

LEGAL  **AID**
S A S K A T C H E W A N
2023-2024 Annual Report

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS IN 2024

www.legalaid.sk.ca

Legal Aid Saskatchewan Offices

Battlefords Area Office
Provincial Building, #L103 - 1192 102nd Street
North Battleford S9A 1E9
p: 306.446.7700 | f: 306.446.7598 | 1.877.441.4418
Legal Director: Jonathan Bodvarson
Battlefords@legalaid.sk.ca

Meadow Lake Area Office
Unit #3, 101 Railway Place
Meadow Lake S9X 1X6
p: 306.236.7636 | f: 306.236.7634 | 1.800.461.8188
Legal Director: Lee Douglas
MeadowLake@legalaid.sk.ca

Melfort Area Office
PO Box 1748, 3rd floor, 107 Crawford Avenue East
Melfort S0E 1A0
p: 306.752.6220 | f: 306.752.6127 | 1.877.424.1901
Regional Legal Director: Deanna Harris
Melfort@legalaid.sk.ca

Moose Jaw Area Office
#113 - 110 Ominica Street West
Moose Jaw S6H 6V2
p: 306.694.3700 | f: 306.694.3738 | 1.877.424.1902
Regional Legal Director: Adrian McBride
MooseJaw@legalaid.sk.ca

Northern Area Office
Box 232, Mistasinik Place, 1328 La Ronge Avenue
La Ronge S0J 1L0
p: 306.425.4455 | f: 306.425.4472 | 1.800.667.4095
Legal Director: Kimberly Earing, K.C.
Northern@legalaid.sk.ca

Prince Albert Area Office
1138 - 11th Floor, L.F. McIntosh Bldg, 800 Central Ave
Prince Albert S6V 6Z2
p: 306.953.2850 | f: 306.953.2866 | 1.877.424.1900
Legal Director: Fatima Sarwar
PrinceAlbert@legalaid.sk.ca

Regina City Area Office
#200, 1871 Smith Street
Regina S4P 4W5
p: 306.787.8760 | f: 306.787.8827 | 1.877.424.1897
Legal Director: Tyne Hagey
ReginaCity@legalaid.sk.ca

Regina Rural Area Office
#102 - 2400 College Avenue
Regina S4P 1C8
p: 306.787.1141 | f: 306.787.2316 | 1.877.424.1906
Legal Director: James Struthers, K.C.
ReginaRural@legalaid.sk.ca

Saskatoon City Area Office
#1053 - 122 Third Avenue North, Sturdy Stone Centre
Saskatoon S7K 2H6
p: 306.933.7820 | f: 306.933.7827 | 1.877.424.1898
Acting Legal Director: Chris Bennett
SaskatoonCity@legalaid.sk.ca

Saskatoon Rural Area Office
#941 - 122 Third Avenue North, Sturdy Stone Centre
Saskatoon S7K 2H6
p: 306.933.7855 | f: 306.933.7854 | 1.877.424.1899
Interim Legal Director: Samantha Neill
SaskatoonRural@legalaid.sk.ca

South East Area Office
#101 - 1302 3rd Street
Estevan S4A 2V6
p: 306.637.4620 | f: 306.637.4625 | 1.877.424.1903
Regional Legal Director: Deanna Harris
Estevan@legalaid.sk.ca

Swift Current Area Office
307 - 350 Cheadle Street West
Swift Current S9H 4G3
p: 306.778.8272 | f: 306.778.8307 | 1.877.424.1905
Regional Legal Director: Adrian McBride
SwiftCurrent@legalaid.sk.ca

Yorkton Area Office
#301 - 120 Smith Street East
Yorkton S3N 3V3
p: 306.786.1440 | f: 306.786.1405 | 1.877.424.1904
Regional Legal Director: Deanna Harris
Yorkton@legalaid.sk.ca

Head Office - Saskatoon
#400 - 201 21st Street East
Saskatoon SK S7K 0B8
p: 306.933.5300
f: 306.933.6764
headoffice@legalaid.sk.ca



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Letters of Transmittal



His Honour
The Honourable Russell Mirasty, SOM, MSM
Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Saskatchewan

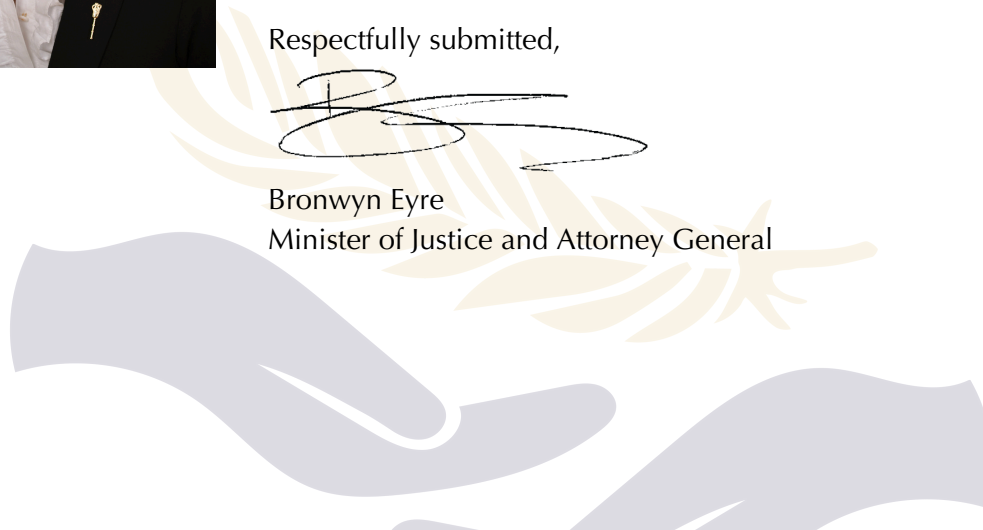
May it please your Honour,

I have the pleasure to transmit to your Honour the Annual Report of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission for the year ending March 31, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B Eyre', written over a faint background of a feather.

Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Justice and Attorney General



The Honourable Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Province of Saskatchewan

Dear Ms. Eyre,

It is my pleasure to forward to you the Annual Report of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission according to The Legal Aid Act, depicting the affairs of the Commission in the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M Holash', written over a faint background of a feather.

Mitchell Holash, K.C.
Chairperson



Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission

The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission (SLAC) is a governance board responsible for ensuring that the strategies, goals, priorities and directions of the organization are implemented through delegation from the board to Legal Aid Saskatchewan (LAS) management.

The Legal Aid Act provides for the appointment of 10 members:

- two members appointed by the Law Society of Saskatchewan;
- six members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council;
- one member who is an employee of the Ministry of Justice; and
- one member who is an employee of the Ministry of Social Service.

