



Legal Aid Alberta

A Just Alberta — *one person at a time*

ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18



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All data in this publication are based on Legal Aid Alberta's fiscal year ending March 31, 2018.
Data references are based on the fiscal year starting April 1, 2017 and ending March 31, 2018.
Reported data is not comparable to prior publications due to a change in our calculation methodology.



REPRESENTING ALBERTANS ACROSS THE PROVINCE

COMMUNITIES ASSISTED IN 2017/18

In 2017/18, Legal Aid Alberta ensured all Albertans had access to legal services and support that helped them understand and protect their rights. Our clients were represented in almost 100 locations throughout Alberta. Below is a list of court and hearing locations served by Legal Aid Alberta lawyers during the year.

Airdrie	Falher	Peace River
Assumption	Fort Chipewyan	Pincher Creek
Athabasca	Fort Macleod	Ponoka
Barrhead	Fort McMurray	Red Deer
Blackfalds	Fort Saskatchewan	Red Earth Creek
Bonnyville	Fort Vermilion	Rimbey
Bowden	Fox Creek	Rocky Mountain House
Bowden Institution	Glenevis	Sherwood Park
Boyle	Grande Cache	Siksika Nation
Breton	Grande Prairie	Slave Lake
Brooks	Hanna	Spruce Grove
Calgary*	High Level	St. Albert
Camrose	High Prairie	St. Paul
Canmore	Hinton	Stettler
Cardston	Jasper	Stony Plain
Chateh	Killam	Strathmore
Claresholm	Lac La Biche	Taber
Cochrane	Leduc	Tsuut'ina Nation
Cold Lake	Lethbridge	Turner Valley
Coronation	Lethbridge Correctional Centre	Valleyview
Didsbury	Lloydminster	Vegreville
Drayton Valley	Mayerthorpe	Vermilion
Drumheller	Medicine Hat	Wabasca-Desmarais
Drumheller Institution	Medicine Hat Regional Hospital	Wainwright
Edmonton*		Westlock
Edson	Morinville	Wetaskiwin
Evansburg	Okotoks	Whitecourt
Fairview		

**Multiple court and hearing locations are represented in Calgary and Edmonton, including Foothills Medical Centre, Peter Lougheed Centre, Rockyview General Hospital, and the Southern Alberta Forensic Psychiatry Centre.*

HELPING BREAK THE CYCLE

As long as he could remember, drug addiction was part of 'Joseph's' life; coupled with a history of break and enter crimes and lengthy jail sentences, Joseph wanted to make a positive change.

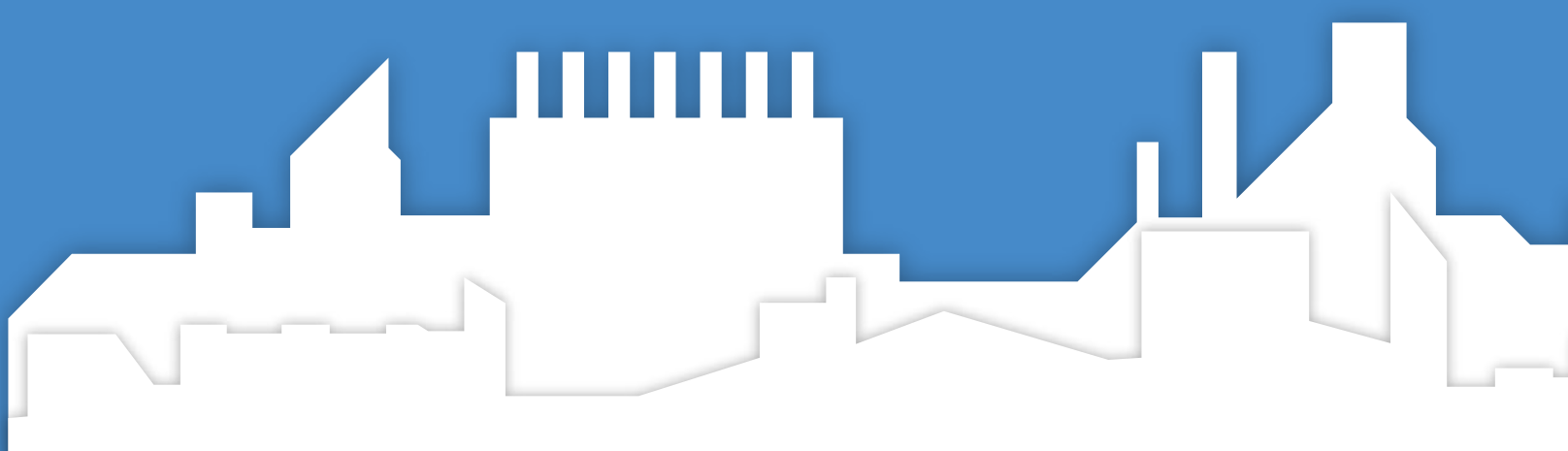
After getting released, Joseph's Legal Aid Alberta lawyer connected him with support services to help him with a new start. With a genuine commitment, he thrived in an out-of-custody, non-residential drug addiction program. He did so well that his lawyer was able to present to the Crown that a six-month conditional sentence order was the most just.

This sentence allowed Joseph to fully focus on his recovery. As part of this commitment, Joseph chose to share his story of addiction, its effects, and recovery with medical trainees helping them better understand the life of an addict.

He kept his lawyer aware of his progress, because he believed that his now former counsel was genuinely interested in him and his recovery. A month before his conditional sentence order was to end, it was alleged that he breached his sentence. His counsel investigated, spoke to his support network and presented his circumstances to the Crown. The Crown dropped the allegations. Through the support of Legal Aid Alberta, Joseph obtained a sentence that lead to positive life changes rather than returning him to jail and a life of addiction.



ABOUT US



ABOUT US

Founded in 1970 through an agreement with the Law Society of Alberta and the Attorney General, Legal Aid Alberta was established to provide criminal and civil legal support for Albertans. We are a not-for-profit organization registered under the provincial *Societies Act*.

Legal Aid Alberta operates independently from government but is accountable to the public through a governance agreement with the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General and the Law Society of Alberta.

PROVIDING LASTING RESOLUTION FOR ALBERTANS

We provide legal services to Albertans when they are at their most vulnerable. We are committed to improving the overall quality of life of our clients within our areas of focus.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Our services aim to provide access to justice for Albertans who need us most. As the number of courthouse locations has expanded, so too has our support. In 2017/18, we provided services in almost 100 courthouse locations across Alberta, providing duty counsel¹ and full representation lawyers throughout the province.

OUR LAWYERS

Our core business is legal representation and advice for our clients, and supporting access to legal services to eligible Albertans.

We provide service to clients through staff and private bar, known as roster lawyers. Our staff provides many services directly to Albertans, with the balance provided by lawyers who have registered to be part of the roster and provide services on behalf of Legal Aid Alberta.

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

We also provide legal services in areas where we are uniquely positioned to have a significant positive impact on the justice system and the lives of Albertans. This includes services like Brydges Duty Counsel,² services in support of Emergency Protection Orders, services for Indigenous Albertans at the Siksika Nation, and client workers for youth and families in crisis.

When directed to do so by the courts, we also provide legal services on behalf of Alberta Justice.

VISION

An Alberta where everyone can access justice and achieve fair and lasting resolutions to their legal issues.

MISSION

We are a leader in the provision of quality, effective legal advice and representation that enables our clients to resolve their legal issues.

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Through our expertise and depth of knowledge, we are able to offer specialized services to Albertans.

