



April 2020

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NOTICE TO THE PROFESSION ACCESS TO JUSTICE INITIATIVES

Financial Eligibility Guideline Increase

All Legal Aid plans across Canada have some form of official financial eligibility guideline or cut-offs indicating income beyond which applicants are not normally entitled to legal aid.

Legal Aid Manitoba (LAM) is pleased to announce that effective April 1, 2020, the income thresholds for each family size category in LAM's financial eligibility guidelines are increased by \$3,000:

Family Size	"Free" Legal Aid Gross Family Income		Agreement to Pay Gross Family Income		Poverty Line [2020 Stats Canada Low-Income Cut-off (LICO) before tax]
	2015 Guideline	Effective April 1, 2020	2015 Guideline	Effective April 1, 2020	
1	\$0 – 23,000	\$0 – 26,000	\$23,000 – 35,000	\$26,000 – 38,000	\$25,920
2	\$0 – 27,000	\$0 – 30,000	\$27,000 – 45,000	\$30,000 – 48,000	\$32,270
3	\$0 – 31,000	\$0 – 34,000	\$31,000 – 50,000	\$34,000 – 53,000	\$39,672
4	\$0 – 34,000	\$0 – 37,000	\$34,000 – 54,000	\$37,000 – 57,000	\$48,166
5	\$0 – 37,000	\$0 – 40,000	\$37,000 – 57,000	\$40,000 – 60,000	\$54,630
6	\$0 – 40,000	\$0 – 43,000	\$40,000 – 60,000	\$43,000 – 63,000	\$61,612
> 6	\$0 – 43,000	\$0 – 46,000	\$43,000 – 60,000	\$46,000 – 63,000	\$68,598

The increased income thresholds apply to legal aid applications dated on or after April 1 2020, and will increase Access to Justice for many Manitobans.

Tariff Review

Private lawyers delivering legal aid services have recently been engaged in discussions with the Province regarding changes to the Tariff. The private bar Tariff was last increased twelve (12) years ago in 2008 and is based on a nominal hourly rate of \$80 per hour. In light of these extremely unusual circumstances, and while discussions between the Province and panel lawyers continue, the Management Council of Legal Aid approved of the following interim measure which applies to certificates issued on or after April 1, 2020:

- The Executive Director may exercise his legislated discretion to increase the Tariff of fees payable by 6.25% for all block tariff items upon counsel certifying the following on their statements of account:

"I am requesting that the Executive Director increase the Tariff fees payable by 6.25% while discussions between LAM panel lawyers and the Province regarding changes to The Legal Aid Regulation Schedule Tariff of Fees continue."

This is the same increase that would result if the nominal hourly rate were raised in the Tariff from \$80 per hour to \$85 per hour.



CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Stakeholder engagement ensures that our services are delivered in an accountable and transparent manner.

Since February 18, 2020, clients applying for legal aid have been asked to provide feedback regarding their experience with the service received from LAM during the application process through an online survey.

The survey regarding client satisfaction with our intake processes can be accessed [here](#). Please do not fill in the survey as it is live and collecting responses from applicants.

Effective April 1, 2020, clients will be asked to provide feedback regarding the services they received from panel lawyers through an online survey.

The survey regarding client satisfaction with the services received by panel lawyers can be accessed [here](#). Please do not fill in the survey as it is currently live and collecting responses from clients.

Our client satisfaction surveys were informed by studying processes and survey questions used by legal aid plans in Canada, the U.S. and Western Europe. We welcome your feedback on the surveys and their question sets.