit Committee.

Dean Lawton, QC (*Chair*)
Lisa Hamilton, QC (*Vice-chair*)
Craig Ferris, QC
Peter Kelly
Steven McKoen, QC

STAFF CONTACT
Susan Forbes, QC

Litigation Subcommittee

Provides guidance to staff on litigation matters and determines which matters should come before the Executive Committee.

Craig Ferris, QC (*Chair*)
Lisa Hamilton, QC
Dean Lawton, QC

STAFF CONTACT
Tara McPhail

Committees, Task Forces and Working Group ...continued

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Access to Justice Advisory Committee

Monitors and advises the Benchers on access to justice and legal services issues in BC and other jurisdictions.

Michelle Stanford, QC (*Chair*)
Paul Barnett
Jeff Campbell, QC
The Honourable Thomas Cromwell
Cheryl D'Sa
Lisa Feinberg
Claire Hunter, QC
Jacqueline McQueen, QC
Nancy Merrill, QC
Michael Welsh, QC

STAFF CONTACT
Doug Munro

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee

Reports to the Benchers on issues affecting equity and diversity in the legal profession and the justice system and assists Benchers with priority planning.

Jeevyn Dhaliwal, QC (*Chair*)
Guangbin Yan (*Vice-Chair*)
Jennifer Chow, QC
Krisha Dhaliwal
Dr. Jan Lindsay
Frances Mahon
Karen Snowshoe
Michael Welsh, QC

STAFF CONTACT
Andrea Hilland

Rule of Law and Lawyer Independence Advisory Committee

Monitors issues and legislation affecting the rule of law and the independence and self-governance of the legal profession and reports on those matters to the Benchers.

Christopher McPherson, QC (*Chair*)
Martin Finch, QC (*Vice-Chair*)
Pinder Cheema, QC
Jon Festinger, QC
Geoffrey McDonald
Jacqueline McQueen, QC
The Honourable Marshall Rothstein, QC
Mark Rushton

STAFF CONTACT
Michael Lucas, QC

Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Committee

Provides guidance to the Law Society on legal issues affecting Indigenous people in the province, advises the Benchers on priority planning and develops related recommendations and initiatives.

Dean Lawton, QC (*Co-Chair*)
Ardith Walkem, QC (*Co-Chair*)
Nicole Bresser
Martin Finch, QC
Katrina Harry
Claire Marshall
Michael McDonald, QC
Christopher McPherson, QC

STAFF CONTACT
Andrea Hilland

TASK FORCES

Futures Task Force

Identifies the anticipated changes in the legal profession, assesses the impact on the delivery of legal services and on future regulation, and reports its findings to the Benchers.

Craig Ferris, QC (*Chair*)
Jeevyn Dhaliwal, QC (*Vice-Chair*)
Lawrence Alexander
Lynne Charbonneau
Dr. Cristie Ford
Steven McKoen, QC
Dr. Katie Sykes
Tony Wilson, QC

STAFF CONTACTS
Adam Whitcombe, QC
Michael Lucas, QC

Lawyer Development Task Force

Monitors developments on issues affecting lawyer education in BC, reports to the Benchers about those developments, and advises the Benchers on priority planning with respect to lawyer education.

Steven McKoen, QC (*Chair*)
Brook Greenberg, QC (*Vice-Chair*)
Sasha Hobbs
Julianne Lamb, QC
Thomas Spraggs
Dr. Katie Sykes
Jasmin Ahmad, QC

STAFF CONTACT
Alison Luke

Licensed Paralegal Task Force

Explores the areas of unmet legal need and the potential role for licensed paralegals to address that need, operating under a professional regulatory structure created and overseen by the Law Society.

Trudi Brown, QC (*Chair*)
Michael Welsh, QC (*Vice-Chair*)
John-Paul Boyd, QC
Nancy Carter, QC
David Dundee
Jamie Maclaren, QC
Steven McKoen, QC
Joanna Cranmer Recalma
Michelle Ross

STAFF CONTACTS
Michael Lucas, QC
Doug Munro

Mental Health Task Force

Helps the Law Society identify ways to reduce the stigma of mental health and substance use issues within the profession and review related regulatory approaches to discipline and admissions.

Brook Greenberg, QC (*Chair*)
Michelle Stanford, QC (*Vice-Chair*)
Phil Dwyer
The Honourable Chief Judge
Melissa A. Gillespie
The Honourable Madam Justice Nitya Iyer
Derek LaCroix, QC
Christopher McPherson, QC
Kendra Milne

STAFF CONTACTS
Alison Luke
Michael Lucas, QC

WORKING GROUP

Anti-Money Laundering Working Group

Monitors and advises the Benchers on key matters relating to the state of anti-money laundering strategies and initiatives in British Columbia. This advisory function supports the Law Society's public interest mandate.

Craig Ferris, QC (*Chair*)
Dean Lawton, QC (*Vice-Chair*)
Pinder Cheema, QC
Lisa Hamilton, QC
Steven McKoen, QC
Christopher McPherson, QC

STAFF CONTACT
Don Avison, QC

Hearing Panel Pools

The hearing panel pools demonstrate the Law Society's commitment to maintaining public confidence and transparency.

Lawyers and members of the public from around the province volunteer to be part of the Law Society's hearing panel pools. Panel members are selected, based on established criteria, from a public (non-lawyer) pool and a lawyer (non-Bencher) pool to help adjudicate all discipline and credentials hearings.