As of March 31, 2024 the Board of Commissioners are:



Mitchell Holash, K.C.
Chair
Prince Albert
Appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council



Kylie Head, K.C.
Vice Chair
Regina
Appointed by the Ministry of Justice



Idowu Adetogun
Moose Jaw
Appointed by the Law Society of Saskatchewan



Rod Antonichuk
Saskatoon
Appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council



Victoria Elliott-Erickson
Prince Albert
Appointed by the Law Society of Saskatchewan



Ellen McGuire
Regina
Appointed by the Ministry of Social Services



Bev Poitras
Fort Qu'Appelle
Appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council



Collin Pullar
Regina
Appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council

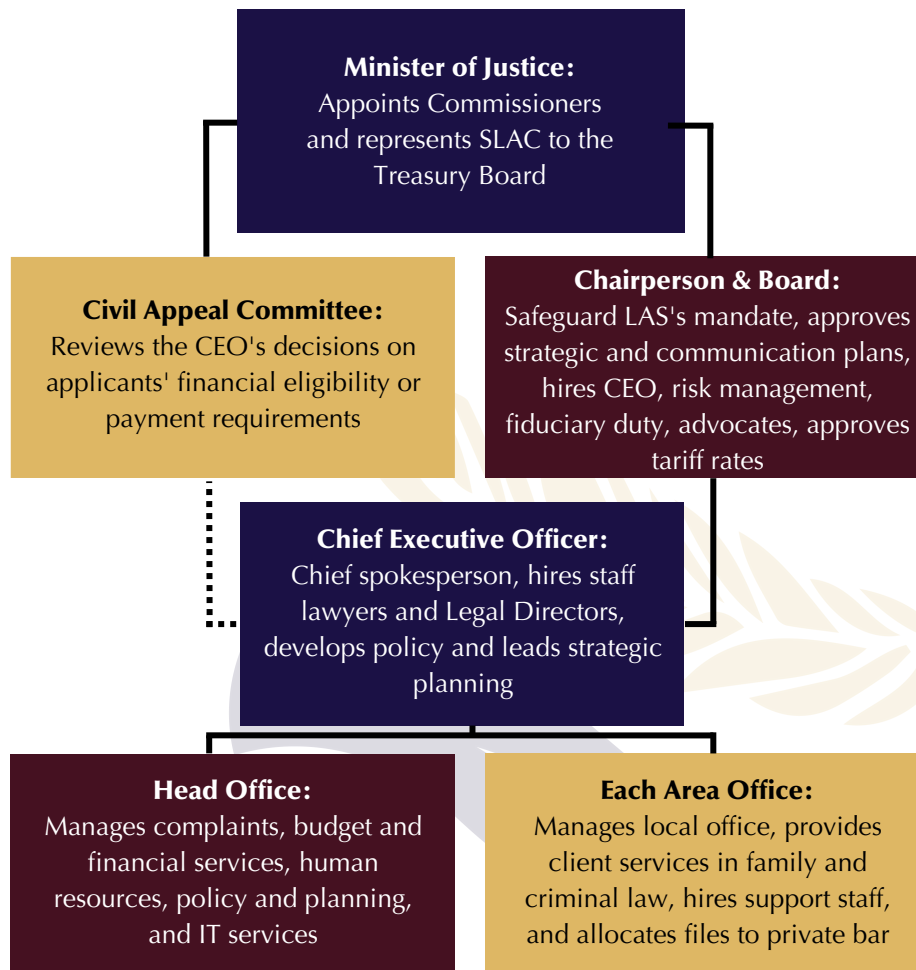


Ron Ratte
La Ronge
Appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council



Iffat Ritter
Saskatoon
Appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council

Organizational Structure



As of March 31, 2024, the Legal Aid Saskatchewan management team consists of:

Head Office:

- Jayne Mallin, Chief Executive Officer
- Robert Grimsrud, General Counsel
- Ali Ahmed Jawaid, Acting Director of Finance
- Joanne Khan, Practice Management Counsel
- Olga Sadikova, Director of People & Culture
- Cameron Schmunk, Director of Private Bar Services
- Kyla Shea, Director of Operations and IT

Area Offices:

- Chris Bennett, Acting Director, Saskatoon City Area Office
- Jonathan Bodvarson, Legal Director, Battlefords Area Office
- R. Lee Douglas, Legal Director, Meadow Lake Area Office
- Kimberly Earing, K.C., Legal Director, Northern Area Office
- Tyne Hagey, Legal Director, Regina City Area Office
- Deanna Harris, Regional Legal Director, Melfort, Yorkton and South East Area Offices
- Adrian McBride, Regional Legal Director, Swift Current and Moose Jaw Area Offices
- Samantha Neill, Interim Legal Director, Saskatoon Rural Area Office
- Fatima Sarwar, Legal Director, Prince Albert Area Office
- James Struthers, K.C., Legal Director, Regina Rural Area Office



Organizational Profile

Services

Full legal services are provided in adult and youth criminal matters and family law to financially eligible clients if the matter falls within Legal Aid Saskatchewan’s range of service and has a reasonable prospect of being resolved. Duty counsel services are provided to in-custody clients, regardless of financial status, at all 74 Provincial Courthouses and circuit points. Legal advice through the Brydges Line is available to those who are arrested or detained, regardless of financial status. Summary advice and information may be provided to anyone by a Legal Aid Saskatchewan lawyer about a wide range of matters if it involves no more than a brief interview or phone call.

Financial Eligibility

Applicants are financially eligible for service if:

- they are receiving income from Social Assistance, Band Assistance or the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability programs; or
- their financial resources are at Social Assistance levels; or
- the costs of obtaining the services from a private lawyer would reduce their financial resources to Social Assistance levels.

Staff Profile

Legal Aid Saskatchewan uses a staff lawyer model for providing legal services to most of its clients. In 2023-2024, staff lawyers handled 86% of full-services cases. Private bar lawyers handled the remainder, usually due to conflict of interest from past service or staff vacancies.

As of March 31, 2024, Legal Aid Saskatchewan had 174 staff positions located in 14 offices throughout the province. LAS has a unionized workplace, with 80.45% of staff represented by CUPE Local 1949. Managers and out-of-scope staff comprise the remaining 19.55%.

LAS is committed to hiring practices that will assist our organization in meeting the employment equity goals set by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC) as follows:

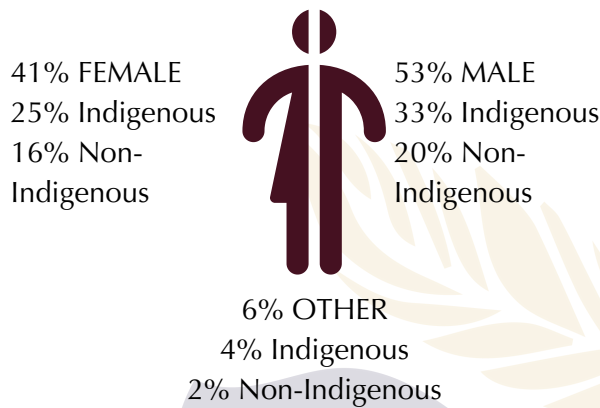
SHRC Desired Employment Profile	LAS Employment Profile (2023-2024)
15.2% Self-Declared Indigenous People	15.51% Self-Declared Indigenous People
27.7% Persons with Disabilities	8.04% Persons with Disabilities
47.5% Women in Underrepresented Occupations	55.81% Women Lawyers
14.0% Members of a Visible Minority Group	52.94% Women in Management
	17.24% Members of a Visible Minority Group



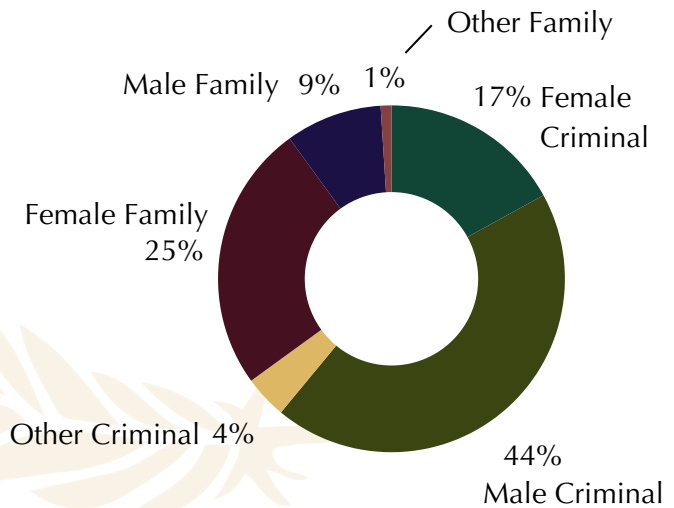
Who is served by Legal Aid Saskatchewan?

