



**Annual Report
2025-2026**



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Legal Aid Alberta respectfully acknowledges that we are located on the Traditional Territory of the Blackfoot, Cree, Dene, Nakota, and Saulteaux — lands that are now known as part of Treaties 6, 7 and 8 and homeland of the Métis. We are honoured to live, work and learn on these lands with all Indigenous Peoples as we move forward together in reconciliation.

Medicine Hat, Alberta



LEADERSHIP MESSAGES

Setting a foundation for the future

This past year marked a pivotal moment for Legal Aid Alberta (LAA), grounded in a renewed commitment to independence and to the stability of our organization and our mission to protect the legal rights of Albertans. At the centre of this work was the successful negotiation of a new five-year Governance Agreement with the Government of Alberta and the Law Society of Alberta — an achievement that will shape our organization and the broader justice system for years to come.

The new agreement, which extends to 2030, reflects a shared understanding of the essential role LAA has in the delivery of legal aid services and justice across the province. Most importantly, it reinforces our operational independence so that we can continue to ensure access to justice remains a right for all Albertans.

An independent legal aid system is fundamental to a fair and functioning justice system. The new agreement affirms this principle and provides a more modernized framework for governance, one that supports accountability while respecting the distinct roles of each partner. It also establishes a strong foundation for future improvements to the legal aid program, including ongoing discussions about sustainability, service delivery and evolving community needs. As Board Chair, I am pleased with the progress that's already been made and how ongoing dialogue will continue to shape the future of our organization and protect access to justice in the province.

Through this process, LAA has become a more resilient and adaptable organization, one that is better positioned to navigate change while maintaining our focus on what truly matters: our clients and to upholding the rule of law. As we look ahead, we do so with confidence.

Another marker of success for the Board itself is our membership. The Board of Directors welcomed three new highly qualified members who were appointed by the Law Society of Alberta: Roseanne Carey, Clint Warkentin and Tamar Epstein. We are also grateful to former Board chair Ryan Callioux, KC, and Board members Owen Edmondson and Hilary Rose, who completed their terms and made significant contributions to LAA.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of Alberta, our executive team, employees, roster lawyers, my fellow Board of Directors, and to all our partners in the justice system. Your dedication, professionalism and unwavering commitment to access to justice makes our work possible. Together, we are helping ensure that all Albertans, especially our most disadvantaged, can access high-quality legal support when they need it.

Brad Pickering, Chair
Legal Aid Alberta Board of Directors



Continuing our commitment to access to justice

A healthy democracy depends on a justice system that is accessible, fair and worthy of public trust, where the rule of law applies equally to all. At Legal Aid Alberta (LAA), access to justice is not an abstract principle. It's our mission. It's what we do on a daily basis for those who need it the most. It means protecting families from the threat of violence and helping young people navigate unstable and unsafe home environments. It means giving children a voice in high-conflict family law cases and standing beside individuals facing mental health or addictions issues.

Access to justice means supporting Indigenous clients through specialized courts grounded in restorative approaches, helping newcomers overcome language and systemic barriers and ensuring round-the-clock access to legal assistance when someone is detained by police.

Ultimately, access to justice is about human dignity. It ensures that no one is invisible in the justice system and that every person is given a voice

regardless of their circumstances. This work never stops, however, I am pleased to report that we made important strides during the past fiscal year guided by our strategic pillars of quality, access and accountability.

Most significantly, together with the Government of Alberta and the Law Society of Alberta, we created a strong foundation for the future with a new five-year Governance Agreement that continues to enshrine LAA as an essential, independent pillar of the justice system. This agreement was the product of months of respectful, collaborative, solution-focused dialogue and a shared understanding of how a sustainable, evidence-based and community-responsive legal aid system works.

All our progress would not have been possible without the commitment and compassion of LAA lawyers on the front lines and the dedication of our support teams, who go above and beyond to protect our clients' interests and ensure their voices are heard. Those efforts amounted to 164,335 legal

issues handled in 2025–2026, and 125,542 duty counsel assists that provided immediate, around-the-clock legal advice.

Our contact centre staff responded to more than 132,000 calls and online submissions for legal advice. Our justice of the peace duty counsel responded to over 27,000 Brydges calls from people in police custody, and conducted 33,000 bail hearings. We also assisted with more than 2,800 Emergency Protection Orders to keep Albertans safe from violence.

Beyond the numbers, we made important progress in our efforts to deliver high-quality legal representation through improvements to policy, quality assurance, compliance and education.

Our work to make legal services easier to access and navigate resulted in important modernizations to the digital tools we use to expand our reach and improve client choice and flexibility, helping them navigate what can feel like a complex, intimidating and overwhelming system.

We hold ourselves accountable through efficient operations that leverage data to improve decision-making and mitigate risk, while also collaborating with our justice system partners to better our understanding of cost drivers and service demands.

As we look ahead to 2026–2027 and to the continuation of our [Quality, Access and Accountability Strategic Plan](#), we do so with firm resolve in our mission and an understanding of what's at stake — not only for our justice system, but for the health, safety and resilience of our communities.



Gianpaolo (John) Panusa, KC

President and CEO, Legal Aid Alberta



Vision and Mission

Our vision:

An Alberta where everyone is able to understand and protect their legal rights.

Our mission:

We resolve legal problems for disadvantaged Albertans and, in doing so, protect the Rule of Law for the benefit of everyone.

Our values:

We Are One: We work together in a collaborative and supportive manner to deliver unwavering and innovative services to our clients as one unified organization.

We Are Protectors: We serve Albertans, often the most vulnerable of us, and work tirelessly to protect their rights and to ensure a fair process.

We Are Exceptional: We are experts at what we do and we continually strive for improvement.

We Are Independent: We operate and provide legal counsel free from outside involvement.





Who we are

At Legal Aid Alberta (LAA), *Quality, Access and Accountability* shape how we deliver legal services to Albertans.

The law is complex. The stakes are high. And without high-quality representation, the path forward can be daunting. For more than five decades, LAA has been a dedicated and essential service within Alberta's justice system, ensuring that in moments of uncertainty with the law, people are not navigating alone.

What distinguishes LAA is not only what we do, but also *how* we do it.

We operate at a scale unmatched by any other legal service provider in Alberta, yet our work is never one-size-fits-all. Every matter is treated for what it is: unique, complex and consequential. Each legal issue is carefully examined, deliberately shaped and strategically advanced — because meaningful representation demands precision and experience applied to the realities of each client's situation.

Our hybrid model is built for both scale and responsiveness. By combining in-house expertise with a province wide network of highly qualified private-practice lawyers, we deliver legal counsel and services to meet people where they are. This allows us to respond to changes in demand and navigate the increasing complexity of legal needs without compromising the quality or integrity of the services we provide.

As a publicly funded, non-profit organization accountable to Albertans through the Ministry of Justice and the Law Society of Alberta, we are a critical part of the province's justice system. Our work reduces barriers, improves system navigation and contributes to more timely and equitable outcomes for both clients and the justice system.

As we look ahead, we will continue to focus on where it matters most: strengthening access to justice, modernizing how our services are delivered and deepening collaboration across the justice and social sectors. Because access to justice is not optional — and neither are we.