This places us in a unique position as a centre of excellence. We are committed to sharing knowledge within the legal community, and work to support improvements to the Alberta judicial system.

Working with our funding partners, stakeholders, and community, we provide targeted training for practising Alberta lawyers and the legal community on a range of topics, with the goal of better outcomes for the clients they represent.

Training and information sessions range from sharing key learnings when representing children in high-conflict cases, including how to effectively and appropriately interview children, to Indigenous awareness and cultural sensitivity training. We are also active members of many committees and working groups where our lawyers share their legal knowledge and experience.

Pillars

These eight ideas define our core commitments and values as an organization. Our ability to live up to and deliver on these principles helps define our value as a leader, and the contribution we make to both the justice system and society:

- Helping Albertans
- Experts in our field
- First contact
- Client-focused assessment
- Fostering legal well-being
- Independent
- Cost-effective
- Integral to justice

SPECIALIZED LEGAL REPRESENTATION

Since 1970, we have supported hundreds of thousands of Albertans from a range of religious, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds protect their rights in the justice system and find lasting resolution to their legal issues.

In 2017/18, we introduced a number of pilot projects and new programs to help support some of the most vulnerable people in our province. For further information on our pilot projects, see page 24.

RESPONSIBILITY TO ALBERTANS

Legal Aid Alberta is incorporated under the *Societies Act* and is mandated to deliver legal aid services within Alberta. We are accountable for the prudent financial stewardship of our funding. We are further accountable to the public through our representation of our clients. Each year, our audited financial statements are presented within our annual report. An audited financial summary is available starting on page 28.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Honourable Kathleen Ganley
Minister of Justice and
Solicitor General
Province of Alberta
424 Legislature Building
10800 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB, T5K 2B6

Don Cranston, QC
President
Law Society of Alberta
Suite 500
919 11 Avenue SW
Calgary, AB, T2R 1P3



Dear Honourable Minister Ganley and
Mr. Cranston:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Legal Aid Alberta, it is my pleasure to submit the *2017/18 Annual Report* in accordance with the requirements set out in Sections 12(b) and 13(b) of the *Governance Agreement* on behalf of Legal Aid Alberta.

As an integral part of the Alberta justice system, 2017/18 has been a time of transition and change for Legal Aid Alberta. Together with our partners in government and the Law Society of Alberta, we have made significant progress towards a new governance agreement. Our current agreement expires in 2019, and with that expiry comes an opportunity to develop a modern system of governance that is more responsive to the needs of our stakeholders and all Albertans, while also reflecting our evolving organizational needs. With our governance partners, we look forward to discussing how Legal Aid Alberta can best serve Albertans, create greater access to justice, and develop a sustainable, adequate, and predictable funding model.

The board of directors is proud of the continued service excellence provided by the Legal Aid Alberta team, both in their dedication to provide high-quality legal representation and advice for their clients, and in their extensive work to support governance negotiations during the last year. We will continue to meet with stakeholders and share how our services support Albertans when they are at their most vulnerable.

In May 2017, we appointed Gianpaolo (John) Panusa as our new president and CEO. John's leadership, collaborative approach with stakeholders, and commitment to improving client service have proved vital as we work through this transitional period.

As a board of directors, we work to follow governance best practices. In doing so, we recently revised and updated the terms of reference for our Human Resources and Compensation Committee. These changes will support meaningful discussions about Legal Aid Alberta's human resources strategy. For new board members, we have enhanced our orientation process by adding an extensive court tour program for directors not from the legal profession.

We continue to be confident in the financial performance, reporting, and efficiencies of the organization. For more information, our audited financial statements are presented on page 28.

Lastly, in my new role as board chair, I would like to thank outgoing board members Lori Bokenfohr, Linda Cook, and Derek Cranna for their contributions during their terms, and welcome Owen Edmondson, Christine Hutchinson, and Daryl Royer as new directors.

I speak for all of our board members when I say we are looking forward to finalizing a new governance agreement and working on our new strategic plan, one grounded in quality service delivery that benefits all Albertans.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deanna Steblyk', with a stylized, cursive script.

Deanna Steblyk
Chair, Board of Directors
Legal Aid Alberta

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO



This is a transformative time at Legal Aid Alberta.

We are firmly positioning Legal Aid Alberta as a Centre of Excellence where our people are, and are seen to be, experts in everything they do. We are establishing ourselves as a best in class service organization that delivers legal representation and advice as our core business. We continue to build strong relationships with stakeholders and partners in the justice system and seek out opportunities to work more collaboratively with them to better support Albertans to understand and protect their legal rights.

Since joining Legal Aid Alberta last year, I have seen the passion and dedication of our staff and roster lawyers as they work to protect the legal rights of individuals and families. They make remarkable contributions to improving the efficiency and speed of Alberta's justice system every day, not only by representing those who would otherwise self-represent, but also by providing services like duty counsel, and by sharing their expertise on projects and committees intended to improve the system for all Albertans. You will read about some of these success stories in this annual report.

In 2017/18, Legal Aid Alberta received an average of 700 telephone calls a day from Albertans in need of legal counsel and support. In order to continue to deliver high quality programs and services to clients, we are rethinking the way we operate. We remain dedicated to ensuring Albertans, and especially the most vulnerable members of our community, have access to services that will help them understand and protect their legal rights. We are looking at ways to ensure we continue removing barriers for clients so they can quickly access our services and get the legal support they need. We are also making it easier for our roster partners to represent clients without unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles.

The process of negotiating a new governance agreement can be all-consuming, but we have never lost focus or commitment to our most important priority — our clients. Our fiscal approach doesn't simply allow us to represent more Albertans, it gives us the capacity to innovate and improve the way we serve, and support the improved efficiency of the justice system.

We continually look for ways on our own and in collaboration with our partners in the system to improve our service to clients, while looking inward at how we do business to ensure our internal processes are efficient, effective, and in the best interest of Albertans. We have worked to find efficiencies, and again this year have kept our administrative costs to less than 10 percent of overall spending while continuing to meet an increased demand for service.

With our executive team and board of directors, I look forward to finalizing our new governance agreement and building on the strength of our relationships with stakeholders to continue to enhance the operational efficiencies of the Alberta justice system.

Thank you for your continued dedication and support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Panusa', with a stylized, flowing script.

Gianpaolo (John) Panusa
President and CEO
Legal Aid Alberta

GOVERNANCE

Legal Aid Alberta is governed by an 11-member board of directors. The board is comprised of up to six directors representing areas of law practice and a minimum of five directors representing the public interest. All members are identified through a robust selection process and are appointed as outlined in the *Governance Agreement* by the Benchers of the Law Society of Alberta. Our directors strongly support the provision of quality, effective legal advice and representation to enable Legal Aid Alberta clients to achieve resolution to their legal issues. Our board members represent a broad and balanced range of experience and knowledge.

EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The board of directors is responsible for the strategic direction of Legal Aid Alberta and its goals, policies, and organizational direction through sound governance practices, ensuring we are serving the public good while being accountable to our funders and the public.

Direction and decisions of the board of directors are implemented by the executive and management teams to support the *Legal Aid Plan*. Our executive team leads the organization and our operations. They develop our policies, plans, and budgets to align with the board of directors' strategic direction, goals, and initiatives.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Back row L to R: Christine Hutchinson, Jim Donihee, Graham Johnson, Ryan Callioux, Hilary Rose, Owen Edmondson, Daryl Royer, Nancy Peck. Front row L to R: Robert Calvert, Deanna Steblyk, Peter Carter.

