



An important “heads up” about the Court’s website and notices

We keep working to communicate better and make our language plainer!

The BC Provincial Court has won awards for the way it communicates with the public about its work, but that doesn’t mean we can be complacent. We’re a court, grounded in traditions that go back centuries, and made up of judges who’ve been speaking and writing legalese for decades. We try to use plain language that everyone can understand, but progress has been gradual. It takes time to change lifelong habits.

This year we plan to take two leaps forward.

New website

Our current website was launched ten years ago and its content-management framework is close to the end of its life cycle. It has a great deal of good information, but it’s not easy to find. Although some pages use plain language, legal jargon has crept into other pages. The website is not mobile-friendly, and it doesn’t meet accessibility standards.

The Court therefore plans to launch a new website before next fall. In keeping with the Court’s mission, it will be user-centered, accessible, inclusive, and integrated with other online legal information. It will be friendly, welcoming, easy to navigate, and have an easy-to-read design - all contributing to the accessible and innovative system of justice the Court strives to provide.

In developing the new site, we consulted website users and groups that provide legal information online. We’re grateful for the time they took to participate in workshops and offer feedback. As a result of what we learned, the new site will be organized according to the needs of its main users:

- People with a legal problem
- People helping someone with a legal problem
- People who report on the justice system
- People who want to learn about the justice system



When our current website was launched ten years ago there was little information available online for Provincial Court users. Our website filled the gap with a variety of information and guides to help litigants. During the last decade BC's public legal information providers have developed a wealth of user-friendly online information on Provincial Court procedures, often based on our web pages and guides. As a result, our new website will contain fewer guides and less detailed "how to" information. Instead, we will provide links to other websites that offer the information people need in easy-to-understand formats.

Our current website had more than 400,000 users and more than 200,000 downloads in 2023. Some pages get thousands of page views each month. We will retain the most-used content, although some of it will be presented in a different format. You can help us decide what information to include on the new site. Tell us what's most helpful to you by clicking the feedback buttons you'll find on our current web pages and taking quick surveys about our guides.



We will prepare a "re-direct" list providing new URLs for popular pages, share it with public legal information providers and eNews subscribers, and post it online to help you find your favourite picklists, eNews articles, and other information.

Notices to the Profession and the Public

The Court issues Practice Directions to explain and provide direction about court procedures and Notices to the Profession and the Public to inform people about other topics. In another step towards plainer language, when the new website goes live we will change the verbose second title to just plain "Notices".

For years, the BC Provincial Court, like other Canadian courts, issued “Notices to the Profession”. “The Profession” referred to the legal profession, to lawyers. As more people began coming to court without lawyers, the Court added “and the public” to the title of its Notices.

Cutting extra words is one of the steps in plain language writing. Since our notices are directed at lawyers and the public, including our litigants, they are directed at everyone. We recognize that it's not necessary to include a phrase that essentially means "Notices to everyone".

So, from now on we'll be issuing Notices.

Please check the date an article was posted. We do our best to keep our website up to date, but older articles may not reflect current information.

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