What we do

People enter the justice system differently — an arrest, a court appearance or an immediate need for protection. Legal Aid Alberta (LAA) is there to provide legal counsel and services to help people access, understand and navigate the justice system.

LAA provides legal services and support to Albertans navigating criminal, family, child welfare, immigration and other urgent legal matters.

We help people:

- In police custody through immediate legal advice (Brydges services)
- In courtrooms through duty counsel assisting with first appearances, justice of the peace bail hearings and urgent matters
- Through our contact centre, where clients begin applications and get immediate assistance

We know not every legal issue requires the same response. At LAA, we help to assess, direct and connect people to the help they need. Through our intake and eligibility processes, we can determine the best path of service, support and legal counsel.

A provincewide network

LAA delivers representation through a hybrid model:

- Corporate, professional and support staff
- Staff lawyers, providing direct, in-house legal services
- Roster lawyers, +1200 private-practise lawyers who take on legal matters and represent clients across Alberta

This model is not just operational, it's strategic. It allows us to:

- Scale services across urban, rural and remote communities
- Connect clients with lawyers who have the right expertise
- Maintain flexibility as demand shifts

Support across the justice process

LAA provides support at multiple stages of the justice process — ranging from immediate advice to ongoing legal representation.

These services reflect different points of entry and different levels of need, with LAA supporting clients at critical stages along the way.

Intake and application services

- Through our contact centre, individuals receive information, apply for legal aid and are directed to appropriate services.

Legal advice and immediate assistance

- Provided through duty counsel in courthouses, legal advice to individuals in custody whose freedom is at stake and other early intervention supports.

Full legal representation

- Delivered through our certificate program, where eligible clients are connected with staff or roster lawyers for ongoing, longer-term legal matters.

Targeted and time-sensitive services

- Including support for bail hearings, Emergency Protection Orders, and other urgent legal situations where timely access to a lawyer is critical.

What is Brydges?

Brydges provides immediate, free access to a Legal Aid Alberta lawyer by phone — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week — for people in custody, ensuring they understand their rights before speaking with police.

Who are duty counsel?

Duty counsel are legal aid lawyers who give immediate legal assistance to individuals unrepresented in court or police custody. They give free, on-the-spot legal advice in family, criminal and immigration cases to ensure individuals understand their rights, the charges or issues they face, and the next steps in the legal process.

Who we serve

LAA provides affordable legal counsel, services and support to disadvantaged Albertans across the province, from rural and remote regions to urban centres. Our clients are often navigating complex legal issues with significant personal impact.

We support clients at different stages of the legal process, from early advice to ongoing representation, depending on their circumstances and legal needs.

LAA supports the justice system and makes a meaningful difference in our clients' lives by helping:

- Low-income clients who cannot afford private legal representation
- Adults and youth involved in the criminal justice system
- Families dealing with separation, parenting disputes or child intervention
- Newcomers and refugees navigating immigration processes
- Individuals experiencing family violence or other urgent legal issues

- Individuals who will benefit from specialized justice programs that support better outcomes through a holistic approach to addressing root issues, such as Indigenous Court, Mental Health Court and Drug Treatment Court.

Many LAA clients experience complex and intersecting life circumstances that can affect their ability to access and navigate the justice system. Legal challenges are often shaped by broader life circumstances, such as housing instability, family breakdown, mental health or addiction issues, the effects of trauma or violence and systemic barriers.

Our leadership

Board of Directors

Brad Pickering | Chair

David Linder, KC, ICD.D | Vice Chair

Amber-Dawn Boudreau | Board Member

Catherine Braeuer, CPA, CA | Board Member

Jim Campbell, MBA | Board Member

Roseanne Carey, CPA, CA, ICD.D | Board Member

Tamar Epstein, LLB | Board Member

Randy Mitchell, JD | Board Member

Daniela O'Callaghan, JD, CIC | Board Member

Sonya von Heyking, CPA, CA, ICD.D, CIA | Board Member

Clint Warkentin, CPA, CFA, ICD.D | Board Member

Executive Team

Gianpaolo (John) Panusa, KC | President and Chief Executive Officer

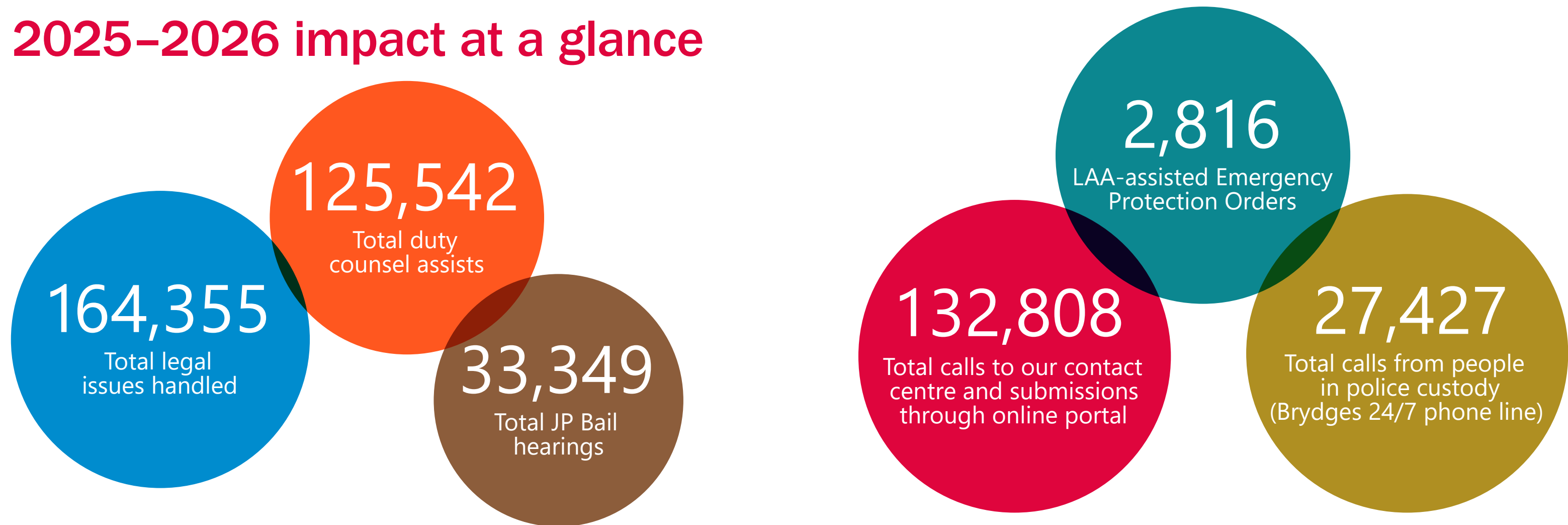
Lori Haughian | Vice President, Justice Services