ADJUSTING OUR FOCUS

Providing legal aid is an integral component in serving all Albertans through quality legal services, while seeking ways to balance the need for service with the availability of funding.

In March 2017, the existing agreement between the Province of Alberta, the Law Society of Alberta, and the Legal Aid Society of Alberta was extended into 2019. This extension allows for the continued review, consultation, and assessment of the legal aid program and long-term stability of Legal Aid Alberta.

As we work with our stakeholders to redefine our governance agreement, we are continuing conversations that will allow us to further strengthen our collaborative relationships with partners and funders.

We are continuing to provide services and support to some of the most vulnerable in our province. This important work is laying the foundation for a renewed agreement — one that will continue to ensure Albertans have access to legal representation that will help them understand and protect their legal rights.

EXECUTIVE TEAM



Back row L to R: Tyler Tollefson, vice president, Legal Representation and Advice; Brian Mulawka, director Communications and Government Relations. Front row L to R: Steve Burford, vice president, Finance and Technology; Gianpaolo (John) Panusa, president and CEO; Lyle Toop, vice president, Human Resources and Client Services.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – STANDING COMMITTEES

Through the use of standing committees, the board of directors undertakes the governance and stewardship of Legal Aid Alberta, facilitates both policy development and ongoing policy revision, and enacts its decision-making authority with respect to issues of coverage. Each committee is chaired by a member of the board, and members are appointed from other board directors and members of the private bar.

Appeals Committee: The Appeals Committee represents the final level of appeal in coverage issues.

Audit and Finance Committee: This committee is responsible for overall fiscal control and monitoring of the organization's financial affairs.

High-cost Case Committee: This committee considers appeals from the taxation of lawyers' accounts and any requests for discretionary increases to lawyers' accounts based on exceptional circumstances. They are also responsible for hearing requests from lawyers for additional coverage or time due to extraordinary circumstances that take a Legal Aid Alberta client's case beyond the usual fees allowed under the Roster Lawyers' *Tariff of Fees*.

Human Resources and Compensation Committee: This committee is responsible for reviewing the compensation and classification structures for all Legal Aid Alberta staff. The committee is also responsible for reviewing the performance of the president and CEO. The committee makes recommendations to the board of directors as required.

Governance Committee: The primary function of the Governance Committee is to provide a focus on governance related topics that will enhance the performance of Legal Aid Alberta.

Nominating Committee: The Nominating Committee is responsible for proposing, to the Benchers of the Law Society of Alberta (the "Benchers"), new nominees and reappointments to the Board of Directors of Legal Aid Alberta.

Roster Committee: The Roster Committee is responsible for ensuring that Legal Aid Alberta and its clients receive legal services that provide value for cost and meet the professional standards as established by the Law Society of Alberta.

Strategic Planning Committee: The Strategic Planning Committee provides organizational leadership to the board including the preparation of agendas for board meetings and coordination of Legal Aid Alberta executive, committees, and stakeholder relations in such a fashion as to allow an orderly development of the organization's goals.



OUR MANDATE

Providing Albertans access to justice through independent legal counsel is part of our mandate and forms an integral part of our obligations under our current *Governance Agreement*. We are here to provide information and support to Albertans by helping them navigate the justice system at a time when they need it most.

LEGAL AID ALBERTA IS ENTRUSTED TO:

- Provide court-appointed counsel for youth and adults;
- provide Brydges² services;
- provide counsel for accused, complainants, and witnesses;
- provide counsel for children in private custody/disputes that are high conflict;
- operate and maintain Staff Law offices,³ all of which shall be appointed to represent clients;
- comply with the requirements of federal and provincial cost-sharing agreements;
- maintain the policy of cost recovery from clients, except in cases of undue financial hardship;
- use both roster (private bar) and staff counsel to deliver services;
- strive to improve quality, efficiencies, and cost effectiveness of operations; and
- encourage the integration of services with other services and facilities to help meet the special legal needs of clients.

A CHANCE TO SUCCEED

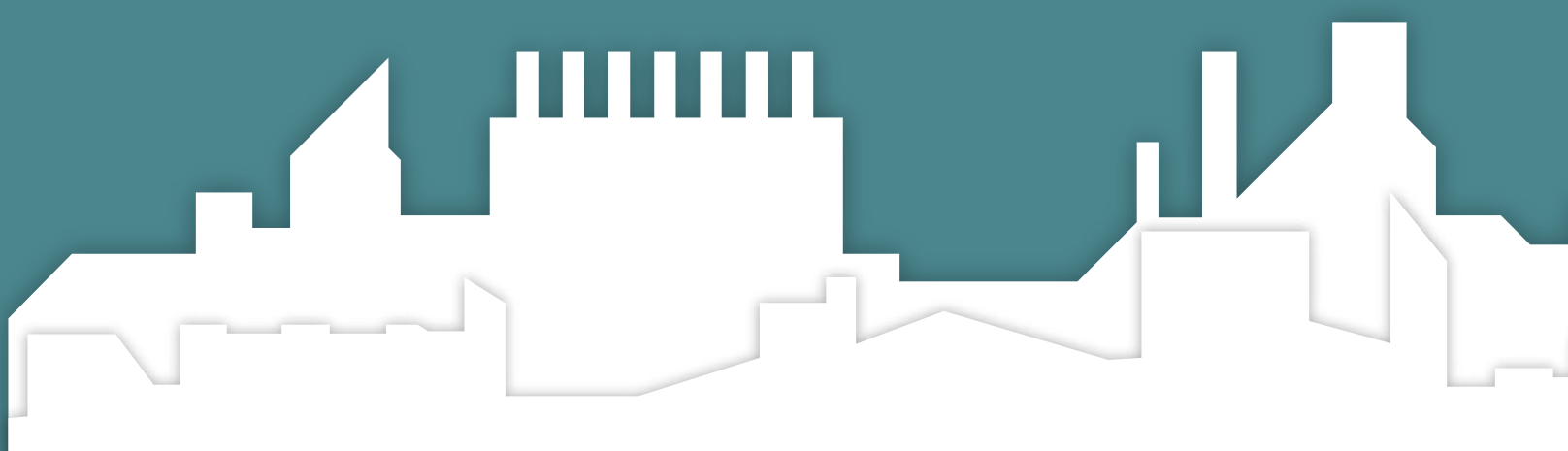
Struggling with addiction at the time, 'Angela' stole more than \$5,000, which is an indictable offence. Two years later, when police charged her with theft, she had made significant changes to her life: she was now sober and caring for her small children. Looking to take responsibility for her actions, Angela confessed.

Feeling remorseful and ashamed, as the theft had been from her employer, Angela's Legal Aid Alberta lawyer referred her case to a restorative justice program. Through the program, she worked with a facilitator to repair the harm caused by her actions, providing the opportunity to apologize to her victims face-to-face, and hear how her crime impacted them.

At sentencing, the judge indicated that her participation in the program had a significant impact on the sentencing decision. Despite her criminal record, the judge sentenced her to a reduced sentence that was served on weekends rather than the 12 months he had been considering. By connecting Angela with the program, she was able to continue to care for her two young children and work towards obtaining employment to help pay restitution to her former employer.



OUR PERFORMANCE



PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

At our core, Legal Aid Alberta represents Albertans, providing access to the justice system. Our core services ensure individuals and families requiring representation are able to protect their constitutional right to a fair trial. However, Legal Aid Alberta programs and services extend beyond representing a client in a courtroom. For many, their first interaction with us is by telephone.