The following information is for all new service files opened in the fiscal year, including Therapeutic Courts. For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, this totaled 15,377 files. Individuals who applied more than once for Legal Aid Saskatchewan's services are counted for each application.

Gender & Self Identification



Gender & Type of Service



Marital Status

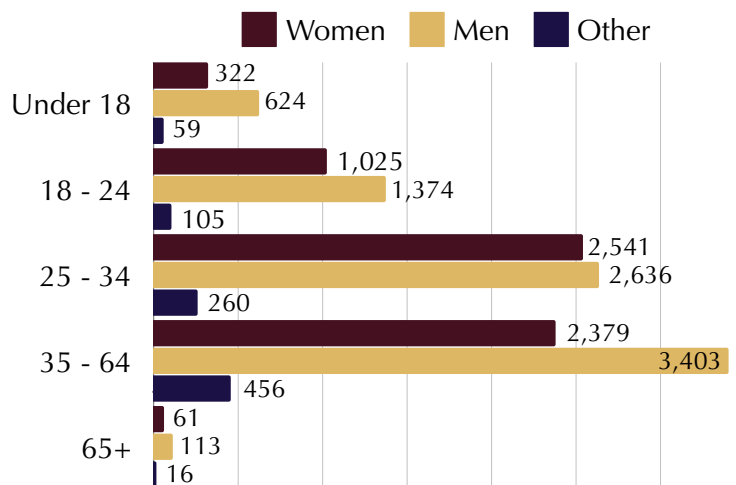


Married or Common Law
11%



Single
89%

Gender & Age



Dependents



2022-2025 Strategic Priorities

Our Vision

Inclusive, responsive justice in Saskatchewan.

Our Mission

We are a publicly funded organization championing access to justice through professional legal services.

Our Values

Compassion – Our empathic approach respects every person’s world view in a culturally responsive way, embracing individual diversity and dignity.

Collaboration – We build trusted relationships that enable exceptional outcomes through aligned strengths and knowledge.

Courage – We are fearless advocates leading transformation through innovation, continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence in legal services.

Commitment – We are responsible for ethical practice, integrity, transparency and accountability of the resources entrusted to us.

Our Priorities

 <p>Our clients (C) experience inclusive justice ...</p>	<p>Client-Centered Experience</p> <p>C1 Improve the client experience. C2 Provide culturally responsive service. C3 Seamless, innovative service delivery models.</p>		
 <p>through effective processes and partnerships (P) ...</p>	<p>Champions for Access to Justice</p> <p>P1 Enhance LAS reputation and visibility. P2 Advance reconciliation principles in justice reform. P3 Sponsor partnerships for holistic response & system change.</p>		
 <p>supported by an engaged team (T)...</p>	<p>Purpose-Driven Teams Producing Exceptional Outcomes</p> <p>T1 Strengthened organizational culture and staff engagement. T2 Improve staff recruitment and retention.</p>		
 <p>and effective stewardship (S) of our resources.</p>	<p>Accountable and Responsive Stewards</p> <p>S1 Proactive and responsive decision making. S1 Optimize funding.</p>		

We commit to ...

... a justice system where Legal Aid Saskatchewan is recognized and respected as a provincial and national champion in justice reform and access to justice. We are proud collaborators, problem solvers and risk-takers removing barriers to justice and pioneering innovative change – ranging from preventative programs, to specialized counsel, to expanded equitable services for a diverse population. In collaboration with our partners, we have inspired change to become Canada’s model for access to justice. We are valued within the communities we serve and are celebrated as an essential and accountable service for the province of Saskatchewan.

... clients who have a streamlined, accessible pathway to trusted legal services. We ensure equitable and inclusive services are provided in a culturally responsive manner in a language of choice. Clients feel safe, well-informed and confident that their voice is honoured throughout their journey seeking justice. The support, legal advice, and representation clients receive are of the highest quality, with opportunities to partake in alternative dispute resolution.

... a work culture with a motivated, engaged team, committed to making a difference for those we serve. Our unique provincial model of legal services attracts the best of the best, allowing us to practice in a way that makes the greatest impact within our communities. We are all invested in our future success and take pride in achieving exceptional outcomes for our clients. We have embraced innovation and technology to offer our services most efficiently and effectively. We feel supported to bring our best everyday – through ongoing development, relevant resources and a positive work environment built on trusted relationships.



A Message from the CEO

Celebrating a year of resilience and achievement

Dear Valued Stakeholders,

2023/24 marks yet another year of growth, achievement, and resilience for Legal Aid Saskatchewan. As we reflect on the past year's successes and challenges, we also look forward with anticipation to the exciting opportunities that lie ahead.

“

2024 holds special significance for us as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Legal Aid Saskatchewan in August.

”



As the planning for this milestone commenced, we were provided an interesting reflective opportunity: we decided to create a history book which will delve into the highlights, people and significant events of Legal Aid Saskatchewan, demonstrating the impact of this cornerstone of the justice system. This has provided all of us with the opportunity to look back to where we started and reflect on how far we have come. We are thankful to our funding partner, The Law Foundation of Saskatchewan, for their generous grant to allow us to undertake this exciting initiative, and we look forward to the unveiling later this year.

We continue to focus on improving our client services and have completed our intake process review, which will now move into the implementation phase. We secured funding for a Therapeutic Court Navigator to support our Saskatoon Therapeutic Courts, and continue to engage with our stakeholders for the expansion of these services throughout the province.

We continue to invest in building our purpose-driven teams by hiring additional frontline staff to meet increasing demands for legal aid services. Our hardworking, committed social justice champions will reap the benefits from much of the work done throughout the year to ensure they are receiving competitive salaries, and that we have a pipeline for talent coming into the organization. To that end, we enhanced our partnership with the University of Saskatchewan's College of Law to provide rural and remote externship opportunities for students, which will commence in 2024 - 2025. We also enhanced our summer student and articling student programs, recognizing that investing and providing opportunities early will ensure we have a constant flow of dedicated and passionate talent into our organization.



“

In a year where we saw significant increased demand and experienced ongoing change as we continuously improve our services, we demonstrated our resilience by not just surviving, but thriving through this year, seeing higher employee engagement scores and being celebrated as a Saskatchewan Top Employer for 2024.

”

Networking and outreach involved working with our Association of Legal Aid Plan (ALAP) colleagues to advocate for increased funding at the federal level, as well as looking at opportunities to coordinate and leverage knowledge across the country. We have built stronger partnerships with colleagues globally, enhancing our reputation and raising our visibility, with an invitation to present to a conference of International Legal Aid Plans in Taiwan on the Future of Legal Aid and Legal Aid Professionals. Expanding our reach and building strong relationships within our communities and beyond has been a key focus area for us.

“

Through strategic partnerships, outreach initiatives and community engagement efforts, we have been able to broaden our impact and create lasting value for all stakeholders.

”

Throughout the past year, we have made significant strides in advancing our Indigenous strategy. Our efforts to foster meaningful relationships with communities, promote cultural awareness, and support Indigenous clients have been central to our mission. We are proud of the progress we have made and remain committed to furthering this important work in the years to come.

