

# Legal Aid BC Presentation

Refugee Claimants Webinar

February 23, 2026

**Legal Aid BC**

Support when you need it



This gathering is taking place on the unceded traditional territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) nations.



# Legal Aid requirements for approval

Legal Aid BC provides services to individuals with low incomes who need legal help that have coverable issues and are financially eligible. To qualify, a person must have a legal problem covered by Legal Aid and meet the financial eligibility guidelines, which are based on net household income and assets.



# Who is covered by Legal Aid?

## Coverage

- Your legal problem must be covered by Legal Aid BC guidelines. This includes certain types of cases like criminal law, family law, child protection, and immigration.
- Not all legal problems are covered. For example, a first-time shoplifting offense or a driving while intoxicated offense would likely not be covered, according to Legal Aid BC coverage policies.

## Financial eligibility

- Legal Aid BC has increased the amount someone can earn to receive legal aid.
- The income guidelines for representation has increased by 3.9%. Legal Aid BC regularly applies an annual cost of living adjustment to the income guidelines.

# Financial Guidelines

Household size	Standard Criminal and Immigration cases	Standard Family Representation cases	CFCSA, Criminal Early Resolution, and Family Limited Representation cases
1	\$2,320	\$2,480	\$3,320
2	\$3,280	\$3,500	\$4,280
3	\$4,020	\$4,280	\$5,020
4	\$4,640	\$4,950	\$5,640
5	\$5,180	\$5,530	\$6,180
6	\$5,680	\$6,060	\$6,680
7 or more	\$6,130	\$6,550	\$7,130

\*As of April 1, 2025

Legal Aid BC



# Services LABC provide for refugees

Under the category of Refugee and Immigration, we provide support to asylum seekers and refugee claimants by offering them access to counsel/lawyers who will guide them through their legal processes.

To access these services, interested individuals must contact our intake workers either through our call center or in person at our downtown Vancouver office.

- Call Center: 604-601-6076 (Greater Vancouver) or 1-888-601-6076 (elsewhere in BC)
- In-Person: 510 Burrard Street, 4th Floor, Vancouver, British Columbia, V6C 3B9

Once an application is received, it is reviewed by an immigration lawyer to determine its merit. A financial assessment is also required. If the claim is deemed eligible and will likely be successful, we will assign a lawyer to the client. If not, we will provide information and resources to help them seek assistance elsewhere.



# Services LABC provide for refugees

**We fund applications to individuals living in BC for the following:**

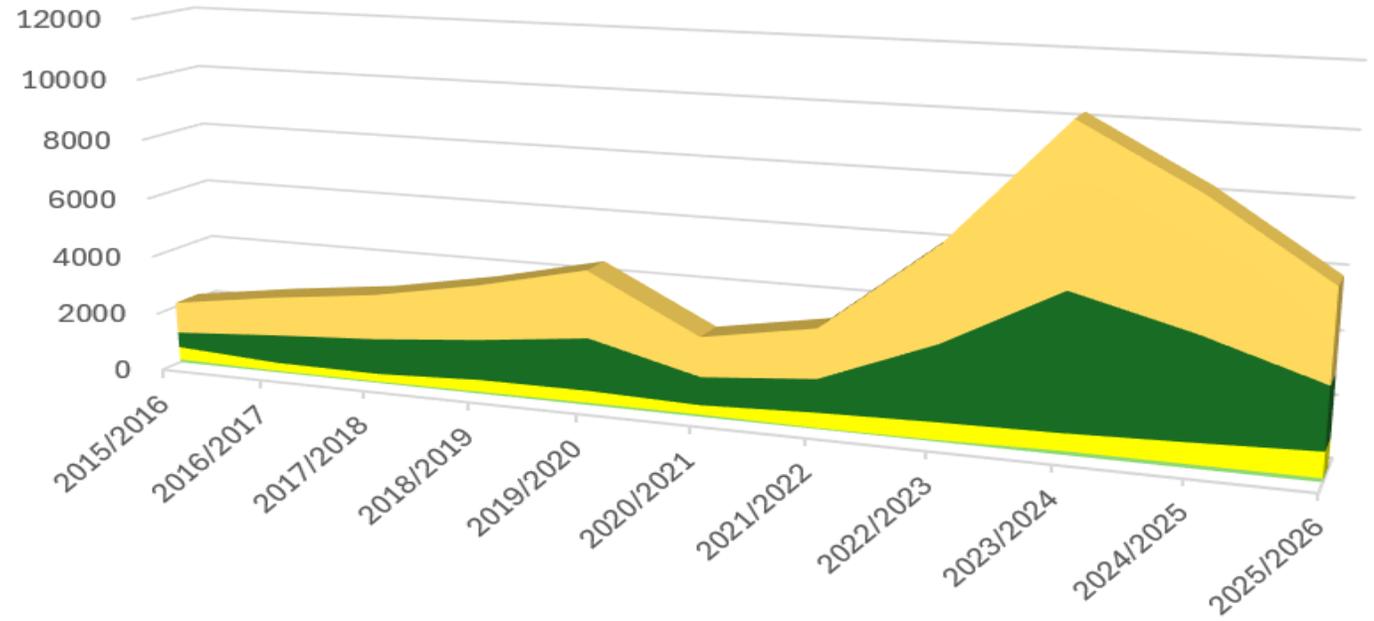
- Refugee status under s. 96 of IRPA (fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion)
- Protection under s. 97 of IRPA (fear of torture or risk to life, or risk of cruel and unusual punishment or treatment)
- Permanent resident status on humanitarian compassionate grounds under s. 25 of IRPA for applicants who face unusual, undeserved hardship in their country of origin
- Pre-Removal Risk Assessment applications (which allow people who are ineligible to make refugee claims in Canada to still have their risk assessed)