CLIENT-CENTRED SERVICE DELIVERY

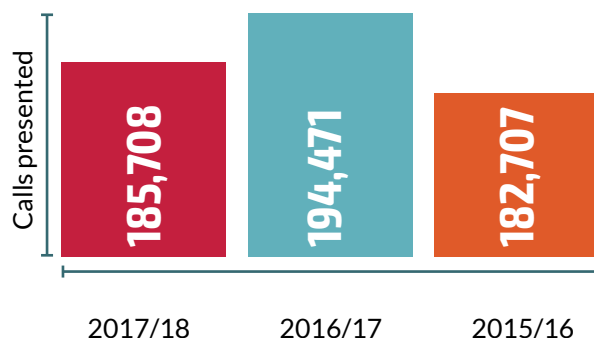
We are here to help. We are available five⁴ days a week to answer telephone calls from Albertans in need of assistance. In 2017/18, we received more than 180,000 calls.

Telephone calls are answered by Legal Aid Alberta system navigational experts who help callers connect with required support services. Through our general call service, we help determine client eligibility and identify needs by creating matter files that detail the nature of the calls received.

700 
Calls received per day
in 2017/18

We assess our performance by measuring the overall quality of our client contacts by telephone to review consistency in the application of Legal Aid Alberta policies and procedures, and to ensure consistency in decision making. Through our quality program, our legal service officers are provided one-on-one mentoring and ongoing training to support consistency in our processes. In 2017/18, 95 percent of all calls reviewed met our quality standards.

TOTAL CALLS



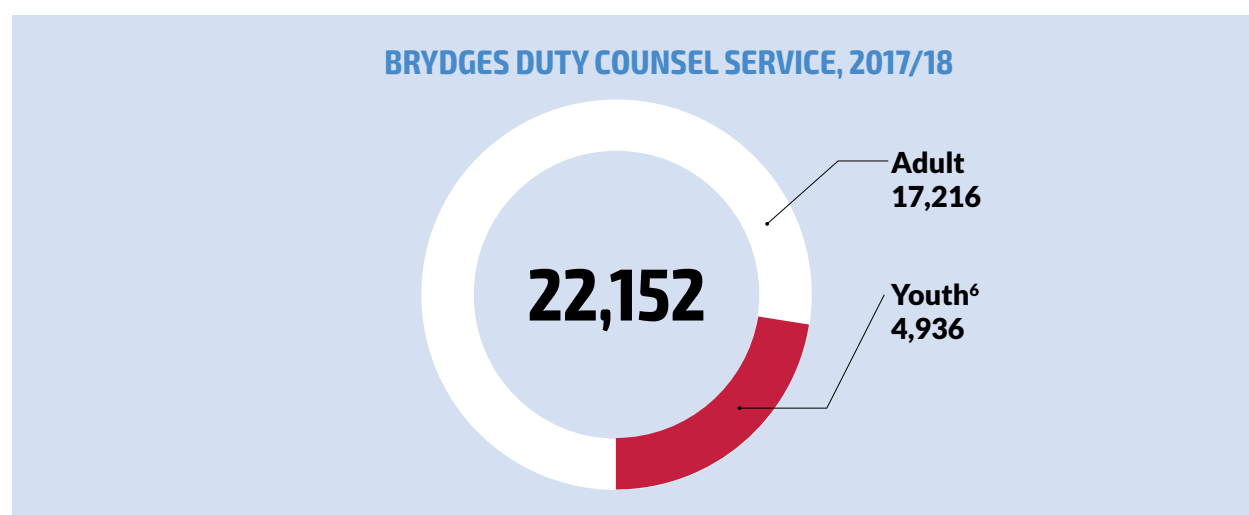
Starting in 2018/19, our processes will be revised to introduce enhanced components to measure outcomes and client communication, ensuring we are meeting our client service mandate. We anticipate these changes may have an impact on our quality scores as we work to refine the way we deliver our services.

CALLS PRESENTED	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
General	104,030	109,705	104,587
Remand centre	59,526	64,880	56,981
Brydges Duty Counsel Service	22,152	19,886	21,139

Brydges Duty Counsel Service

Included in the total number of calls presented are those from the Brydges Duty Counsel Service.⁵ Any person who is detained or arrested in Alberta has the right to speak to a lawyer and receive advice. This telephone service is available 24-hours a day to provide advice on the client's charter rights and criminal law matters.

We continue to see steady demand for the Brydges duty counsel service. In 2017/18, there was more than a 10 percent increase in calls received.



QUALIFIED AND SKILLED SERVICE PROVIDERS

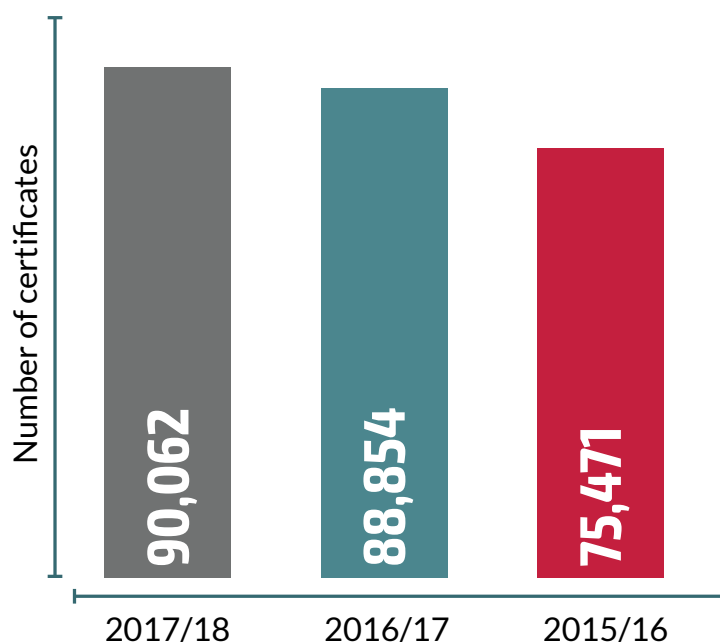
In 2017/18, we had approximately 90,000 active certificates.⁷ Eligible clients are represented by staff and roster lawyers throughout the province. Last year, 1,460 roster lawyers⁸ managed an average of 47 certificates each.

Our qualified and dedicated lawyers are registered with the Law Society of Alberta and are committed to providing Albertans with quality service and fair access to justice.

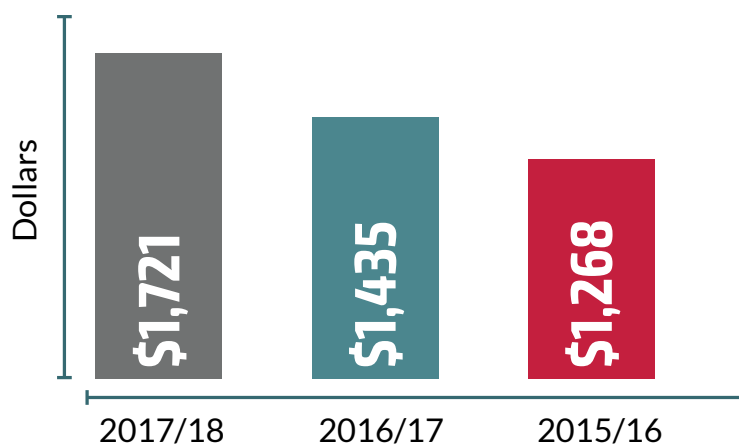
Over the past three years, we have seen a significant increase in the number of certificates issued annually. This increase can be attributed to changes made to the financial eligibility guidelines in December 2015 and to weakened economic conditions in 2016. Our services touch some of the province's most vulnerable people from communities throughout Alberta. From 2016/17 to 2017/18, roster lawyer costs increased by 7 percent.