Members of the public hearing panel pool

Donald Amos
E. Nanette (Nan) Bennett
Linda Berg
Clarence Bolt
David Dewhirst
Michael Dungey
Carol Gibson
Darlene Hammell
Karen Kesteloo
Cyril Kesten
John Lane
Brendan Matthews
Laura Nashman
Lance Ollenberger
Paul Ruffell
Thelma Siglos
Robert Smith
Ruth Wittenberg

Members of the non-Bencher lawyer hearing panel pool

Ralston Alexander, QC
Douglas Chiu
Catherine Chow
Gillian Dougans
Eric Gottardi
Kimberly Henders Miller
Gavin Hume, QC
David Layton, QC
Lindsay R. LeBlanc
Bruce LeRose, QC
Andrew Mayes
Monique Pongracic-Speier, QC
H. Nina Purewal
Shannon N. Salter
William Veenstra, QC
John Waddell, QC
Ardith Walkem, QC
Sandra Weafer
William Younie, QC

Life Benchers

Benchers who have volunteered for four terms or have served as president of the Law Society are recognized with the title Life Bencher.

The Honourable Mary F. Southin, QC	(1971-1980)	Ann Howard	(1992-2002)	Joost Blom, QC	(2004-2011)
H. Allan Hope, QC	(1974-1982)	Richard C. Gibbs, QC	(1996-2002)	Carol W. Hickman, QC	(2004-2011)
The Honourable Thomas R. Braidwood, QC	(1973-1975; 1979-1985)	Howard R. Berge, QC	(1992-2003)	Bruce A. LeRose, QC	(2004-2012)
The Honourable Bruce I. Cohen, QC	(1978-1986)	Russell S. Tretiak, QC	(1992-2003)	Art Vertlieb, QC	(2004-2013)
Marvin R.V. Storrow, QC	(1980-1987)	Robert D. Diebolt, QC	(1996-2003)	Rita C. Andreone, QC	(2006-2013)
R. Paul Beckmann, QC	(1980-1989)	G. Ronald Toews, QC	(1996-2003)	Kathryn Berge, QC	(2006-2013)
Robert M. Dick, QC	(1983-1991)	Gerald J. Kambeitz, QC	(1996-2003)	Leon Getz, QC	(2006-2013)
The Honourable Peter Leask, QC	(1984-1992)	William J. Sullivan, QC	(1997-2003)	Thelma O'Grady	(2006-2013)
John M. Hogg, QC	(1984-1993)	Master Peter J. Keighley	(1996-2004)	David Renwick, QC	(2006-2013)
P. Michael Bolton, QC	(1985-1993)	William M. Everett, QC	(1998-2004)	Richard Stewart, QC	(2006-2013)
The Honourable Mr. Justice Robert T.C. Johnston	(1986-1994)	Ralston S. Alexander, QC	(1999-2005)	Jan Lindsay, QC	(2006-2014)
The Honourable Grant D. Burnyeat, QC	(1988-1995)	Patricia L. Schmit, QC	(1998-2005)	Kenneth M. Walker, QC	(2007-2015)
Donald A. Silversides, QC	(1984-1995)	Robert W. McDiarmid, QC	(1998-2006)	Peter B. Lloyd, FCPA, FCA	(2008-2015)
James M. MacIntyre, QC	(1986-1995)	Anna K. Fung, QC	(1998-2007)	David W. Mossop, QC	(2008-2015)
Alan E. Vanderburgh, QC	(1989-1995)	Ian Donaldson, QC	(2000-2007)	Haydn Acheson	(2008-2015)
Karen F. Nordlinger, QC	(1988-1996)	June Preston, MSW	(2001-2008)	The Honourable Mr. Justice E. David Crossin	(2010-2016)
Richard C.C. Peck, QC	(1988-1997)	The Honourable Mr. Justice John J.L. Hunter	(2002-2008)	Herman Van Ommen, QC	(2009-2017)
Leonard T. Doust, QC	(1990-1997)	Gordon Turriff, QC	(2002-2009)	C.E. Lee Ongman, QC	(2010-2017)
William M. Trotter, QC	(1990-1997)	Terence E. La Liberté, QC	(2000-2001, 2004-2009)	Thomas P. Fellhauer	(2010-2017)
Trudi L. Brown, QC	(1992-1998)	James D. Vilvang, QC	(2002-2009)	Gregory A. Petrisor	(2010-2017)
Warren T. Wilson, QC	(1991-1999)	David A. Zacks, QC	(2002-2009)	Satwinder Bains	(2010-2017)
The Honourable Ujjal Dosanjh, QC (1995-2000)	The Honourable Judge William F.M. Jackson	(2003-2009)	Claude H. Richmond	(2010-2018)
Karl F. Warner, QC	(1994-2000)	Patrick Kelly	(2002-2010)	Miriam Kresivo, QC	(2012-2018)
Richard S. Margetts, QC	(1995-2001)	Dr. Maelor Vallance ((2002-2010)	Nancy G. Merrill, QC	(2011-2019)
Gerald J. Lecovin, QC	(1994-2001)	G. Glen Ridgway, QC	(2002-2010)	Philip A. Riddell, QC	(2012-2019)
Emily M. Reid, QC	(1994-2001)	Gavin Hume, QC	(2004-2011)	Tony Wilson, QC	(2012-2019)
Jane S. Shackell, QC (1994-2001)				

The dates in parentheses represent years of service as a Bencher.