Furthermore, the development of the Gladue Submission Guide stands as a testament to our commitment to inclusivity and fairness within the legal system. This guide, along with our enhanced Gladue Database, will serve as a valuable resource in ensuring that Indigenous peoples are treated equitably in the criminal justice system, furthering our efforts towards a more just and compassionate society.

“

By leveraging technology and streamlining processes, we aim to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and client satisfaction.

”

Our commitment to modernization and innovation is evidenced by our ongoing private bar modernization initiative, our intake process review, and our ongoing digitization efforts of finalizing our migration to Office 365 and significantly improving our IT security. This commitment to continuous improvement will ensure our clients, staff, service providers and justice stakeholders see a demonstrable improvement in value.



I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the entire Legal Aid Saskatchewan team for their hard work, dedication and resilience throughout the past year. From our Commission members and Senior Management team to our Legal Directors, staff lawyers and administrative staff, each of you plays a vital role in our success, and I am immensely grateful for your contributions.

Thank you to the Honourable Bronwyn Eyre, Saskatchewan's Minister of Justice and Attorney General, and the Honourable Arif Virani, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, for their demonstrated commitment to our mandate, to the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan for their generous support, and to our justice stakeholders as we undergo change and rejuvenate our service delivery models.

As we embark on the next chapter of our journey, we remain committed to our core values and driven by our shared vision of building an inclusive, responsive, and equitable justice system in Saskatchewan. Together, we will continue to innovate, collaborate, and make a positive impact in the lives of those we serve.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.



Jayne Mallin
Chief Executive Officer
jmallin@legalaid.sk.ca



Strategic Priorities Report

The 2023-2024 fiscal year was the second year of our strategic plan. Our work during this time built upon the foundation created the previous year by focusing on the planning aspects of our initiatives. The following report reviews some of the essential work our team has achieved during this foundational year and demonstrates how our operational goals support our strategic pillars.



Client-Centered Experience

Developing and fostering a client-centered experience is a key strategy in supporting our vision of inclusive, responsive and equitable justice in Saskatchewan.

Safe Spaces at Legal Aid Saskatchewan

In the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Staff Indigenous Engagement Committee reached out to Legal Aid Saskatchewan's network in search of a custom visual representation of our commitment to safe spaces for our Indigenous and LGBTQIA2S+ communities. Jordan Schell created an art piece using vibrant acrylic paint and intricate beadwork, which has been reprinted for each of our Area Offices to enhance the welcoming and safe spaces we provide for our clients.



"As far back as I can remember I've been an artist. When I was 8, I asked my grandmother for an artist's hat for Christmas. My art began with Crayola crayons, markers and acrylic paints.

With my heritage as a Plains Cree, I learned of the art of beading. I enjoy the diversity of art and how traditional beading can cross over into other mediums. Having been raised by my Caucasian grandmother, I was encouraged to express myself with my imagination in my art, including my beading.

Like many artists, I have struggles that both influence and sometimes inhibit my work. Life for many of us isn't easy but I'm grateful for my mother, her love and continued support. I like to share my work and like to learn from other artists and their mediums. Life is art and art is life."

– Jordan Mackenzie Bruce Schell



Therapeutic Court Navigator

The Law Foundation of Saskatchewan provided funding for a three-year pilot program of hiring a Therapeutic Court Navigator to support clients in Saskatoon's two Therapeutic Courts – Mental Health Court and Domestic Violence Court. With training in social work, the Therapeutic Court Navigator will be the primary contact person for clients and families, therefore freeing the lawyer assigned to focus on providing legal advice at the time of referral to the program and speaking at sentencing. The Navigator will support clients to attend appointments, court appearances, and ensure that other requirements of the therapy program are met. They will work with the clients' families and other support people to ensure a comprehensive safety net for these vulnerable clients.

It is anticipated that this position will improve the graduation rates for both of these therapeutic court programs. The Therapeutic Court Navigator will begin supporting clients in summer 2024.

Clients Experiencing Culturally Responsive Service

Legal Aid Saskatchewan's Indigenous Policy Counsel provided guidance on the use of the Gladue Submission Guide and Gladue submissions in general on several occasions throughout the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Staff lawyers received training on the Gladue Submission Guide through an interactive exercise with a panel of Gladue experts and users, including a client who had actively used the guide.

Legal Aid Saskatchewan staff lawyers have participated in additional Independent Race and Culture Assessments (IRCA) training. IRCAs provide context for the criminal behaviour of Black accused and will inform sentencing in a culturally responsive way.

LAS also welcomed Myrna McCallum to lead a CPD session on Trauma-Informed Lawyering for staff lawyers. This session was valuable given that many LAS clients experience trauma and PTSD. The majority of LAS clients are Indigenous and have experienced the effects of residential schools. Myrna noted collective care practices, self-awareness and resiliency are critical to the success of a modern lawyer, and that adopting a trauma-informed practice to lawyering can improve relationships, strengthen mental health and wellness, and help lawyers enjoy a long fulfilling career.

Initiatives to Ensure Connectivity and Mobility

In the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Legal Aid Saskatchewan IT department undertook several initiatives to ensure connectivity and mobility. Some of these initiatives include:

- Corporate Wi-Fi deployment at all Area Offices
- BYOD / Guest Wi-Fi deployment at all Area Offices
- Advanced VPN deployment with Multi-Gateway redundancy and MFA enforcement
- WebEx IBC deployment for both Court Services and IP phone mobility support
- Advanced Conditional Access Policies to manage access to VPN, O365, and MFA enforcement
- Began MFA deployment using Microsoft Authenticator and YubiKey options for users

The following operational metrics support our commitment to cultivating a client-centered experience.



Number of clients qualifying for legal aid services


To qualify for Legal Aid Saskatchewan services, an individual must be financially eligible, have a legal problem that is covered by Legal Aid Saskatchewan guidelines, and the legal problem must have professional merit, in the opinion of Legal Aid Saskatchewan.

Between April 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024, 23,884 applications for legal aid service were received. Of these, 17,221 individuals qualified.

2022-2023: 17,932 individuals qualified for legal aid services

2021-2022: 15,229 individuals qualified for legal aid services

2020-2021: 13,407 individuals qualified for legal aid services



**2023-2024:
17,221 individuals
qualified for legal
aid services**

Percentage of clients assigned to a lawyer within 7 days of application

82% of clients with criminal law matters were assigned to a lawyer within 7 days of application

2022-2023: 85% of clients with criminal law matters were assigned to a lawyer within 7 days of application

69% of clients with family law matters were assigned to a lawyer within 7 days of application

2022-2023: 67% of clients with family law matters were assigned to a lawyer within 7 days of application

Percentage of clients speaking to a lawyer within 21 days of application approval

Of the 17,221 clients approved for legal aid services, 67% of clients with criminal law matters and 75% of clients with family law matters spoke to their assigned lawyer within 21 days of application approval.

The average wait time can be affected by a variety of factors, such as lawyer case load, staff vacancies, or missing or incomplete client paperwork. This metric does not include duty counsel service.

2022-2023: 71.5%

2021-2022: 71%

2020-2021: 56%

2019-2020: 61%



**2023-2024:
69% of clients
spoke to a lawyer
within 21 days of
application
approval**



Number of intake calls answered within 2.5 minutes



The Application Centre received 37,433 phone calls in the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Of those, 6,567 callers disconnected before speaking with an Eligibility Officer.

The remaining 30,866 were handled by the Eligibility team.