While new certificates have started to stabilize, in 2017/18, we saw an additional increase in legal matters related to child welfare and immigration, and family and duty counsel certificates remained elevated over 2015/16.

ACTIVE CERTIFICATES



AVERAGE CERTIFICATE COST*



*Average cost for roster lawyer certificates.

From 2016/17 to 2017/18, roster certificate costs continued to increase. This increase can be attributed to factors such as increased case complexity or inflation, and is calculated on completed certificates.

CERTIFICATES ISSUED ⁹	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
Client-based			
Criminal	31,018	34,075	30,536
Family	6,536	7,666	6,444
Child welfare	1,536	1,481	1,183
Immigration	1,091	510	356
Civil	58	82	143
Duty counsel	11,490	11,558	9,580
Total	51,729	55,372	48,242

Duty counsel

As a core element of our service, we provide lawyers in courtrooms across Alberta. This service is known as duty counsel. Duty counsel lawyers provide information, guidance, and legal advice prior to an individual's first court appearance. In many cases, duty counsel lawyers can advocate on behalf of the individual. In addition, duty counsel can assist Albertans with family or child welfare issues.



Duty counsel is an integral part of our justice system. This service is provided regardless of income, and available to anyone who does not yet have legal representation. Duty counsel lawyers help ensure Albertans are served in a manner that provides the best outcome — while making the most efficient use of the court's time.

In addition to adult matters, we provide specialized assistance to youth who are detained and in need of legal advice,¹⁰ and provide support to unrepresented youth in Youth Justice Court.

Families and children

In 2017/18, matters pertaining to families and child welfare made up more than 26 percent of the total requests for services received during the year. Our family law personnel are located throughout the province and provide specialized assistance to clients with family law and child welfare matters.

Clients may also be matched with a justice navigator. Our navigators help clients understand the legal process and what may be expected from them as they seek resolution to their legal matters. In addition, justice navigators can help clients identify challenges, develop strategies to cope with them, advocate for the client, and where appropriate provide referral and crisis intervention support. Navigators help to remove the underlying causes that bring Albertans into conflict.

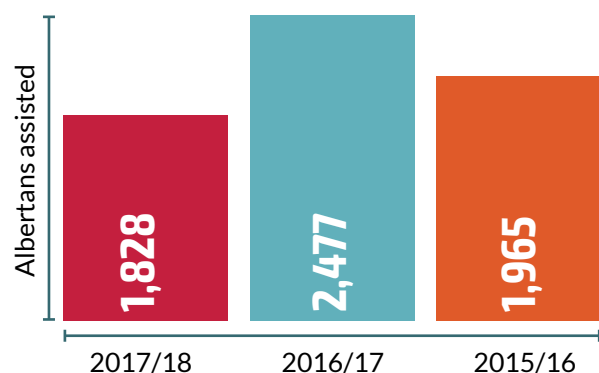
PROVIDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALBERTANS

Emergency Protection Order Program

We also help those at risk of experiencing family violence. Our Emergency Protection Order (EPO) Program is available to all Albertans, regardless of income. Through the program, clients are provided with information and assistance to apply for and receive an emergency protection order. Clients can also access referrals to other agencies for ongoing support. These orders are a critical tool in providing immediate protection from family violence.

**5 EPOs
A DAY**
1,828 EPOs in 2017/18

EMERGENCY PROTECTION ORDER FILES



Family and child welfare requests for service in 2017/18



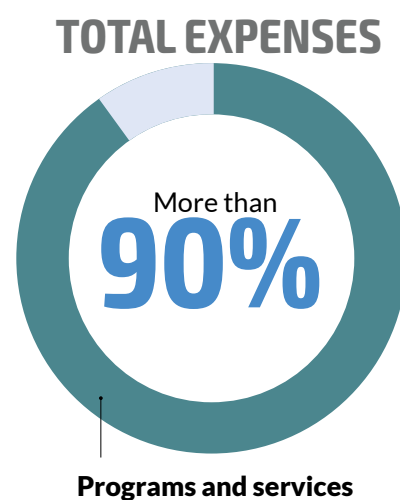
Discretionary Coverage Program

Implemented in 2015, the Discretionary Coverage Program is in place to consider potential clients who meet our service eligibility requirements, but do not qualify for services based on financial eligibility. In these instances, the matter is referred to the Discretionary Coverage Program. The program helps to limit time in court to hear formal court-ordered counsel applications, decreasing the time it takes for counsel to be appointed and reducing the burden on the courts and our staff. In 2017/18, more than 500 certificates were issued to provide counsel services to in-need Albertans as part of this program.



SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION

We are entrusted to provide legal aid support to eligible Albertans. As part of our responsibilities, we take a prudent approach to our financial stewardship. Funding is a key area of focus for our board of directors and management, as is providing effective, quality legal support to those in need. In 2017/18, we directed more than 90 percent of received revenue to programs and services for Albertans. Our administrative costs are below the national average for legal aid organizations and among the lowest in Canada.



ADMINISTRATION COSTS (\$000S)	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
Total expenses	96,854	95,161	79,773
Management and administration	7,820	7,633	7,926

NEW 2017/18 PILOT PROGRAMS

We launched a series of pilot projects to help address some of the most significant needs of our clients.

Mental Health Court

During the year, our services expanded to include providing dedicated support in Edmonton's new mental health court. Based on a model used in other Canadian jurisdictions, mental health court is a collaborative approach between the justice system and health care professionals to hear cases involving Albertans who may be facing mental health challenges and illnesses.

The pilot project directly ties to our mission and culture. We have dedicated duty counsel and support staff resources to ensure those needing representation have equitable access to legal counsel and support. Legal Aid Alberta lawyers and staff work with the prosecutor and other mental health care professions to provide meaningful assistance to clients, including follow-up support once sentencing is complete.

Mental health court is not a cookie cutter approach, as the process continues to evolve as stakeholders including judges, prosecutors, court staff, remand centre staff and Alberta Health Services team members learn from their case experiences. This collaborative approach lays the foundation to discuss improvements and arrive at decisions that are fair and effective for those before the court.

What is unique about this program is the judge has the help of a group of legal and health professionals to guide the decision. The focus is on addressing the problems that cause the behaviour, in order to reduce recidivism.

Drug Court

As part of a team of stakeholders from across the Alberta justice system, we participated in the launch of Alberta's first drug treatment court in Edmonton. The Edmonton Drug Treatment Court Service is an intensive one-year (minimum) court-supervised drug treatment program aimed at helping participants break the cycle of crime and addiction. The program sees participants completing drug treatment rather than being incarcerated. Successful graduates return to the community with access to secure housing, employment or schooling, as well as the tools to continue in their recovery. The success of the drug court program is evident through its graduates, who are at a much lower risk to reoffend.

Métis Youth Advocacy Program

Funded through a grant from the Department of Justice Canada, we launched the Métis Youth Advocacy Program. The program mandate is to provide vital services that support Métis youth and their organizations, and advocate for Métis youth rights, with the goal of building capacity within communities to support Métis youth involved with the law.

Our program manager works closely with Métis communities in Northern Alberta, and community partners to improve the supports available for Métis youth in conflict with the law.

