

## NOTICE TO THE PROFESSION

LAMAS (Legal Aid Manitoba Application System) is Legal Aid Manitoba's (LAM's) internal certificate management system for Community Law Offices and staff lawyers.

[PBOonline](#) is LAM's external internet-based certificate management system for private bar lawyers, developed in-house by our Information Systems Department.

Effective April 1st, 2014, PBOonline became the sole method of certificate delivery to private bar panel members; all certificates and associated documents are delivered electronically.

Effective June 2, 2014, LAMAS became the sole method of certificate delivery to staff lawyers; all certificates and associated documents are delivered electronically.

Both LAMAS and PBOonline have greatly simplified and accelerated the process of legal aid certificate issuance, acceptance of certificates by counsel, and file/disbursement requests and authorizations.

### **Changes to how certificates will be assigned to private bar and staff counsel**

LAM maintains a panel of solicitors who have indicated they are prepared to provide legal aid to eligible applicants. Staff lawyers, and over 200 private bar lawyers, are members of the panel.

Pursuant to *The Legal Aid Manitoba Act*, only registered members of the panel can be appointed by LAM to provide legal aid. In making the appointment, LAM must consider any request made by an applicant for a specific lawyer.

In circumstances where choice of counsel is not in issue and coverage has been approved, LAM staff have traditionally had to search for counsel willing to accept certificates for particular matters by telephone and /or email.

LAM's Information Systems Department has developed upgrades to both LAMAS and PBOonline that will remove the delay associated with having staff manually search for available counsel. LAM is confident that this innovation:

- will improve operational efficiencies;
- ensure that certificates are assigned to available counsel in a fair and transparent manner; and
- will further reduce delays associated with assigning certificates to counsel.

Effective January 23, 2017, panel members accessing LAMAS or PBOonline, will be required to indicate which court locations they are prepared to travel to, and what types of matters they are prepared to act on. LAM's Information Systems will use this data to generate lists of counsel that have indicated they will accept certificates for particular matters, at particular court locations.

Detailed instructions on how to enter this data can be found here:

- [PBOonline Instructions](#)
- [LAMAS Instructions](#)

**FURTHER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MAY ALSO BE PROVIDED BY CONTACTING:**

[pbhelpdesk@legalaid.mb.ca](mailto:pbhelpdesk@legalaid.mb.ca)

## **PBOnline Statement of Accounts**

In [Notice to the Profession 31 – 2016](#), LAM provided notice to all private bar panel members that effective April 1, 2017, LAM will require that all private bar statements of account be created and submitted electronically to LAM for processing and payment, through PBOnline.

**WE URGE ALL PRIVATE BAR LAWYERS TO VIEW THE INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEO TUTORIAL REGARDING  
PBONLINE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AT:**

<http://www.legalaid.mb.ca/for-lawyers/pbonline>

**FURTHER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DURING REGULAR OFFICE HOURS MAY ALSO BE PROVIDED BY  
CONTACTING THE MAILBOXES BELOW:**

[pbhelpdesk@legalaid.mb.ca](mailto:pbhelpdesk@legalaid.mb.ca)

**FOR ASSISTANCE SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO BILLING AND/OR TARIFF QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT  
[legalaccounts@legalaid.mb.ca](mailto:legalaccounts@legalaid.mb.ca)**

## **Applying for Legal Aid**

LAM encourages all panel members to use the electronic legal aid application whenever possible. If you require assistance with the electronic application form, please contact [pbhelpdesk@legalaid.mb.ca](mailto:pbhelpdesk@legalaid.mb.ca).

LAM acknowledges that because internet access is required to use the electronic application, there may be circumstances where it is impossible or impractical to do so. Attached please find a copy of the most recent version of [LAM's paper application](#); please ONLY use this version of the legal aid application if you are unable to access the electronic application.

**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU USE THE MOST UP TO DATE VERSION OF THE [LEGAL AID APPLICATION](#)  
AS OLDER VERSIONS ARE OUTDATED AND EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 2017, WILL NO LONGER BE ACCEPTED.**

## **Judicious Use of Technology**

LAM continues to seek opportunities to reduce unnecessary expenses associated with printing and regular mail. We encourage our stakeholders and the profession to deliver correspondence/documents to us via PBOnline, [email](#) or [facsimile](#) as opposed to regular mail.

Since September 2015, all faxed documents (including paper applications for legal aid) received by the Administration Office, Winnipeg Area Office and our Regional Area Offices are automatically converted into an electronic PDF file. Hard copies of these electronic files (paper applications included) are not printed unless absolutely necessary. These electronic PDF files are uploaded into LAM's database, PBOnline, and/or delivered to a specific addressee(s) electronically. This results in substantial savings and efficiency for LAM which translates into more, and better coverage for Applicants.

This innovation, (developed in-house by our Information Systems Department) removes the redundancy of having a staff person scan hard copy documents (including applications for legal aid) into LAM's database, and has reduced costs associated with printing, copying, and the need to create and maintain physical files.

We thank all of our stakeholders for assisting LAM in meeting its mandate of delivering legal services to low income individuals and groups in a cost-effective and efficient manner. We request your continued assistance in helping us achieve our strategic objectives by delivering correspondence/documents to LAM via [email](#) or [facsimile](#) instead of regular mail whenever possible and, in particular, when a paper application for legal aid is submitted.

Paper applications for legal aid can be submitted via [email](#) or [facsimile](#) to the Area Office servicing your region.