



BC lawyers can access some Provincial Court records digitally

Updated: August 2024

BC lawyers no longer have to visit a courthouse in person to see Provincial Court records in family and criminal matters – they can now access these court records digitally with just a few clicks! This digital access increases convenience and speed of delivery for lawyers while reducing workload for court registry staff.

Background

The Law Society of BC worked with the provincial government's Citizen Services and Court Services Branch to develop digital credentials lawyers can use to verify their identity securely online. The Law Society uses the BC Wallet app to issue credentials enabling lawyers to access court records digitally on a new Access to Court Materials (ACM) platform.

Approximately 100 family duty counsel lawyers began using ACM in a pilot in 2022 and the feedback was positive.

In the spring of 2023 the program was expanded to offer digital access to family court records to practising lawyers (members of the BC bar) province-wide. They can get direct access to any Provincial Court family court records they'd be able to access in a court registry - whenever it's needed, and without travelling or waiting.

Later that year it was expanded to include access to some criminal court records.

What family court records can lawyers access digitally?

Members of the BC bar can access Provincial Court *Family Law Act*, *Family Maintenance Enforcement Act*, and *Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA)* records using the ACM program, unless the court records have been sealed. Available court records include pleadings, orders, and court summary sheets.

When you login to the ACM platform, you'll have to sign an electronic undertaking to comply with the statutory rules permitting access (*Provincial Court Family Rules* and *CFCSA Rules*). Remember that there are differences in the access provisions of the two statutes. For example, access to *CFCSA* files is limited to lawyers of record

on the file.

You'll also be reminded of the Court's *Access to Court Records Policy* governing your access. This policy has been updated recently. So before using ACM, review both the statutory rules and the policy to ensure you know the rules. Your use of the ACM program is subject to audit.

BC Supreme Court and Court of Appeal records are not included.

What criminal court records can lawyers access digitally?

Members of the BC bar can also access digital versions of Informations, records of proceedings, and DARS log notes in Provincial Court adult criminal proceedings. You can download and print documents, if needed. Counsel of record can also listen to Provincial Court adult criminal audio recordings ("DARS") on a computer.

However, ACM does not include sealed or in camera hearings, Provincial Court traffic and youth matters, or BC Supreme Court or Court of Appeal records.

How do you get started?

Follow the steps and links on the BC government's Access to Court Materials website.

[Notices, Policies, Practice Directions](#)

[Access to Court Materials platform](#) (BC Government)

[Law Society of BC](#)

[BC Wallet app](#)

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