We have worked to build relationships with Métis leaders and elders, law enforcement, and other support services to develop and implement a new integrated and collaborative service delivery model which provides legal, community, and social support services to Métis youth.

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Throughout the cases we manage, our staff and roster lawyers have developed a unique and diverse knowledge of the law and Alberta's justice system. As a legal centre of excellence, we share knowledge and expertise with others in the legal community. We provide learning opportunities for practising Alberta lawyers and the broader legal community on a range of topics with the goal of better outcomes for the clients they serve.

In 2017/18, we hosted more than 150 lawyers and staff at 10 training sessions on topics ranging from representing children in high-conflict cases to Indigenous awareness, historical trauma and its impacts, and cultural sensitivity training.

Through these sessions, we were able to bring our lawyers together with others to share key learnings and expertise.

To deliver specialized services to our unique client base, we must also act as a business centre of excellence. Our processes, the way we work with clients, our relationships with stakeholders, and our partnerships with roster lawyers continue to be areas of focus for our organization. Looking to 2018/19, we will continue to expand our role as a centre of excellence in the legal and broader community, which will include expanded training session topics and additional participant engagement.



SUPPORTING THE MOST VULNERABLE

‘Daryl’ is a 28-year-old recipient of Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped. His story started with a charge of breaching a conditional sentence order. Appearing to have age appropriate communication skills, Daryl collected more and more breaches of the conditional sentence order, release conditions, and probation orders.

By working with Daryl’s family and contacts in the mental health community, his Legal Aid Alberta lawyer was able to help get Daryl a formal diagnosis of non-verbal learning disorder. His diagnosis supported a successful appeal and led to Daryl being placed in the Edmonton John Howard Society’s Independence Apartments, a community-based residential facility that provides supports to adult males on conditional release.

Daryl continued breaching various orders and the lawyer, working with the judge and the Crown, was able to try placements and bail conditions to find a pathway to success. Daryl’s criminal file was ultimately resolved with a sentence of time served and he has been successful in remaining charge-free.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of **The Legal Aid Society of Alberta**, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2018, and the statements of changes in net assets (liabilities), revenue and expenses and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's responsibility for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditors consider internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of **The Legal Aid Society of Alberta** as at March 31, 2018, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Edmonton, A.B., Canada

June 1, 2018

Ernst & Young LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants



A member firm of Ernst & Young Global Limited

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

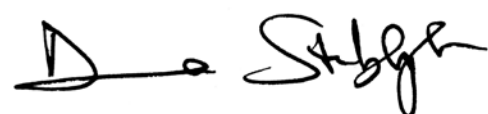
Year ended March 31, 2018

[\$ in thousands of dollars]

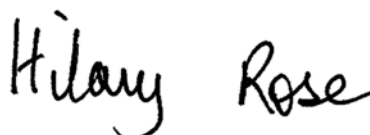
	Notes	2017/18	2016/17
ASSETS			
Current			
Cash, cash equivalents, and restricted cash	[note 3]	1,000	238
Accounts receivable		164	542
Goods and Services Tax rebate receivable		646	614
Prepaid expenses		172	388
Total current assets		1,982	1,782
Capital assets, net	[note 4]	7,939	9,304
		9,921	11,086
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES)			
Current			
Bank indebtedness	[note 5]	1,194	—
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		2,787	4,390
Accrued vacation pay		1,047	1,080
Current portion of deferred lease inducements		414	267
Provision for unbilled services provided on outstanding certificates	[note 6]	7,940	7,650
Total current liabilities		13,382	13,387
Deferred contributions	[note 7]	1,000	—
Deferred capital contributions	[note 8]	—	420
Deferred lease inducements		1,810	2,341
Total liabilities		16,192	16,148
Commitments and contingencies	[notes 6 and 9]		
NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES)			
Internally funded capital assets		7,939	9,220
Unrestricted		(14,210)	(14,282)
Net assets (liabilities)		(6,271)	(5,062)
		9,921	11,086

See accompanying notes

On behalf of the Board of Directors:



Deanna Steblyk
Chair, Board of Directors
Legal Aid Alberta



Hilary Rose
Director, Board of Directors
Legal Aid Alberta

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES)

Year ended March 31, 2018
[\$ in thousands of dollars]

	2017/18		
	Internally funded capital assets	Unrestricted	Total
Balance, beginning of the year	9,220	(14,282)	(5,062)
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	—	(1,209)	(1,209)
Purchases of capital assets	1,182	(1,182)	—
Purchases of capital assets using restricted contributions	(336)	336	—
Amortization of capital assets	(2,098)	2,098	—
Retirement of capital assets	(29)	29	—
Balance, end of the year	7,939	(14,210)	(6,271)

	2016/17		
	Internally funded capital assets	Unrestricted	Total
Balance, beginning of the year	7,078	(4,734)	2,344
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	—	(7,406)	(7,406)
Purchases of capital assets	4,187	(4,187)	—
Purchases of capital assets using restricted contributions	(84)	84	—
Amortization of capital assets	(1,872)	1,872	—
Retirement of capital assets	(89)	89	—
Balance, end of the year	9,220	(14,282)	(5,062)

See accompanying notes

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES

Year ended March 31, 2018
[\$ in thousands of dollars]

	Notes	2017/18	2016/17
REVENUE			
Province of Alberta	[note 3]	88,429	80,558
Alberta Law Foundation grant		2,905	3,317
Recoveries from clients		3,832	3,365
Interest and other		479	515
Total revenue		95,645	87,755
EXPENSES			
Private bar ¹¹			
Legal aid fees and disbursements	[note 11]		
Criminal adult		37,462	35,611
Criminal youth		1,386	1,645
Family, child welfare, immigration, and refugee		18,412	16,299
Duty counsel		2,656	2,899
Court-ordered counsel and discretionary coverage		2,086	1,365
		62,002	57,819
Increase in provision for unbilled services provided on outstanding certificates	[note 6]	290	4,450
		62,292	62,269
Other program expenses			
	[note 10]		
Client services		26,742	25,229
Management and administration		7,820	7,663
		34,562	32,892
Total expenses		96,854	95,161
Deficiency of revenue over expenses		(1,209)	(7,406)

See accompanying notes

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

Year ended March 31, 2018
[\$ in thousands of dollars]

	2017/18	2016/17
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(1,209)	(7,406)
Items not involving cash		
Amortization of capital assets	2,098	1,872
Loss on disposal of capital assets	29	89
Amortization of leasehold inducements	(396)	(331)
Provision for unbilled services	290	4,450
Changes in non-cash operating working capital		
Accounts receivable	378	612
Goods and Services Tax rebate receivable	(32)	(89)
Prepaid expenses	216	(25)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(1,603)	2,518
Accrued vacation pay	(33)	(81)
Deferred revenue	—	(167)
Cash provided by (used in) operating activities	(262)	1,442
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchases of capital assets	(1,182)	(4,187)
Reduction in capital assets from restricted contributions	420	—
Purchases of investments	—	(5,000)
Proceeds on disposal of investments	—	7,500
Cash used in investing activities	(762)	(1,687)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds from lease inducements	12	1,676
Restricted contributions received for/used from reserve	1,000	(2,500)
Restricted contributions received for capital assets	(420)	420
Cash provided by (used in) financing activities	592	(404)
Net decrease in cash during the year	(432)	(649)
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	238	887
Cash and cash equivalents (bank indebtedness), end of year	(194)	238
Cash and cash equivalents represented by:		
Cash, cash equivalents, and restricted cash	1,000	238
Bank indebtedness	(1,194)	—
	(194)	238

See accompanying notes

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Year ended March 31, 2018
[\$ in thousands of dollars]

1. THE ORGANIZATION

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta (the Society), registered as a society under the laws of the Province of Alberta, operates by agreement between the Society, the Law Society of Alberta, and the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General of the Province of Alberta to assist individuals of modest means in obtaining legal services in criminal and civil matters. The current *Governance Agreement*, which became effective on April 1, 2011 and expired on March 31, 2016, was initially extended to March 31, 2017 and subsequently extended to March 31, 2019. Under the provisions of the *Income Tax Act* (Canada), the Society is exempt from income tax.