18,001

Number of intake calls answered within 2.5 minutes

2m 51s

Average wait time in minutes per caller

New full service files opened

	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022	
	Staff	Private Bar	Staff	Private Bar	Staff	Private Bar
Criminal Adult	9,718	1,857	8,724	1,821	6,091	1,305
Criminal Youth	1,663	148	1,046	113	1,046	113
Family	3,417	418	2,018	343	2,018	343
Child Apprehension	590	161	434	143	434	143
	15,388	2,584	12,222	2,420	9,589	1,904

Other services provided

	2023-2024		2022-2023		2021-2022	
	Staff	Private Bar	Staff	Private Bar	Staff	Private Bar
Duty Counsel Advice	36	14,438	50	14,796	39	13,948
Summary Advice	41	-	67	-	111	-
Duty Counsel Service (Adult)	7,463	2,429	7,578	1,902	6,505	2,259
Duty Counsel Service (Youth)	650	33	436	92	392	29
	8,190	16,900	8,131	16,790	7,047	16,236

Number of complaints

Legal Aid Saskatchewan investigates all complaints that are received in writing to our Head Office. These complaints include concerns about eligibility as well as client service. In the 2023-2024 fiscal year, Legal Aid Saskatchewan Head Office received 165 complaints – 61 were related to eligibility matters and 104 were about client service. One hundred and twenty (120) of the complaints were resolved by March 31, 2024. Forty-five (45) are still under investigation.

2023-2024: 165 complaints were received

2022-2023: 82 complaints were received



Files resolved by mediation

Effective July 1, 2022, family law matters that come to court in Saskatchewan are required to attempt a family dispute resolution process by the close of pleadings before they may continue with any further court proceedings. Family dispute resolution includes:

- mediation;
- collaborative law processes;
- family arbitration; or
- the use of a parenting coordinator where there is an existing order or agreement.

Mediation in family law matters allows for better outcomes and more personalized choices for all parties and their families. Mediation training enhances communication skills and is resolution-based, which means it is less time-consuming, less stressful and less expensive for parties who would otherwise attend court. Mediation also encourages collaboration between parties and allows for full participation by the parties most knowledgeable of the matters at hand.

As of March 31, 2024 Legal Aid Saskatchewan had a mediation team of eight staff lawyers, and four additional staff lawyers training to be mediators. During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, 283 applications were made for mediation services. Fifty-six (56) certificates were filed with the Early Family Dispute Office indicating a joint mediation meeting occurred. Some mediations involve more than two parties. In other circumstances, one party fails to engage, and the matter is redirected to Court.

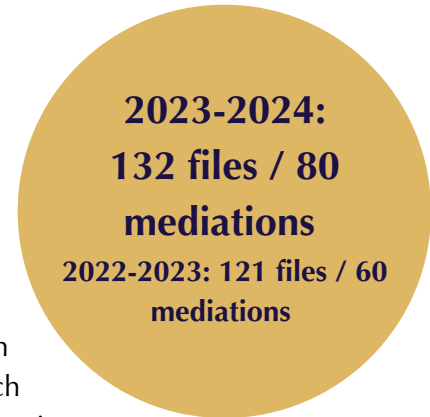
★ Since 2021, the Legal Aid Saskatchewan mediation team has assisted 260 families. ★

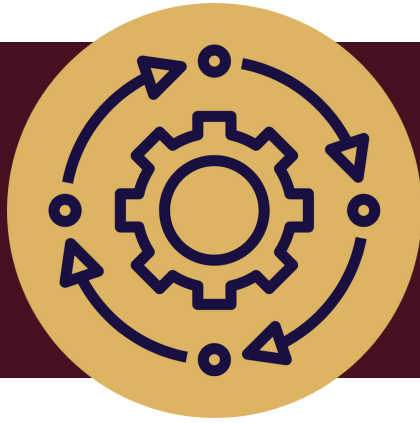
Number of staff using mobile technology

223 LAS laptops in use

101 BYOD devices using LAS O365 apps

15 LAS-managed smartphones





Champions for Access to Justice

The work we do for our clients and to make the justice system effective for all is unparalleled. We are committed to making our successes known and to build upon community relationships to enhance our services.

Celebrating 50 Years in 2024

On August 22, 1974, The Community Legal Services (Saskatchewan) Act, 1974 was proclaimed and the Saskatchewan Community Legal Services Commission was established. For 50 years, employees of the Commission have dedicated passion and expertise to the provision of professional legal services to those unable to pay for it themselves.

“The Community Legal Services Act will lead the way in the field of legal aid, setting an example for other provinces to follow. It will be the aim of the newly appointed commission to ensure all members of Saskatchewan society have equal ability to enforce their rights, that public information programs be initiated to inform citizens of their rights and obligations, and that programs be developed to prevent the creation of legal problems.” – Roy Romanow, Attorney General (August 22, 1974)

Congratulations to all past and present employees for achieving this remarkable milestone! To mark this anniversary, Legal Aid Saskatchewan is producing a history book recounting the past five decades of milestones of legal aid in our province. This publication will be released in December 2024 at a celebration in Saskatoon. Throughout the year, employees will host local celebrations in their communities, and the all-staff conference will serve as a gathering of champions for access to justice.

Dedication to the Field of Law

The entire Legal Aid Saskatchewan organization congratulates the Honourable Kim Armstrong, K.C. who was appointed to the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan in Meadow Lake in July 2023. At the time of this appointment, Judge Armstrong had been with LAS for 21 years, and most recently held the position of Acting Legal Director of the Saskatoon City Area Office.

It was also a year of notable recognition for LAS Staff Lawyer Suzanne Lalonde in the Moose Jaw Area Office. In December 2023, Suzanne was elected president of the Law Society of Saskatchewan. She also received the King’s Counsel designation for her legal contributions to the province.

The Law Society of Saskatchewan (LSS) regulates the legal profession in our province, and is governed by Benchers. LAS acknowledges the involvement of Jonathan Bodvarson, Legal Director of the Battlefords Area Office, and Idowu Adetogun, Commissioner, as Benchers of the LSS.



Partnerships Supporting Service Delivery

Legal Aid Saskatchewan’s Chief Executive Officer was invited by the FSIN to observe the Indigenous People’s Court in Calgary. This delegation of justice and Indigenous partners included representatives from the Crown, Chief Judge, Indigenous Chiefs, RCMP, FSIN, Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan and Tribunal staff. Participants observed the Court, committed to healing, focused on accountability and restoration rather than punishment, and collaboratively committed to a much different way of delivering justice. LAS is looking forward to the establishment of an Indigenous People’s Court in Saskatchewan and the impact this will have for our clients.

Legal Aid Saskatchewan also partners with the FASD Network of Saskatchewan, the Integrated Justice Program and the John Howard Society of Saskatchewan for Gladue writing services. These partnerships ensure culturally appropriate options are offered to and used by our Indigenous clients

Services, Meetings, Strategies and Priorities Developed and/or Implemented

Community profiles are being created for the Gladue Rights Research Database that will ensure the historical and current histories and knowledge of each First Nation and Metis community is rooted in Indigenous history, knowledge and tradition. As these profiles are created, the First Nation approves and provides feedback, ensuring it is a collaborative and inclusive process.

Law Reform Initiatives

LAS’s Indigenous Policy Counsel assisted staff lawyers with arguments with respect to Charter of Rights and Freedoms challenges, particularly mandatory minimums and Gladue aspects of sentencing.

The following operational metrics support our commitment to service as champions for access to justice.

Number of stories

Sharing stories of Legal Aid Saskatchewan’s work, team and values builds trust with our clients, community partners and stakeholders.