We also fund appeals and judicial reviews of [some](#) Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) decisions, [based on merit](#).



# Number of Immigration Contracts per year

LABC Immigration Contracts by Fiscal Year



\*2025/2026 up to today; February 23, 2026\*

	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Schedule Based	95	51	46	61	74	73	36	51	124	122	120
Appeal	450	288	270	412	409	315	501	575	563	683	821
Standard	522	976	1212	1379	1777	939	1104	2499	4443	3341	2007
<b>Total</b>	<b>1067</b>	<b>1325</b>	<b>1528</b>	<b>1852</b>	<b>2260</b>	<b>1327</b>	<b>1641</b>	<b>3125</b>	<b>5130</b>	<b>4146</b>	<b>2948</b>

# Legal Aid Navigators

The Legal Navigators Program formally began in September 2023, with the primary objective of providing legal information to our clients across various legal areas covered by our organization: Criminal Law, Immigration and Refugees, Family Law, and Child Protection.

We currently have 11 navigator team members, managing a caseload of over 8,904 active Navigator clients to date.

In addition to serving as a source of legal information, we can also mediate between lawyers and clients in case of any conflicts and connect our clients with various organizations that can assist with housing, food, financial aid, mental health support, and other relevant needs.

We also prepare them for their first meeting with their lawyer.

**Our clients have described this program as a fundamental help in establishing themselves in Canada and clearly understanding their legal processes.**



# Specific application considerations

- Once a lawyer has submitted documentation (refugee claim) to the IRB, there will be a period of at least 1 year of no communication.
- When the IRB hearing is scheduled, the lawyer will reach out to the client. During this time the client needs to keep contact information up to date with the lawyer and the IRB.
- If the client has moved to BC after making a claim in another province, ask if they can still work with their lawyer from the prior province. If not, have them contact LABC. All IRB hearings are virtual.
- Change of counsel requests require a new financial eligibility assessment if a request comes in after 90 days from the original application.
- Lawyers can not expedite IRB hearings.
- If you are with a client needing help to reach intake or the intake worker is not getting back to them, please sign a consent form (*to forward after presentation*)
- If a client wants an IRB appeal, they must bring in their IRB decision documentation for review.



# Other legal resources



**IMMIGRATION & REFUGEE**  
LEGAL CLINIC

## Contact Us

 810 – 510 BURRARD ST  
VANCOUVER V6C 3A8

 778-372-6583  
WHATSAPP: 778-222-  
7568

 [INFO@IRLC.CA](mailto:INFO@IRLC.CA)



## Contact

2610 Victoria Dr  
Vancouver, BC V5N 4L2

 [info@issbc.org](mailto:info@issbc.org)

 1 (604) 684-2561

**Legal Aid BC**





# QUESTIONS AND FEEDBACK