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Part III of the *CPA Canada Handbook – Accounting*, which constitutes generally accepted accounting principles for not-for-profit organizations in Canada, and includes the significant accounting policies described hereafter.

REVENUE RECOGNITION

The Society's primary sources of funding are contributions from the Province of Alberta and the Alberta Law Foundation, recoveries from clients, and interest and other income.

The Society follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Contributions are recognized in the accounts when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when initially recorded in the accounts. Externally restricted contributions are deferred when initially recorded in the accounts and recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are recognized.

Externally restricted contributions for the acquisition of capital assets are recorded as deferred capital contributions and recognized as revenue as the related assets are amortized over their useful lives. Restricted contributions for the purchase of capital assets that will not be amortized are recognized as a direct increase in net assets.

Recoveries from client recipients of legal aid services cannot be reasonably estimated in advance due to the uncertainty of collection. Accordingly, these recoveries and contributions are recorded as revenue when received.

Interest and other income are recognized as revenue when earned.

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES CONTINUED

EXPENSE RECOGNITION

Legal aid fees and disbursements are eligible for payment in respect of services authorized on issued legal aid certificates. The Society records the estimated value of services provided, but not submitted for payment, on outstanding certificates in the period in which the services are provided. Legal expenses include amounts billed to the Society by lawyers and an estimate of amounts for work performed but not yet billed.

ALLOCATION OF OTHER PROGRAM EXPENSES

The expenses of each function include personnel and other expenses that are directly related to the function. General support and other expenses are not allocated, except for rent, which is allocated to functions by head count.

FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Investments are recorded at fair value. Other financial instruments, including accounts receivable, payable, and accrued liabilities, are initially recorded at their fair value and are subsequently measured at amortized cost, net of any provisions for impairment.

CONTROLLED ENTITIES

Controlled not-for-profit entities are not consolidated by the Society. Instead, summarized financial information is disclosed.

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash and cash equivalents include cash and term deposits with periods to initial maturity of less than 90 days.

SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS

Short-term investments consist of term deposits with initial maturity dates between 90 and 365 days.

INVESTMENTS

Investments consist of term deposits with initial maturity dates in excess of 365 days.

CAPITAL ASSETS

Purchased tangible and intangible assets are recorded at acquisition cost. Contributed tangible and intangible capital costs are recorded at fair value at the date of the contribution. Amortization is determined using the following annual rates and methods over the estimated useful lives of the assets:

Tangible assets

Furniture	10% declining balance
Equipment	20% declining balance
Computer hardware	Straight-line over 4 years
Leasehold improvements	Straight-line over term of lease

Intangible assets

Computer software	Straight-line over 5 years
-------------------	----------------------------

DEFERRED LEASE INDUCEMENTS

Deferred lease inducements represent leasehold improvement allowances paid or payable by landlords. Such inducements are amortized on a straight-line basis over the remaining term of the lease and recorded as a reduction of rent expense.

CONTRIBUTED MATERIALS AND SERVICES

Contributed materials and services are not recognized in the financial statements.

3. CASH, CASH EQUIVALENTS, AND RESTRICTED CASH

For the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018, the Society is required to defer \$1,000 of its funding and hold this amount as restricted cash. Use of the \$1,000 requires approval from the Province of Alberta [note 7].

	2017/18	2016/17
Cash and cash equivalents	—	238
Restricted cash	1,000	—
	1,000	238

4. CAPITAL ASSETS

	2017/18		2016/17	
	Cost	Accumulated amortization	Cost	Accumulated amortization
TANGIBLE ASSETS				
Furniture	930	638	941	613
Equipment	275	229	466	388
Computer hardware	2,528	1,576	2,051	1,223
Leasehold improvements	6,934	4,934	6,955	4,606
	10,667	7,377	10,413	6,830
INTANGIBLE ASSETS				
Computer software	9,340	4,691	9,081	3,360
	20,007	12,068	19,494	10,190
Net book value	7,939		9,304	

Leasehold improvements with a cost of nil (2017: \$333), computer software with a cost of nil (2017: \$1,148), and computer hardware with a cost of nil (2017: \$31) were not available for use at the year-end and amortization has not yet commenced.

5. BANK INDEBTEDNESS

The Society has an overdraft facility (the facility) with Alberta Treasury Branches for a maximum amount of \$2,500, bearing interest at 19.25% per annum. The facility is available from March 26 to April 6, 2018, and is unsecured.

	2017/18	2016/17
Bank overdraft	416	—
Cheques issued in excess of funds on deposit	778	—
	1,194	—

6. PROVISION FOR UNBILLED SERVICES PROVIDED ON OUTSTANDING CERTIFICATES

The provision for services provided by members of the private bar¹² that have not been billed on outstanding certificates is estimated at year-end using a method that incorporates historical median costs and time frames to complete similar cases. As at March 31, 2018, the Society had approximately 18,686 (2017: 25,100) outstanding certificates issued to the private bar with an estimated liability of \$7,940 (2017: \$7,650).

The estimated liability is subject to measurement uncertainty. Measurement uncertainty exists when there is a variance between the recognized amount and another reasonably possible amount. Due to the uncertainty involved in the estimation process, there will likely be a difference between the estimated and actual liability and the difference may be material.

In addition to the liability for unbilled services provided to March 31, 2018 on outstanding private bar certificates, the Society estimates the

future costs to complete private bar and Society lawyer certificate files. As at March 31, 2018, there is an estimated \$28,700 (2017: \$29,875) that will be incurred on approximately 22,240 (2017: 30,300) outstanding certificates issued to the private bar and the Society's lawyers over and above both the billings paid to date and work performed but not yet billed. Due to the uncertainty in the estimation process, there will likely be a difference between the estimated and actual costs to complete outstanding certificates and the difference may be material.

7. DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS

As part of the current *Governance Agreement*, effective as at April 1, 2016, the Province of Alberta requires that at least \$2,500 of its funding be deferred and held as restricted cash for non-forecasted or unbudgeted costs, with use below the \$2,500 minimum amount requiring advance approval and subsequent replenishment. Additional restrictions on annual surpluses and funding received from the Alberta Law Foundation would also be required if certain conditions were met in a fiscal year.

7. DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS CONTINUED

On February 28, 2017, the Society received approval from the Province of Alberta to utilize the cash balance of \$2,500 for operations. Accordingly, the \$2,500 balance was removed from deferred contributions and recognized as Province of Alberta revenue for the year ended March 31, 2017.

The sections of the *Governance Agreement* pertaining to the replenishment of the \$2,500 funding deferral were amended for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018. The Society is required to defer \$1,000 of its funding and hold this amount as restricted cash. Use of the \$1,000 requires approval from the Province of Alberta.