76 LinkedIn stories

The Legal Aid Saskatchewan LinkedIn account is used for advertising open job opportunities, promoting our work and achievements, and highlighting leadership and employees. Between April 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024, Legal Aid Saskatchewan posted 76 stories on our LinkedIn page.

108 national & provincial highlights

Legal Aid Saskatchewan was mentioned or highlighted in 108 news publications and media announcements (provincial and national) during the 2023-2024 fiscal year.





Purpose-Driven Teams Producing Exceptional Outcomes

We commit to celebrating success and providing growth opportunities. We support the wellbeing of our team, knowing that this has a positive effect on our clients.

Saskatchewan Top Employer 2024

Legal Aid Saskatchewan has been recognized as a Saskatchewan Top Employer 2024! Saskatchewan's Top Employers is an annual competition organized by the editors of Canada's Top 100 Employers. This special designation recognizes Saskatchewan employers that lead their industries in offering exceptional places to work. The evaluation process examines the workplace, benefits, vacation and time off, communications, performance management, skills development and community involvement. Recognition as Saskatchewan's Top Employer 2024 truly sets Legal Aid Saskatchewan apart from other workplaces!



**SASKATCHEWAN'S
TOP EMPLOYERS**

Long Service Awards Recognize Employees' Dedication to Legal Aid

Service awards were presented to a group of outstanding LAS employees during our 2023 all-staff conference in Saskatoon. Congratulations to:



Cheryl Boechler – 50 years of service
Mary Lou Rheindel – 30 years of service
Lynette Leibel – 30 years of service
Cindy Chery – 25 years of service
Lisa Wilhelm Skopyk – 25 years of service
Jennifer Calderbank – 25 years of service
Shannon Stanley – 25 years of service
Janice Hoffart – 25 years of service
Tanis Talbot – 25 years of service
Phillip Ventzek – 20 years of service
Terra Lennox-Zepp – 15 years of service
Cherie Dey – 15 years of service
Lynda Wilson – 15 years of service
Wanda Phillips – 10 years of service
Kyla Shea – 10 years of service
Matthew Llewellyn – 5 years of service
Taylor Obarianyk – 5 years of service



LAS Articling Student and Summer Student Programs

LAS has robust programs for young professionals entering the legal profession. The 2023-2024 fiscal year was the first year of hiring four University of Saskatchewan law students to join our Area Offices to be mentored by our seasoned team of lawyers and legal professionals: Isaac Rogers in Saskatoon Rural, Lisa Wanlin in Regina City, Elise Brass in Regina Rural, and Alicia Jenkins in Saskatoon City. We are pleased to welcome back Isaac and Lisa as two of our 2024-2025 articling students!

Legal Aid Saskatchewan's articling students' program provides a broad hands-on experience for students-at-law interested in criminal and family law, and promotes interaction between lawyers, clients and our admin team. Morgan Blyth (Northern Area Office) and Wendy Corden (Yorkton Area Office) were our two 2023-2024 articling students, and both have accepted full-time position as LAS staff lawyers upon their call to the bar!

The following operational metrics support our commitment of fostering purpose-driven teams producing exceptional outcomes.

Mechanisms to engage staff

Learn to Lead, Lead to Learn: These open discussions focus on various leadership topics for all staff to participate. In the 2023-2024 fiscal year, staff participated in two Learn to Lead, Lead to Learn forums.

Lunch and Learns: This learning forum is facilitated internally by our Practice Management Counsel, Indigenous Policy Council, Staff Lawyers, and external presenters. There was a total of 16 Lunch and Learns sessions hosted by LAS staff and external partners throughout the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Town Halls: These forums hosted by the CEO and senior management provide updates to staff on progress towards our strategic priorities. LAS hosted four all-staff town halls in 2023 -2024.

Number of self-identified Indigenous employees

15.52% Legal Aid Saskatchewan employees self-identify as Indigenous

Number of applicants for positions

During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the average number of external applications received for positions with Legal Aid Saskatchewan was 83.4. This includes all positions that were vacant and advertised. For every administrative position, an average of 141.7 applications were received. For every lawyer position, an average of 6.4 applications were received.

83.4
average number of
applications per position



Absenteeism

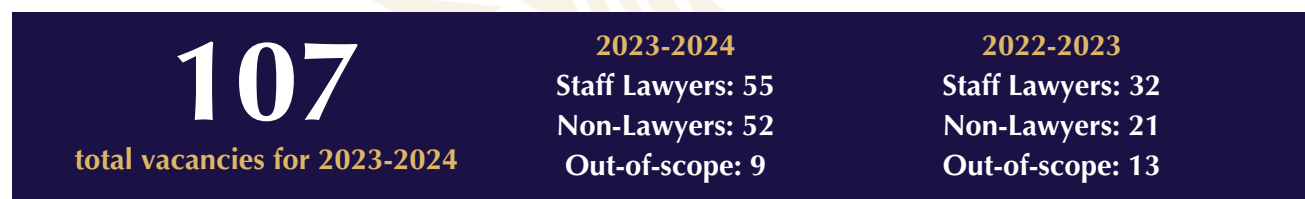
Sick days and unpaid leave are defined as time away from work (with or without pay) due to the illness of an employee or family member. In 2023-2024, the average rate of absenteeism was 9.19 days.

	2023-2024	5-year average
Lawyers	9.19 days	8.23 days
Legal Assistants	13.28 days	14.63 days
Admin Staff	9.9 days	9.26 days
Out-of-Scope	6.13 days	7 days



Staff vacancies

A position is considered vacant beginning on the day a person leaves the employment of Legal Aid Saskatchewan and ends on the date a new person starts in that same position. This vacancy rate does not include new positions. During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, there were 107 staff vacancies.



Time to fill an open position

The average amount of time it took to fill a position at Legal Aid Saskatchewan with an external candidate in the 2023-2024 fiscal year was 68.9 days.

- **Average number of days to hire a lawyer:** 87.7
In 2022-2023, the average was 64.25 days.
- **Average number of days to hire a non-lawyer:** 60.3
In 2022-2023, the average was 43.3 days.
- **Average number of days to hire out-of-scope:** 44.8
In 2022-2023, the average was 67 days.



New hire retention rate

The percentage of new hires who remained employed with Legal Aid Saskatchewan over the course of the 2023-2024 fiscal year is 81.8%. In 2022-2023, the retention rate was 76.6%.

81.8%

2023-2024 retention rate





Accountable and Responsive Stewards

We commit to effective stewardship of our resources.

LAS is funded by appropriations from the provincial government, supported by federal government. The federal cost-share agreement applies only to criminal files, while the provincial government supplies funding for both criminal and family legal aid services. LAS commits to effective stewardship of the resources entrusted to us as champions for access to justice.

Private Bar Billing Modernization Project

The work with the private bar billing modernization project continues to advance. Recent pilot projects involving exceptional circumstances and case management policies and forms have generated beneficial feedback from private bar lawyers, for both criminal law and family law matters. A Billings and Payments Handbook has been drafted and shared with a focus group. The online private bar portal is in the initial assessment and technological review phases, with the next steps of the design and development phases highly anticipated. The goal is to streamline the system and present standardized processes that benefit both the private bar panel and LAS's commitment to responsive decision making.

Expanding the Data Framework

LAS is reviewing its internal and external data requirements to strengthen our role of accountable and responsive stewards. Effective internal metrics will improve long term budgeting, resource allocation, office management, and relationship with the private bar. It will also allow for comparative analysis with other legal aid plans and building trust with our funders.