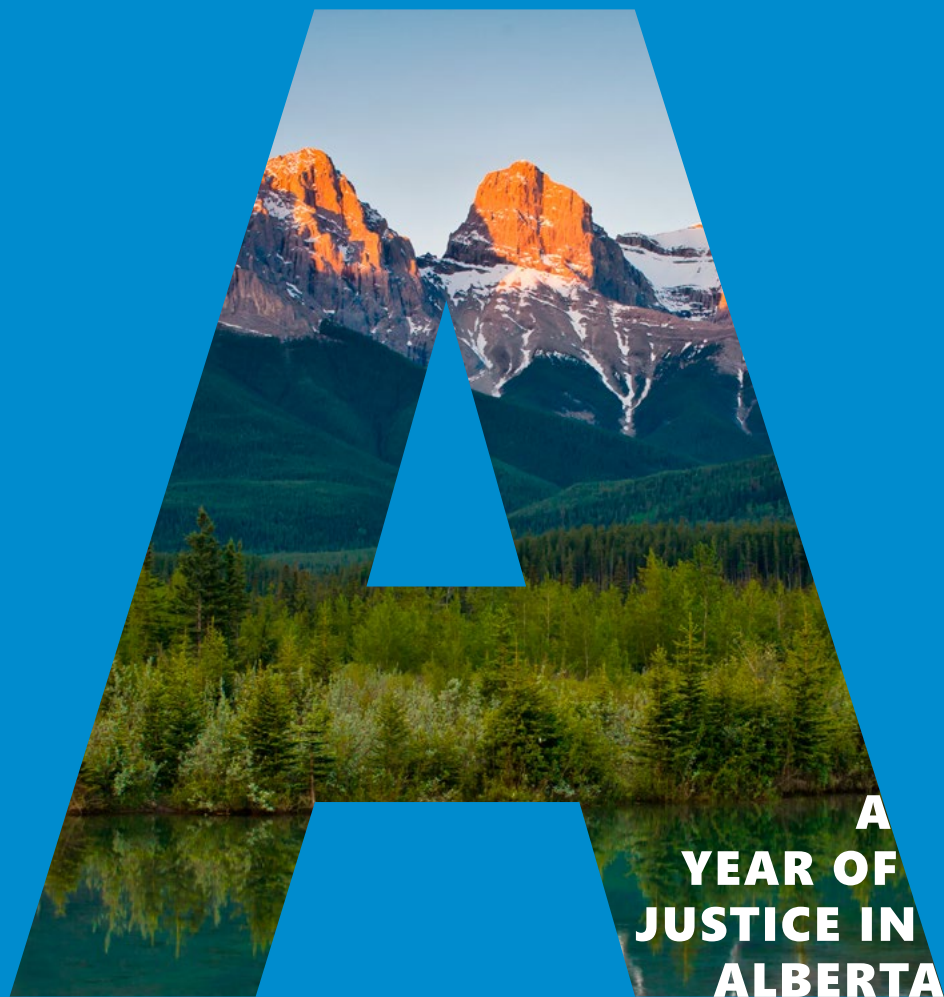
Laurie Wang | Vice President, People, Corporate Strategy and Engagement

Gregory Lazin | General Counsel



2025–2026 impact at a glance





The 2025–26 fiscal year saw both economic and population growth, alongside societal challenges that impacted our province and Legal Aid Alberta (LAA). Even as inflation moderated compared to recent years, costs for essentials such as food, housing and energy continued to climb. This stretched household budgets and particularly affected lower-income families and those already struggling with poverty.

Alberta's success as a province and economic engine in Canada saw the province exceed five million people in 2025. This milestone was surpassed even as overall population growth slowed to 2.5%, due in part to federal government changes to immigration levels. Alberta still outpaced the country in overall growth — the national population increased by 0.9% — and our province also led in interprovincial migration. This resulted in 120,316 new residents.

Alberta's population growth and the external forces that affect cost of living influence poverty and crime rates and the number of cases in the justice system. This affects LAA through the volume of legal issues we handle and certificates issued (multiple legal issues can be captured in a single certificate).

Last year, LAA contact centre staff responded to 132,808 phone calls and messages to our phone lines and online portal, offering guidance and support to clients at some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives. This resulted in the organization handling 164,335 legal issues in criminal, family, child welfare and immigration law, and Emergency Protection Orders. In human terms, this means we protected access to justice and the legal rights of our most disadvantaged. Two-thirds of LAA clients earn less than \$10,000 a year, and 40% have no income.

One of the major developments impacting LAA and our mission was the signing of a new Governance Agreement with the Government of Alberta and the Law Society of Alberta.

This five-year agreement secured stable funding for LAA through 2030 and, importantly, reaffirmed our independence as an essential non-profit organization that protects access to justice. Our structure as a legal aid organization, with independent oversight, offers the best balance of flexibility, accountability and responsiveness.

While the signing of the governance agreement laid a healthy foundation for LAA and the future, we continued to advance our commitment to our core pillars of quality, access and accountability. This included investments in ongoing education to support staff and roster lawyers across key areas, including mental health and bail advocacy and culturally responsive practice. Modernizing administrative policies, billing procedures and compliance oversight strengthened accountability. Ongoing expansion and modernization of Client Gateway improved access to our services.

As noted in previous years, the overrepresentation of Indigenous People in the justice system remains a challenge across Alberta and Canada. Statistics Canada's Over-Representation Index, which represents the difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous incarceration rates, was 10.8 in Alberta — the second highest in Canada. LAA has an important role in addressing these issues through our work in Indigenous courts, which focus on restorative justice and healing. In 2025–26, we introduced our Indigenous Action Plan and Indigenous Framework and made progress on building culturally responsive, respectful and accessible legal services for Indigenous clients and communities.

Looking to the future and Alberta's economic outlook, the shifting global economic landscape will continue to pose challenges for the province as GDP and population growth slow. With a new three-year strategic plan that maintains our focus on quality, access and accountability, LAA will continue to defend access to justice and fight for the legal rights of Albertans.



**RESULTS
AND
ACHIEVEMENTS**

The 2025–2026 fiscal year marked a period of consolidation and forward momentum for Legal Aid Alberta. We continued to advance the 2023–2026 Strategic Plan by strengthening the quality of legal representation, improving access to services across the province and reinforcing accountability through modernized systems, governance and workplace practices.

Strategic priority 1: Quality

Quality focuses on delivering strong, consistent legal representation by supporting highly qualified, independent counsel and staff through clear standards, ongoing education and rigorous quality assurance and accountability.

What we set out to do

Strengthen the quality and consistency of legal representation through clear policies, robust quality assurance, enhanced accountability and targeted education.

What we achieved

- Completed a comprehensive review of administrative policies and pivoted from incremental updates to a wholesale modernization approach, establishing a new framework to resolve inconsistencies and improve clarity for internal and external stakeholders.
- Strengthened billing and compliance oversight through the development of a formal compliance process map, standardized investigation practices and expanded invoice review.
- Designed and delivered a comprehensive professional development program for Justice Services, including mental health and well-being education for front-line staff, in-person legal education sessions for lawyers and Judicial Navigators and leadership development initiatives to strengthen management capacity and cross-departmental understanding.
- Strengthened duty counsel quality, specialization and continuity by introducing a formal quality-assurance program with structured in-court observations and transparent roster processes; transitioning specialized representations, such as mental health review panels, in-house to improve service integration; advancing triage and therapeutic court models to support early resolution; and completing staffing and operational reviews to ensure sustainable duty counsel coverage aligned with future service needs.
- Developed and delivered a multi-stream education plan for staff and roster lawyers to address sector-wide gaps, including specialized education related to Emergency Protection Orders, bail advocacy, immigration, mental health and culturally responsive legal practice.
- Introduced standards and experience requirements for lawyers representing people accused of sexual offence charges, which are among the most complex and sensitive areas of criminal law and require strong legal and evidentiary expertise.