8. DEFERRED CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS

	2017/18			2016/17
	Deferred capital contributions	Expended capital contributions	Total	Total
Balance, beginning of the year	336	84	420	—
Amounts received during the year	—	—	—	420
Amounts used to purchase capital assets	(336)	(84)	(420)	—
Amounts recognized as revenue during the year	—	—	—	—
Balance, end of the year	—	—	—	420

9. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

COMMITMENTS

The Society is committed under operating leases for office premises to make annual payments in the following amounts for the next five years and thereafter:

	\$
2019	2,546
2020	2,361
2021	2,368
2022	2,377
2023	2,057
Thereafter	1,582
	13,291

9. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES CONTINUED

CONTINGENCIES

During the ordinary course of business activities, the Society may be contingently liable for litigation and claims from clients, suppliers, and former employees. Management believes that adequate provisions have been made in the accounts where required. Although it is not possible to estimate

the extent of potential costs and losses, if any, management believes that the ultimate resolution of such contingencies will not have a material adverse effect on the financial position or results of operations of the Society.

10. OTHER PROGRAM EXPENSES

Other program expenses reflected in the statement of revenue and expenses, classified by object, are as follows:

	2017/18	2016/17
Salaries and benefits	27,875	26,000
Occupancy	2,209	2,369
Amortization and loss on disposal of capital assets	2,127	1,961
Outside services	741	742
Technology and communications	584	813
Office and sundry	307	246
Legal disbursements and resources	241	206
Travel	228	205
Goods and Services Tax not refundable	189	280
Other	61	70
	34,562	32,892

Rent expense has been allocated to other program expenses as follows:

	2017/18	2016/17
Client services	1,821	1,971
Management and administration	388	398
	2,209	2,369

11. RELATED PARTIES

Certain members of the board of directors provide certificate services to the Society. These legal services are provided in the regular course of business under the same tariff of fees as other lawyers. During the year, directors provided certificate services of \$536 (2017: \$526) to the Society and their respective firms provided additional certificate services of \$1,109 (2017: \$630).

12. LEGAL AID FOUNDATION OF ALBERTA

Legal Aid Foundation of Alberta (the Foundation) was incorporated on February 7, 2013 under the *Business Corporations Act* of Alberta. The Society controls the Foundation, the purpose of which is to raise philanthropic and sponsorship funds. The Society appoints the majority of the Foundation's board of directors and, according to Foundation bylaws, all resources of the Foundation must be provided to the Society or used for the Society's benefit. The Foundation is a registered charity and, under the provisions of the *Income Tax Act* (Canada), is exempt from income taxes.

Prior to March 31, 2016, the Foundation had no fundraising or business transactions, and as at March 31, 2016, the Foundation had no assets. During the year ended March 31, 2018, the Foundation received a donation for \$1 (2017: \$1), and as at March 31, 2018, had assets of \$2 (2017: \$1).

13. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

CREDIT RISK

The Society's exposure to credit risk, represented by the carrying amount of accounts receivable, results from the risk that one party to the financial instrument may cause a financial loss for the other party by failing to discharge an obligation. The Society monitors outstanding balances regularly and allows for uncollectible amounts when determined.

INTEREST RATE RISK

The Society is subject to interest rate risk with respect to its investments because the fair value will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. The risk is low given the high liquid nature of the instruments and their relatively short terms to maturity.

LIQUIDITY RISK

The Society is exposed to the risk that it will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with its financial liabilities.

14. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain comparative figures have been reclassified to conform to the presentation adopted for the current year.

REUNITING FAMILIES

Lawyers with Legal Aid Alberta helped facilitate the reunion of children with family members at initial custody hearings in three separate cases.

Legal Aid Alberta was able to assist a mother to get into appropriate programming to address her anger management issues and access supports in the community. The lawyer successfully argued the hearing and demonstrated the mother as a competent and loving caregiver, and got the client's children returned to her care.

On another child welfare file, our lawyer was able to convince the court and the director to place a child in the care of the father who was our client, despite Child Services not being initially prepared to explore residence with the father as a viable home for the child. With the help of one of our justice navigators, the client developed a safety plan to protect the child, and the director, at the initial custody hearing, agreed it was in the child's best interest to place the child with the father under a supervision order.

And for the first time in a lawyer's career with Legal Aid Alberta, he was successful in getting a child returned at the initial custody stage. The consequence was that the director withdrew its substantive application with respect to the child. Our client was a man with two children and a wife with a drinking problem. The teenage boy was troubled, and was abusing his younger sister. The boy is in a group home now, his mother is living outside the home, and the lawyer argued that the safety concerns have been satisfactorily mitigated. The judge agreed although the department opposed the return.



ENDNOTES



ENDNOTES

- 1 Duty counsel assists those who are unrepresented at their court appearance. There is no financial eligibility requirement for assistance through duty counsel — it is free to all Albertans. For more information, see page 21.
- 2 Brydges Duty Counsel Service is a free, 24-hour telephone service offered to Albertans under arrest and in custody or under active investigation by law enforcement who need immediate advice on their charter rights and criminal law.
- 3 The Youth Criminal Defence, Criminal Resolution, and Family Law Offices are all departments housed within Legal Aid Alberta and our current office space.
- 4 Our telephone-based duty counsel service, Brydges, is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and these calls are included in the total calls presented and per day average calculation.
- 5 See endnote 2.
- 6 The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* categorizes youth as those aged 12 to 18 years of age.
- 7 Certificates are issued by Legal Aid Alberta to registered roster lawyers who are assigned to represent an eligible client.
- 8 “Roster lawyers” refers to a list of practising Alberta lawyers who have met the eligibility requirements to represent Legal Aid Alberta clients. These lawyers often have their own private practices and are located throughout the province.
- 9 In 2016/17, we enhanced our business intelligence systems and changed our calculation methodology; therefore, reported figures are not comparable to prior years.
- 10 The Youth Criminal Defence Office service is restricted to young persons who have been arrested under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.
- 11 Private bar expenses are in relation to roster lawyers referenced elsewhere in this annual report.
- 12 Members of the private bar are referred to as roster lawyers elsewhere in the Annual Report. Private bar or roster lawyers provide services on behalf of Legal Aid Alberta.

OUR CULTURE AND VALUES

Legal Aid Alberta's core values drive the beliefs and the behaviours of our organization. Our values are the foundation for our unique culture and personality, and provide the motivation to achieve our mission and vision — and deliver on our brand promise of a just Alberta — one person at a time.

INTEGRITY

- We behave in a manner that is honest, ethical, responsible, and lawful
- We are respectful in our interactions with each other, our clients, and our stakeholders
- We assume that others are worthy of our trust

TRANSPARENCY

- We are open and consultative in our decision-making
- We communicate our decisions in a timely and meaningful way
- We report on our activities by providing information that is relevant and accurate

ACCOUNTABILITY

- We are accountable to our clients, our stakeholders, and our staff
- We use our resources in the most effective and efficient manner possible
- We strive for continuous improvement
- We provide quality service that enables our clients to resolve their legal issues
- We take responsibility for our actions

FAIRNESS

- We are consistent in our processes and decision making
- We make decisions on the basis of facts and sound principles
- We embrace diversity and behave in a manner free of discrimination
- We treat people in an equitable way
- We create unity across the organization

RESPONSIVENESS

- We recognize and respond to the needs of our clients, staff, and stakeholders
- We make our services accessible
- We deliver in a timely fashion
- We collaborate with our community partners
- We look for innovative approaches to problem solving and service delivery



Legal Aid Alberta

A Just Alberta — one person at a time

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