The following operational metrics support our commitment to the roles of accountable and responsive stewards.

Number of risks ranked medium or high without mitigation strategy

Legal Aid Saskatchewan's General Counsel maintains a risk registry of all internal and external threats to the financial, operational, legal and reputational health of the organization. This registry is presented to the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission on a quarterly basis. During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, Legal Aid Saskatchewan documented 11 risks in the risk registry. Of these 11 identified risks, all of them include a current and future mitigation strategy.

0

risks ranked medium or high without a mitigation strategy



Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the Commission's financial statements. This responsibility includes maintaining the integrity and objectivity of the Commission's financial records and presenting the financial statements in accordance with Canadian Public Sector Accounting standards.

Management maintains an appropriate system of internal controls, including policies and procedures, which provide reasonable assurance that the Commission's assets are safeguarded and that the financial records are relevant and reliable.

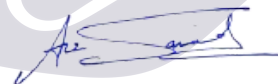
To ensure management meets its responsibilities for financial reporting and internal control, the members of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission discuss audit and reporting matters with representatives of management at regular meetings.

The members of the Commission have also reviewed the financial statements with representatives of management. The members have approved in principle the Commission's financial statements for the year end March 31, 2024.

The Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan conducts an independent audit of the financial statements. Their examination is conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards and includes tests and other procedures which allow them to report on the fairness of the financial statements. The Provincial Auditor's Report outlines the scope of the audit and the opinion.



Jayne Mallin
Chief Executive Officer



Ali Ahmed Jawaid
Acting Director of Finance

THE SASKATCHEWAN LEGAL AID COMMISSION

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended March 31, 2024

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To: The Members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2024, and the statement of operations and changes in accumulated surplus, statement of changes in net financial assets, and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission as at March 31, 2024, and the results of its operations, changes in net financial assets, and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards for Treasury Board's approval, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.



- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control identified during the audit.

Regina, Saskatchewan
June 21, 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Clemett".

Tara Clemett, CPA, CA, CISA
Provincial Auditor
Office of the Provincial Auditor

Statement 1

THE SASKATCHEWAN LEGAL AID COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
As at March 31

	2024	2023
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Financial Assets		
Cash	\$ 9,590,182	\$ 8,750,195
Accounts receivable	<u>59,916</u>	<u>19,087</u>
Total financial assets	<u>9,650,098</u>	<u>8,769,282</u>
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		
General	269,808	249,049
Private Solicitors' Fees	7,988,352	6,379,635
Employee Salaries and Benefits (note 11)	1,347,210	790,742
Deferred Contributions (note 6)	<u>---</u>	<u>20,125</u>
Total liabilities	<u>9,605,370</u>	<u>7,439,551</u>
Net financial assets, (statement 3)	<u>44,728</u>	<u>1,329,731</u>
Non-financial assets		
Tangible capital assets (note 5)	49,494	87,869
Prepaid expenses	<u>293,408</u>	<u>225,555</u>
Total Non-financial assets	<u>342,902</u>	<u>313,424</u>
Accumulated surplus, (statement 2)	<u>\$ 387,630</u>	<u>\$ 1,643,155</u>

Contractual Obligations (note 7)
Subsequent Events (note 11)
(See accompanying notes)

Statement 2

**THE SASKATCHEWAN LEGAL AID COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN ACCUMULATED SURPLUS
For the Year Ended March 31**

	2024		2023
	Budget (note 10)	Actual	Actual
Revenue			
Ministry of Justice and Attorney General	\$ 31,627,000	\$ 32,433,000	\$ 30,236,000
Grants	424,025	145,240	56,637
Other	<u>314,563</u>	<u>638,805</u>	<u>452,174</u>
Total revenue	<u>32,365,588</u>	<u>33,217,045</u>	<u>30,744,811</u>
Expense			
Salaries and employee benefits	21,525,764	20,358,079	19,995,428
Head Office administrative (schedule 1)	1,993,823	1,660,326	1,199,927
Area Office administrative and operating expenses (schedule 1)	2,175,277	2,112,232	2,380,281
Provision of legal services	7,329,400	9,127,229	7,857,615
Other legal expenses	182,250	140,647	151,201
Travel	985,500	1,035,682	923,218
Amortization of tangible capital assets	71,729	38,375	64,109
Loss on disposal of tangible capital assets	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>3</u>
Total expense	<u>34,263,743</u>	<u>34,472,570</u>	<u>32,571,782</u>
(Deficit) surplus	(1,898,155)	(1,255,525)	(1,826,971)
Accumulated surplus, beginning of year	<u>1,643,155</u>	<u>1,643,155</u>	<u>3,470,126</u>
Accumulated surplus (deficit) end of year (statement 1)	<u>\$ (255,000)</u>	<u>\$ 387,630</u>	<u>\$ 1,643,155</u>

(See accompanying notes)

Statement 3

THE SASKATCHEWAN LEGAL AID COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET FINANCIAL ASSETS
For the Year Ended March 31

	2024	2023	
	Budget	Actual	
	Actual	Actual	
	(note 10)		
Operating (deficit) surplus (Statement 2)	\$ (1,898,155)	\$ (1,255,525)	\$ (1,826,971)
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	(25,000)	---	(69,277)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	71,729	38,375	64,109
Loss on disposal of tangible capital assets	---	---	3
	<u>46,729</u>	<u>38,375</u>	<u>(5,165)</u>
Acquisition of prepaid expenses	(193,958)	(293,408)	(225,555)
Use of prepaid expenses	<u>193,958</u>	<u>225,555</u>	<u>193,958</u>
	<u>---</u>	<u>(67,853)</u>	<u>(31,597)</u>
(Decrease) increase in net financial assets	(1,851,426)	(1,285,003)	(1,863,733)
Net financial assets, beginning of year	<u>1,329,731</u>	<u>1,329,731</u>	<u>3,193,464</u>
Net financial assets (Net debt), end of year (statement 1)	<u>\$ (521,695)</u>	<u>\$ 44,728</u>	<u>\$ 1,329,731</u>

(See accompanying notes)

Statement 4

**THE SASKATCHEWAN LEGAL AID COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
For the Year Ended March 31**

	2024	2023
Cash (used in) provided by		
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Appropriation funds received	\$ 32,433,000	\$ 30,236,000
Cash received from grants	95,522	106,602
Cash received from other revenue	643,193	445,021
Cash payments for salaries and benefits	(19,885,088)	(20,026,388)
Cash payments for other suppliers	(4,928,128)	(4,657,197)
Cash payments for legal services	(7,518,512)	(6,923,870)
Net cash (used in) provided by operating activities	839,987	(819,832)
CAPITAL ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of capital assets	---	(69,277)
Net (decrease) increase in cash	839,987	(889,109)
Cash, beginning of year	8,750,195	9,639,304
Cash, end of year	\$ 9,590,182	\$ 8,750,195

(See accompanying notes)

THE SASKATCHEWAN LEGAL AID COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
March 31, 2024

The Legal Aid Act came into force on September 1, 1983 by Order in Council 1275/83 and continued the Saskatchewan Community Legal Services Commission as a body corporate under the name of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission (Commission). The purpose of the Commission is to provide legal services to persons and organizations for criminal and civil matters where those persons and organizations are financially unable to secure those services from their own resources.

1. Significant Accounting Policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards published by the Chartered Professional Accountants Canada (CPA Canada). A statement of remeasurement gains and losses has not been presented in these financial statements because all financial instruments are measured at amortized costs. The following policies are considered significant:

a) Revenue Recognition

Revenues are recognized in the period in which the transactions or events occurred that give rise to the revenues and when collection is reasonably assured. All revenues are recorded on an accrual basis.