Strategic priority 2: Access

Strategic priority 3: Accountability

Access focuses on making legal aid services easier to reach, navigate and use by modernizing intake processes, expanding digital service channels, improving service delivery in rural and Indigenous communities and supporting client choice.

What we set out to do

Make legal aid services easier to access and navigate through modernized intake and digital tools, expanded service reach and improved client choice and flexibility.

What we achieved

- Expanded and modernized Client Gateway, extending functionality across criminal, family, child welfare and immigration services.
- Re-engineered intake and interactive voice response processes to reduce wait times and incoming call volumes while maintaining timely access for priority matters.
- Strengthened culturally responsive service delivery by continuing to implement the Indigenous Engagement Framework, developed education and services shaped by and with the communities we serve.

- Expanded access to information and services for both clients and counsel through improved digital content, enhanced portals and agency onboarding initiatives that support smoother navigation across the justice system.

What is Client Gateway?

Client Gateway is a secure online portal that enables LAA lawyers to help existing clients apply for legal aid coverage directly online without having to call.

Accountability focuses on operating with integrity, efficiency and transparency by strengthening decision-making, governance, workforce engagement, risk management and technology platforms.

What we set out to do

Operate efficiently and responsibly by strengthening data-driven decision-making, enhancing workplace culture, modernizing technology and maintaining strong governance and risk management practices.

What we achieved

- Collaborated with justice system partners to improve understanding of cost drivers and service demands, supported by new dashboards, operational reports and enhanced data structures that inform executive and system-level decision-making.
- Advanced technology modernization initiatives, including automation of Client Gateway data flows, assessment and planning for the next phase of the Lawyer Portal and developing requirements for a modern contact centre platform.

- Strengthened organizational risk management by updating the risk framework to incorporate environmental and external factors, which supports adaptive and forward-looking risk mitigation.

Culturally responsive education

In September 2025, Legal Aid Alberta (LAA) launched our first [Indigenous Action Plan \(IAP\)](#) and [Indigenous Engagement Framework \(IEF\)](#), key steps toward building culturally responsive, respectful and accessible legal services for Indigenous clients and communities.

Implementation has advanced through a practical, adaptive approach grounded in relationship-based engagement, culturally responsive service and organization-wide readiness to support reconciliation. Actions have been informed by community input, staff experience and ongoing learning.

Progress in key areas included:

- Adoption of the IEF as the foundation for engagement with Indigenous clients and communities.
- Delivered 21 Indigenous cultural education workshops (16 in-person and five virtual), reaching more than 260 employees to build a shared organizational understanding of Indigenous histories, colonial impacts and responsibility within the justice system.
- Integration of workshop feedback to inform ongoing improvements to education, service design and future phases of the IAP.
- Implemented a community-informed service and education model grounded in local agency partnerships, court practices and community needs.
- Developed Indigenous-specific content across internal and public-facing platforms to improve access to information for clients, staff and stakeholders.

The Indigenous cultural education workshop was developed to build a shared understanding among staff of the historical and systemic factors contributing to the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in the justice system, and to support the application and integration of this knowledge in our day-to-day work.

The sessions provide historical context on the impacts of colonization and the lasting effects of policies such as the Indian Act, the Pass System, residential schools and the Sixties Scoop, emphasizing the connection between these histories and present-day outcomes. They also highlight the role of the justice system in perpetuating systemic inequities.

The workshop also introduces the IEF as a practical, values-based approach to engagement and service delivery. Staff are led through guiding principles, which include relationship-building and collaboration, flexibility and adaptability, dependable service delivery, continuous self-improvement, culturally competent service and accountability and transparency. Through discussion and reflection, staff are encouraged to consider organizational responsibilities and individual actions that support reconciliation.

The workshop reinforces that reconciliation is an ongoing practice rooted in relationships, humility, accountability and supports LAA's organizational efforts to provide equitable, respectful and effective legal services to Indigenous clients and communities.





Community connections

Addressing overrepresentation, particularly of Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized communities, remains a central focus of our work.

Community-based initiatives, including work in areas such as Alexander First Nation and Mîni Thnî, continue to inform the delivery of services, ensuring they reflect community priorities, culture, local systems and access needs. Through 37 touchpoints with Indigenous communities and community-led initiatives, LAA continued to build relationships, listen to community priorities and strengthen service delivery in ways that are more responsive to local context and need.

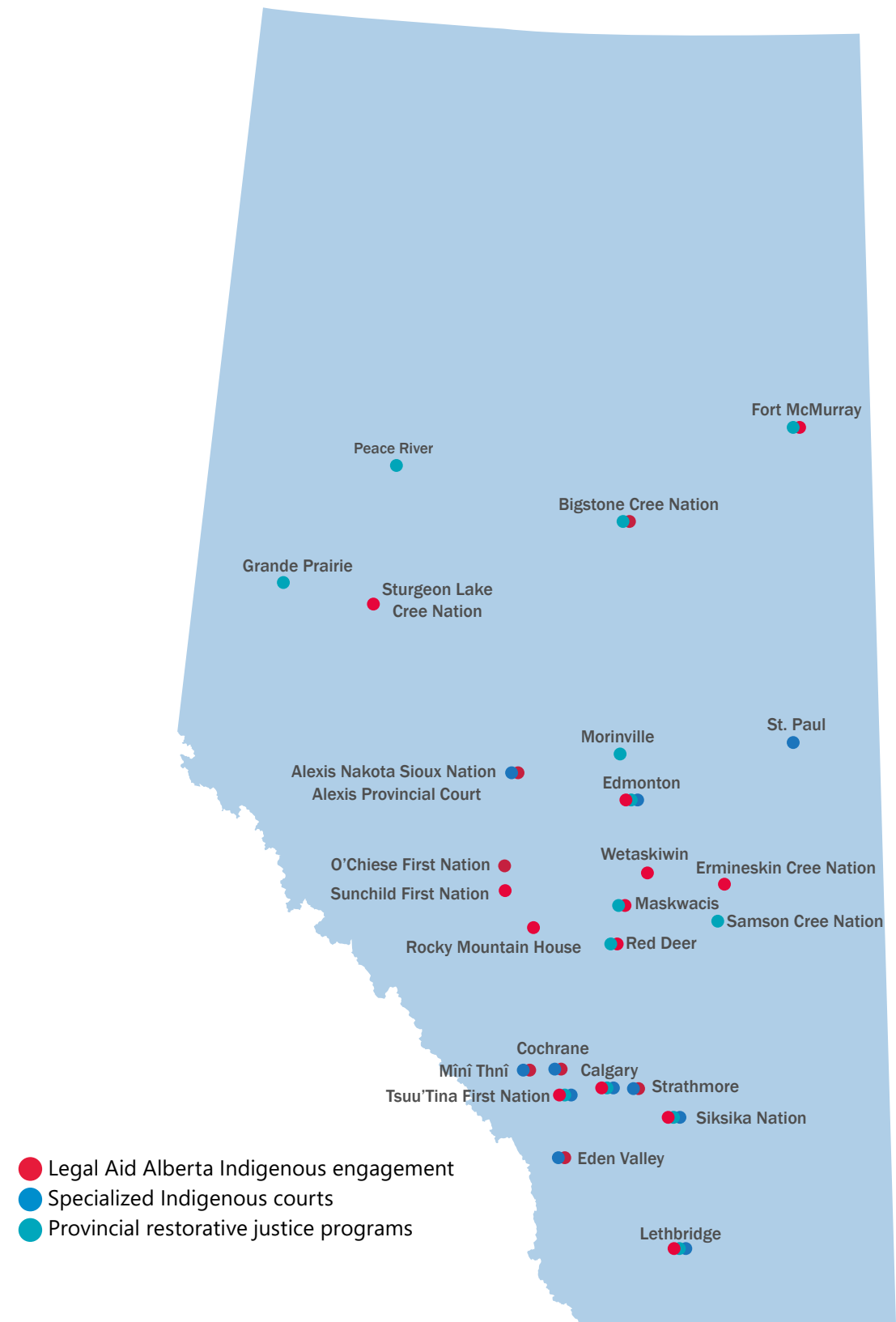
Through ongoing engagement, LAA is adapting how services are delivered in practice to strengthen relationships, improve access and better respond to the specific needs of the communities it serves.

Indigenous specialized court services

Legal Aid Alberta provides supports to Indigenous clients in the following locations:

- Edmonton Indigenous Court
- Calgary Indigenous Court
- Alexander First Nation
- Siksika Nation Court
- Tsuu'Tina First Nation Peacemaking Court
- St. Paul Healing to Wellness Court
- Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation Restorative Court
- Mîni Thnî (former Morley)
- Diamond Valley Court of Justice
- Lethbridge Indigenous Court
- Bigstone Cree Nation

Indigenous outreach and connections





COMMUNITY IMPACT AND ENGAGEMENT

Legal Aid Alberta's (LAA) work is grounded in the communities we serve and shaped by the realities people face within the justice system.

Across Alberta, many individuals experience barriers that contribute to overrepresentation in the justice system, including poverty, systemic inequities and the lasting impacts of colonization. In response, LAA continues to focus on approaches that strengthen access to legal support, build relationships with the communities we serve and improve service delivery.

Education, outreach and public engagement are key parts of this work, not only for our staff and roster lawyers, but also for the communities we serve. They strengthen knowledge and awareness among staff, roster lawyers, justice partners and the public, helping to support more consistent, informed and responsive legal services across the province.

Together, community engagement, education and legal services form an integrated approach that focuses on meeting people where they are and responding to their needs and those of communities in meaningful ways.

Education and development

In 2025–2026, LAA advanced our education initiatives for staff, roster lawyers and external audiences to strengthen the quality, consistency and cultural responsiveness of legal services.

Educational development was delivered across core practice areas, including criminal, family, child welfare, bail, mental health, immigration and advocacy. Specialized learning streams, such as a five-part bail education series, a mental health and criminal law series, and a two-part deep dive into Emergency Protection Orders, supported ongoing learning across complex and high-risk matters.

In October 2025, LAA hosted a two-day development workshop for staff lawyers, focused on strengthening understanding of LAA's processes, the client journey and internal cross-collaboration. By highlighting how cross-team workflows contribute to individual roles, the workshop supported more co-ordinated and effective service for Albertans. The session concluded with a discussion on the importance of mental health and self-care.

Through the Indigenous Action Plan and Indigenous Engagement Framework, LAA further aligned education with community-based service delivery. This included integrating cultural competency and ongoing learning opportunities alongside community initiatives.

Over the fiscal year, LAA delivered more than 20 educational sessions to staff, roster lawyers, students, justice partners and the public, reaching more than 3,042 registrants through professional development, outreach and public education.

Together, these efforts strengthened professional standards and supported more culturally responsive legal services across the province.



Public legal education and legal literacy

LAA also expanded public legal education to help Albertans better understand their rights and navigate legal processes.

In 2025–2026, LAA hosted three public education sessions with 780 registrants focused on criminal and immigration law and continued to share practical legal information through media outreach. Through initiatives such as Ask a Lawyer, LAA lawyers helped explain legal issues in clear, accessible language and increased public awareness of legal rights, court processes and available supports.

These efforts support access to justice by helping Albertans find reliable information earlier, better understand their options and connect more easily to legal services when they need them.

Duty Counsel Day

LAA continues to expand our presence through outreach, education and direct engagement. Duty Counsel Day is one example of this approach. Duty Counsel Day is a nationwide initiative, recognized by the Senate of Canada and the Supreme Court of Canada, that raises awareness and educates the public about the essential role that duty counsel lawyers play in protecting access to justice.

Duty counsel lawyers provide free legal advice and representation to individuals who appear in court without a lawyer. They assist people with criminal, family and immigration matters by helping them understand their rights and navigate the legal system.

- Information booths in Edmonton and Calgary courthouses connected with about 300 Albertans, providing real-time information about available legal services.
- Outreach extended beyond classrooms to libraries, universities and community organizations, broadening access.

- Public education and media engagement increased visibility and understanding of legal rights and available supports.

These efforts reflect a broader focus on meeting people outside formal legal settings, finding unique ways to share and learn, while improving access to information about legal services.

Duty counsel provide help over



1.4 million
times a year to Canadians
across the country

LAA named one of Alberta's Top 85 Employers

Legal Aid Alberta was named one of Alberta's Top 85 Employers for 2026, recognizing our commitment to building a strong, supportive workplace. This honour reflects a collaborative culture, meaningful investment in staff, and a focus on employee well-being and growth. A strong workplace helps LAA attract, retain and support people who deliver legal services across the province. In turn, that investment strengthens the organization's ability to serve Albertans with quality, consistency and care.



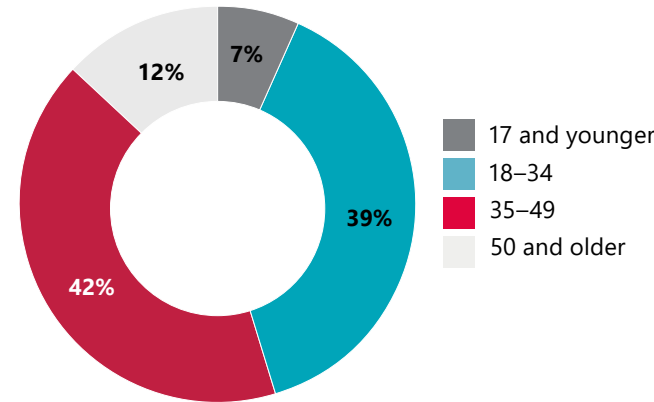
Behind every number is a person, family or community navigating complex legal challenges and seeking timely access to justice. Together, these figures reflect the breadth of Legal Aid Alberta’s (LAA) work and our ongoing role in supporting fair and accessible legal services across the province.

Historically, LAA has reported service volumes based on certificates issued (which means multiple legal issues may have been captured in a single certificate). In 2025–2026, LAA began transitioning to a reporting approach developed in partnership with the Government of Alberta that more accurately reflects the number of individuals accessing services and the legal matters being handled. This approach provides a clearer picture of the scope and complexity of legal support delivered across the province, recognizing that individuals may seek assistance with multiple legal issues in various areas throughout the year.

Clients connecting with LAA for support

Each year, LAA’s contact centre handles hundreds of thousands of phone calls from Albertans seeking legal information and support. Clients also connect with LAA lawyers through Gateway, our online portal. These interactions represent the first point of contact for many people navigating urgent and often complex legal situations.

Representing clients of all ages

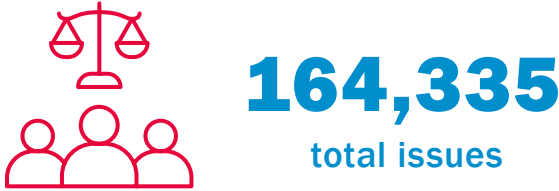


Client income levels



Legal issues handled

LAA provides support to all eligible Albertans across the province. This number reflects the total of legal issues handled by LAA during the fiscal year across criminal, family and immigration law. Volumes fluctuate year-to-year based on changing legal needs, economic conditions and demand for legal assistance across the province.





Legal issue by area of law



Legal issue by location

Location	Criminal	Family	Immigration
Calgary	48,977	2,660	496
Edmonton	54,733	2,971	549
Fort McMurray	3,227	87	0
Grande Prairie	4,851	169	1
Lethbridge	9,075	432	2
Medicine Hat	3,714	226	0
Peace River	5,850	165	0
Red Deer	7,552	530	1
St. Paul	8,631	383	0
Wetaskiwin	5,849	340	0
Whitecourt	2,711	153	0
Total	155,170	8,116	1,049

Adult and Youth Criminal Law

Access to justice is a fundamental part of a fair and equitable justice system. A significant portion of LAA's work involves adult and youth criminal matters, where staff and roster lawyers provide legal representation and support to individuals facing serious consequences, including imprisonment, loss of income or removal from Canada.

LAA lawyers support clients across adult and youth criminal law matters, including administrative, summary, indictable and major criminal matters.

- Administrative matters involve offences related to court orders, probation, breaches or regulatory processes.
- Summary matters generally involve less serious offences that are resolved in the Alberta Court of Justice.
- Indictable matters involve more serious criminal charges, which may proceed in the Alberta Court of Justice or the Court of King's Bench.

- Major criminal matters involve the most serious and complex offences, often carrying significant legal consequences and requiring extensive legal representation.

The Youth Criminal Justice Act recognizes the right of young people charged with criminal offences to legal representation. LAA also recognizes that youth involved in the justice system may be experiencing broader social, family or personal challenges. In addition to legal support, youth clients are connected with community resources and services intended to support their well-being and improve longer-term outcomes.





Family Law, Civil, Child Welfare and Emergency Protection Orders

LAA supports Albertans navigating family law, child welfare and other matters involving vulnerable people by providing legal advice, guidance and representation throughout the legal process. Services include assistance with child welfare matters, parenting and support issues, representation for children, Emergency Protection Orders (EPO), and select civil matters involving vulnerable or disadvantaged individuals.

Family violence continues to affect people and families across Alberta, creating urgent safety and legal needs. LAA's EPO program provides immediate legal support to individuals seeking protection from violence. The program also connects individuals with community supports and legal representation during proceedings.

LAA also assists individuals involved in guardianship or trusteeship proceedings under Alberta's adult guardianship legislation. When a person's ability to make personal or financial decisions is being considered before the courts, LAA may provide legal representation to help ensure the process is fair and equitable.



1,468
Child welfare issues



5,519
Family law issues



862
Independent
Counsel for Child



2,816
Emergency
Protection Orders

Immigration and Refugee Law

Supporting immigrants and refugees is an important part of LAA's commitment to serving vulnerable Albertans. Many people come to Alberta seeking safety, stability, opportunity or reunification with family, and may face complex legal challenges as they navigate Canada's immigration and refugee systems.

To help ensure these legal processes are fair and accessible, LAA assists eligible newcomers and non-citizens residing in Alberta with matters such as refugee claims, judicial reviews, detention reviews and appeals. This work helps people and families navigate critical legal proceedings that can have significant and lasting impacts on their lives.



1,049
immigration
issues handled

Justice of the peace bail hearings

The justice system is founded on the principle that individuals are presumed innocent until proven guilty, yet those arrested and held in custody often face immediate legal and procedural disadvantages. LAA's justice of the peace (JP) bail duty counsel are available from 8 a.m. to midnight, 365 days a year, to provide legal advice and representation by telephone and online platforms during bail hearings. This service is free for clients.

Working closely with the courts and the Ministry of Justice, JP bail duty counsel helps ensure timely access to legal support from a person's first point of contact with the justice system. JP bail lawyers also assist individuals detained by police through LAA's 24/7 Brydges phone line.



33,355
JP bail hearings



Duty counsel

Thousands of Albertans attend court each year, often without legal representation or a clear understanding of the court process. Access to legal counsel is a fundamental right protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and Legal Aid Alberta's duty counsel help ensure individuals can access timely legal advice and support when they need it most.

Duty counsel provide free, immediate, on-the-spot legal assistance to individuals who would otherwise navigate the court process alone — often at moments of significant vulnerability and urgency. In courtrooms across Alberta, duty counsel help unrepresented individuals understand their rights, make informed decisions and meaningfully participate in proceedings that can have life-altering consequences. They facilitate efficient court operations by resolving matters early, where appropriate, reducing delays and supporting judicial economy. Duty counsel also have a vital role in upholding the integrity of the justice system. They help bridge systemic gaps by supporting individuals experiencing barriers such as poverty, mental health challenges or lack of access to legal resources. In doing so, they contribute directly to procedural fairness, the protection of Charter rights and public confidence in the administration of justice.

LAA assigns duty counsel in docket courts in all Alberta criminal courts (adult and youth). In addition to criminal courts, duty counsel can be found at:

- Institutional hearings
- Applications for confirmation of Emergency Protection Orders
- Mental health review panels
- Specialized courts (Mental Health Court, Drug Treatment Court, Indigenous Court)
- Family court (Alberta Court of Justice and Court of King's Bench)



125,542

Clients assisted by duty counsel

Specialty courts

LAA supports individuals appearing before specialty and therapeutic courts and tribunals across the province. These forums address underlying factors such as mental health issues, substance use and family violence.

Indigenous courts focus on restorative justice and healing, addressing the impacts of intergenerational trauma and the

over-representation of Indigenous Peoples in the justice system. They emphasize collaboration and incorporate cultural practices such as elder participation and ceremony.

Drug treatment courts provide a structured, treatment-focused approach to break cycles of criminal behaviour related to substance use, combining judicial supervision, treatment and social supports.

Mental Health Court (Edmonton) uses a therapeutic model to support individuals with mental health challenges through treatment, supervision and access to services.

Family protection (domestic violence) addresses intimate partner violence, focusing on victim safety, early intervention and offender accountability, with integrated support from social service agencies.

Institutional hearings involve individuals facing disciplinary or administrative decisions within correctional facilities. Legal Aid Alberta supports clients by helping them understand the process, their rights, and the potential outcomes.

Duty counsel also assists individuals appearing before specialized boards and panels:

Alberta Review Board, which oversees cases

involving individuals found not criminally responsible or unfit to stand trial.

Mental health review panels, which make decisions on admission, discharge and treatment under the Mental Health Act.

Brydges calls

Brydges calls provide individuals who have been arrested or detained with immediate access to legal advice by telephone. Following the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in *R. v. Brydges*, police are required to inform individuals of their right to speak with counsel and to advise them of the availability of free legal advice through duty counsel.

In Alberta, LAA delivers this service through a 24/7 toll-free number that connects people in custody with duty counsel staff. This service is available regardless of a person's financial situation. This early access to legal advice helps individuals understand their rights and options at a critical stage and supports fair and informed participation in the justice system.



27,427

Brydges calls



Financial statements of

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Year ended March 31, 2026, with
comparative information for 2025

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

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Legal Aid Society of Alberta (the "Society"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2026, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Society as at March 31, 2026, 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.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Society in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. We obtained the Annual Report prior to the date of this auditor's report. If, based on the work we have performed on this other information, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the 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.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Society's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Society or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Society's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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 Society's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Society's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Society to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Statement of Financial Position

(dollar amounts in thousands)

March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

	2026	2025
Assets		
Current:		
Cash-operating and unrestricted	\$ 83,495	\$ 28,465
Cash-restricted-deferred revenue [Note 3, 5]	625	36,895
Cash-restricted-quarterly pre-grant funding operations reserve [Note 3, 8]	-	32,671
Cash-restricted-general funding reserve [Note 3, 8]	39,746	-
Cash-restricted-contingent reserve [Note 3, 7]	22,000	22,000
Accounts receivable	10	119
Goods and services input tax credits receivable	1,794	913
Prepaid expenses	278	264
	147,948	121,327
Capital assets, net [Note 4]	4,480	4,505
	\$ 152,428	\$ 125,832

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current:

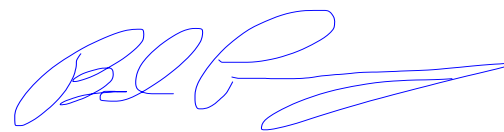
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 5,785	\$ 6,034
Accrued vacation pay	1,977	1,969
Deferred lease liability - current portion	340	340
Deferred revenue [Note 5]	625	36,895
Provision for unbilled services [Note 6]	18,192	17,702
	26,919	62,940
Deferred contributions [Note 7]	22,000	22,000
Deferred lease liability - long term	3,372	3,716
	52,291	88,656

Net Assets:


Unrestricted net assets	55,911	-
Internally funded capital assets	4,480	4,505
Internally restricted:		
Quarterly pre-grant funding operations reserve [Note 8]	-	32,671
General funding reserve [Note 8]	39,746	-
	100,137	37,176
	\$ 152,428	\$ 125,832

Commitments and contingencies [Note 11]

See accompanying notes to financial statements



Brad Pickering



Catherine Braeuer

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Edmonton, Alberta

June 24, 2026

MNP LLP
Chartered Professional Accountants

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Statement of Operations

(dollar amounts in thousands)

Year ended March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

	2026	2025
Revenue:		
Grant-Province of Alberta <i>[Note 5, 9]</i>	\$ 139,154	\$ 147,532
Grant-Alberta Law Foundation <i>[Note 10]</i>	66,747	25,496
Client recoveries	4,877	5,112
Interest and other	3,803	4,679
Total revenue	214,581	182,819
Expenses:		
Roster (outsourced legal representation):		
Criminal - adult	70,880	67,770
Criminal - youth	4,259	3,553
Child welfare	4,482	3,801
Immigration and refugee	2,508	2,589
Family and civil	12,934	10,968
Duty counsel	7,062	7,368
	102,125	96,049
Provision for unbilled services provided on outstanding certificates <i>[Note 6]</i>	490	3,745
	102,615	99,794
Internal operating expenses by area <i>[Note 13]</i> :		
Legal representation	33,417	31,986
Client services	8,911	9,231
Management, general, and administration	6,677	6,520
	49,005	47,737
Total expenses	151,620	147,531
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 62,961	\$ 35,288

See accompanying notes to financial statements

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Statement of Cash Flows

(dollar amounts in thousands)

Year ended March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

	2026	2025
Cash flows provided by (used in):		
Operating:		
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 62,961	\$ 35,288
Items not involving cash:		
Amortization of capital assets	639	639
Amortization of deferred lease liability	(344)	(492)
Provision for unbilled services	490	3,745
Changes in non-cash operating working capital:		
Accounts receivable	109	(109)
Goods and services input tax credits receivable	(881)	(45)
Prepaid expenses	(14)	(139)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(249)	1,241
Accrued vacation pay	8	(155)
Deferred revenue	(36,270)	(37,532)
	26,449	2,441
Financing:		
Contingent reserve <i>[Note 7, 10]</i>	-	13,500
	-	13,500
Investing:		
Purchase of capital assets	(614)	(69)
	(614)	(69)
Increase in cash and restricted cash	25,835	15,872
Cash and restricted cash, beginning of year	120,031	104,159
Cash and restricted cash, end of year	\$ 145,866	\$ 120,031
Represented by:		
Cash-operating and unrestricted	\$ 83,495	\$ 28,465
Cash-restricted-deferred revenue	625	36,895
Cash-restricted-quarterly pre-grant funding operations reserve	-	32,671
Cash-restricted-general funding reserve	39,746	-
Cash-restricted-contingent reserve	22,000	22,000
	\$ 145,866	\$ 120,031

See accompanying notes to financial statements

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Notes to financial statements
(dollar amounts in thousands)
Year ended March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

1. The organization

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta [the "Society"], registered as a society under the laws of the Province of Alberta, provides legal aid services by agreement between the Society, the Law Society of Alberta, and the Alberta Ministry of Justice to assist individuals of modest means in obtaining legal services for qualifying matters. LAA operates under a governance agreement effective July 16, 2025. Under the provisions of the *Income Tax Act (Canada)*, the Society is exempt from income tax.

2. Summary of 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; a statutory contribution from the Alberta Law Foundation, per the *Legal Profession Act*, of 50% of the interest it receives on lawyers' pooled trust accounts, and special contributions as agreed from time to time; 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.

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 occupancy, and information technology and business intelligence, which are allocated to functions by head count.

Financial instruments

Financial instruments, including accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities, accrued vacation pay, and the provision for unbilled services are initially recorded at their fair value and are subsequently measured at amortized cost, net of any provisions for impairment. Transaction costs related to financial instruments measured at fair value are expensed as incurred.

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Notes to financial statements
(dollar amounts in thousands)
Year ended March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

Cash and restricted cash

Cash and restricted cash include cash and restricted cash related to deferred revenue and contributions.

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 straight-line method at the following annual rates over the estimated useful lives of the assets as follows:

Tangible assets

Furniture and equipment	Over 7 years
Computer hardware	Over 4 years
Leasehold improvements	Over the lesser of the lease term and 10 years

Long-lived assets

Long-lived assets consist of capital assets. Long-lived assets held for use are measured and amortized as described in the applicable accounting policies.

The Society writes down long-lived assets held for use when conditions indicate that the asset no longer contributes to the Society's ability to provide goods and services or future economic benefits of the asset are less than its net carrying amount. When the Society determines that a long-lived asset is impaired, its carrying amount is written down to the asset's fair value.

Deferred lease liability

Deferred lease liability represents leasehold improvement allowances paid or payable by landlords and periods of free rent or graduated rent increases as inducements to enter into a long-term lease. This liability is amortized on a straight-line basis over the remaining term of the lease and recorded as a reduction of rent expense.

Cloud computing arrangements

The Society has adopted the simplification method for recording expenditures related to cloud computing arrangements. Under this method, expenditures are treated as a supply of services and recognized as an expense when the services are received.

3. Cash - restricted

The use of certain cash balances are restricted based on their intended use. See notes 5, 7, and 8.

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Notes to financial statements

(dollar amounts in thousands)

Year ended March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

4. Capital assets

Capital assets consist of the following:

	2026		2025	
	Cost	Accumulated amortization	Cost	Accumulated amortization
Tangible assets				
Furniture and equipment	\$ 406	\$ 342	\$ 405	\$ 294
Computer hardware	124	110	190	160
Leasehold improvements	6,176	1,774	5,893	1,530
	6,706	2,226	6,488	1,984
Net book value	\$ 4,480		\$ 4,505	

During the year, the Society removed the cost and accumulated amortization of fully amortized assets as follows: furniture and equipment \$nil [2025 – \$21], computer hardware \$66 [2025 – \$20], and leasehold improvements \$331 [2025 – \$nil]. Included in leasehold improvements is construction in progress of \$nil [2025 – \$69].

5. Deferred revenue

The Society has received funding for services to be delivered to clients, in excess of amounts required. As a result, \$625 [2025 – \$36,895] of the funding from the Province of Alberta has been deferred and a corresponding amount of cash has been classified as restricted cash – deferred revenue for this purpose. This will be recognized as the expenses are incurred.

	2026	2025
Deferred revenue, beginning of year	\$ 36,895	\$ 74,427
Grant – Province of Alberta – funding received	102,884	110,000
	139,779	184,427
Grant – Province of Alberta – revenue recognized	(139,154)	(147,532)
Deferred revenue, end of year	\$ 625	\$ 36,895

See also Note 9

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Notes to financial statements

(dollar amounts in thousands)

Year ended March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

6. Provision for unbilled services provided on outstanding certificates

The provision for services provided by roster lawyers that have not been billed on outstanding certificates is estimated at year-end using a method that incorporates historical average costs and time frames to complete similar cases. The increase for the year ended March 31, 2026, related to the change in provision for unbilled services provided on outstanding certificates, was \$490 [2025 – \$3,745]. As at March 31, 2026, the Society had approximately 29,860 [2025 – 27,930] outstanding certificates issued to roster lawyers with an estimated liability of \$18,192 [2025 – \$17,702].

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, 2026, on outstanding roster certificates, the Society estimates the future costs to complete roster and Society lawyer certificate files. As at March 31, 2026, there is an estimated \$35,086 [2025 – \$32,142] that will be incurred on approximately 31,116 [2025 – 29,154] outstanding certificates issued to roster 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

The current governance agreement requires that the Society defer and hold certain grant amounts received from the Alberta Law Foundation and the Province of Alberta, referred to as a contingent reserve, to a maximum amount agreed with the Province of Alberta (currently \$22.0 million), for non-forecasted or unbudgeted costs.

	2026		2025	
	Province of Alberta	Alberta Law Foundation	Total	Total
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 1,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 8,500
Additions during the year [Note 10]	—	—	—	13,500
Balance, end of year	\$ 1,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000

8. Internally restricted reserves

During the year, the Board of Directors approved rescinding the existing Quarterly Pre-Grant Funding Operations Reserve, and approved creation of a new General Funding Reserve for the purpose of mitigating fluctuations in the timing and amount of funding received from all sources. A corresponding amount of cash has been restricted.

9. Grant – Province of Alberta

Revenue from the Province of Alberta consists of the following:

	2026	2025
Grant – Province of Alberta – funds received	\$ 102,884	\$ 110,000
Prior years' deferred grant funds recognized	36,270	37,532
	\$ 139,154	\$ 147,532

See also Note 5.

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Notes to financial statements

(dollar amounts in thousands)

Year ended March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

10. Grant – Alberta Law Foundation

Funds received from the Alberta Law Foundation during the year were allocated as follows:

	2026	2025
Grant – Alberta Law Foundation – funds received	\$ 66,747	\$ 38,996
Amount reallocated to deferred contributions (contingent reserve) [Note 7]	—	(13,500)
Grant - Alberta Law Foundation – revenue recognized	\$ 66,747	\$ 25,496

See also Note 7.

11. Commitments and contingencies

[a] 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:

2027	\$ 1,866
2028	1,914
2029	1,933
2030	1,967
2031	1,927
Thereafter	4,738
	\$ 14,345

[b] 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.

12. Cloud computing arrangements

During the year, the Society expensed \$2,665 [2025 - \$3,235] related to implementation, licensing, maintenance, and enhancement of software used, and to be used, under cloud computing arrangements. These expenses are included under the classification of Computer in Note 13.

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Notes to financial statements

(dollar amounts in thousands)

Year ended March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

13. Internal operating expenses

Internal operating expenses reflected in the statement of operations, grouped by type, are as follows:

	2026	2025
Salaries and benefits	\$ 40,612	\$ 39,371
Legal disbursements	157	182
Office operating and supplies	972	980
Communication	229	210
Computer [Note 12]	3,580	3,663
Outside services	702	503
Travel	299	222
Occupancy	1,475	1,662
Goods and services tax - not refundable	340	305
Amortization of capital assets	639	639
	\$ 49,005	\$ 47,737

Occupancy expense has been allocated to service groups as follows:

	2026	2025
Legal representation	\$ 936	\$ 982
Client services	293	394
Management, general, and administration	246	286
	\$ 1,475	\$ 1,662

Internal operating expenses for the information technology and business intelligence services have been allocated to service groups as follows:

	2026	2025
Legal representation	\$ 4,605	\$ 5,066
Client services	1,964	2,325
Management, general, and administration	799	868
	\$ 7,368	\$ 8,259

14. 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 \$nil [2025 – \$nil] to the Society and their respective firms provided additional certificate services of \$79 [2025 – \$155].

15. Trust accounts

As part of its normal professional practice, the Society administers trust money on behalf of its clients, which is maintained in separate trust accounts and deposits. The Society has no beneficial interest in these trust accounts and deposits, except to the extent that fees for services rendered and disbursements on behalf of the client may be paid therefrom. These amounts are not recorded in the financial statements of the Society. The balances of trust accounts and deposits as at March 31, 2026 amounted to \$11 [2025 – \$61].

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta

Notes to financial statements

(dollar amounts in thousands)

Year ended March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

16. Financial instruments and risk management

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.

Liquidity risk

The Society is exposed to the risk that it will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with its financial liabilities. The Society is exposed to this risk mainly in respect of its accounts payable and accrued liabilities, accrued vacation pay, and provision for unbilled services provided on outstanding certificates.



Legal Aid Alberta