Other revenue is comprised of client contributions, cost recoveries, interest and miscellaneous receipts.

Externally restricted inflows are deferred contribution when restrictions are placed on their use by the contributor, and are recognized as revenue when used for their specific purposes.

Government appropriations are recognized in the period the transfer is authorized and any eligibility criteria is met.

b) Expenses

Expenses are reported on an accrual basis. The costs of services incurred during the year are expensed.

c) Provision of Legal Services Expense

Provision of legal services expense include amounts billed by private bar lawyers to the Commission and an estimate of amounts of services performed by lawyers but not yet billed to the Commission.

d) Tangible Capital Assets

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost, which includes amounts that are directly related to the acquisition, design, construction, development, improvement, or betterment of the asset. Normal repairs and maintenance are expensed as incurred. The tangible capital assets are reduced annually by an amount representing the consumed cost of the asset calculated on a straight line basis as follows:

Office Equipment and Furniture	7 years
Legal Aid Information Network (LAIN)	
Development Costs	3 years

Tangible capital assets are written down when conditions indicate that they no longer contribute to the Commission's ability to provide services, or when the value of future economic benefits associated with the tangible capital assets is less than their net book value. The net write-downs (if any) are accounted for as expense in the Statement of Operations.

e) Financial Instruments

All financial instruments are measured at fair value upon initial recognition. Cash is measured at fair value. Accounts receivable, accounts payable, accrued liabilities, and deferred contributions are measured at amortized cost. The Commission does not have any embedded derivatives in host contracts.

f) New accounting standards not yet in effect

A new Canadian public sector accounting standard is not yet in effect for governments and has not been applied in preparing these financial statements. The Commission plans to adopt the new standard on the effective date and is currently analysing the impact this will have on these financial statements.

The following standards will become effective as follows:

- The Conceptual Framework for Financial Reporting in the Public Sector (effective fiscal years beginning on or after April 1, 2026).

g) New Public Sector Accounting Standards

- PS 3400 Revenue (effective April 1, 2023), a new standard on how to account for and report on revenue.
- PS 3160 Public Private Partnerships (effective April 1, 2023), a new standard on public private partnerships as an alternative finance and procurement model available to public sector entities where the public sector entity procures infrastructure using a private sector partner.
- PSG-8 Purchased Intangibles (effective April 1, 2023), explaining the scope of the intangibles allowed be recognized in the financial statements.

The Commission adopted these new standards and determined there is no impact for the period indicated above.

2. Financial Risk Management

The management of the Commission mitigates the risks associated with financial instruments with regular reporting to the members of the Commission.

Credit Risk:

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a transaction will fail to discharge an obligation and cause the other party to incur a financial loss. The Commission's exposure to credit risk is from the potential of non-payment of grants or accounts receivable. The credit risk on the

receivables is not material as most grants are received from the provincial appropriations and the other receivables are comprised of small amounts from contributions from clients.

Liquidity Risk:

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Commission is unable to meet its financial commitments as they become due. The Commission manages the liquidity risk from the monthly appropriations it receives from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice and Attorney General.

Market Risk:

Market risk represents the potential for loss from changes in the value of financial instruments due to changes in the market conditions. The Commission does not have any exposure to market risk.

3. Capital Management

The Commission's objective when managing its accumulated surplus is to ensure adequate resources exist to support the operations and growth strategies of the Commission.

The Commission obtains its funding from provincial appropriations through the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General. The Commission does not have any debt.

The Commission monitors and assesses its financial performance by a monthly variance analysis of actual and yearly projections to approved budget. The budget and variance analysis is approved by the members of the Commission. The management of the Commission also provide an appropriation forecast to the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General.

4. Pension Plan

The Commission participates in a defined contribution pension plan for the benefit of its employees. The Commission's financial obligation is limited to making regular payments to match the amounts contributed by the employees for current service. Until November 15, 2022, contributions were made to The Staff Pension Plan for Employees of The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission (Plan). Thereafter, the Commission transitioned from the Plan to the Saskatchewan Public Employees Pension Plan (PEPP).

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission, the Trustees of the Plan and the Union Executive was undertaken to recommence participation in PEPP. The decision was endorsed by the Commission on June 24, 2022.

An amendment to terminate the Plan was filed for approval with Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan (FCAA) and approval was made on February 27, 2023, by the Deputy Superintendent of Pensions – FCAA. The Plan account balances held with the fund custodian, Manulife, were transferred to PEPP on April 27, 2023.

The Commission's annual pension expense included in salaries and benefits for 2024 amounted to \$999,303 (2023 - \$978,404).

5. Tangible Capital Assets

Tangible capital assets are comprised of the following amounts:

	Office Equipment and Furniture	LAIN Development Costs	2024 Total	2023 Total
Opening cost	\$ 281,543	\$ 717,771	\$ 999,314	\$ 956,602
Additions during the year	---	---	---	69,277
Disposals during the year	---	---	---	(26,565)
Closing Cost	<u>281,543</u>	<u>717,771</u>	<u>999,314</u>	<u>999,314</u>
Opening Accumulated				
Amortization	222,153	689,292	911,445	873,898
Amortization during the year	9,896	28,479	38,375	64,109
Disposal during the year	---	---	---	(26,562)
Closing Accumulated				
Amortization	<u>232,049</u>	<u>717,771</u>	<u>949,820</u>	<u>911,445</u>
Net book value of				
Tangible capital assets	\$ <u>49,494</u>	\$ <u>---</u>	\$ <u>49,494</u>	\$ <u>87,869</u>

The Commission did not have any write downs of tangible capital assets during the year.

6. Deferred Contributions and Grants

Deferred operating contributions represent externally restricted grants and contributions for which the related expense have not been incurred.

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 20,125	\$ 45,310
Add: Grant contributions received or receivable in the year		
Law Foundation of Saskatchewan	64,244	7,152
Law Foundation of Saskatchewan Legal Aid Endowment Fund Trust	60,871	24,300
Less: Amounts recognized as revenue in the year	(145,240)	(56,637)
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ ---</u>	<u>\$ 20,125</u>

The Law Foundation of Saskatchewan approved two grants during the year to Legal Aid Commission totalling \$286,000 (2023 - \$93,400). The Commission recognized \$29,047 (2023 - \$7,152) as a receivable from the Foundation for expenses incurred for the \$50,000 LAS History Book grant approved in 2022/23 and \$16,000 approved for publishing LAS History Book in 2023/24.

The Law Foundation of Saskatchewan Endowment Fund Trust approved grants totalling \$85,000 (2023 - \$30,625). During the year, the Trust made a payment of \$60,325 (2023 - \$24,300) to the Commission for these grants. The Commission recognized \$546 as receivable from the Endowment Fund for National Criminal Law Program (NCLP)/National Family Law Program (NFLP).

7. Measurement Uncertainty and Contractual Obligations

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Areas where estimates are made include accrued private solicitors' fees and the related provision of legal service expense, amortization of tangible capital assets, non-vesting sick leave benefits, and contingent liabilities.

These estimates are based on the best information available at the time of preparation of the financial statements and are reviewed periodically to reflect new information as it becomes available. Measurement uncertainty exists in these financial statements and actual results could differ from those estimates.

The provision for services provided by members of the private bar that have not been billed on outstanding appointments is estimated at year end using a method that incorporates historical average costs and estimated time frames to complete similar cases. In addition to the liability for services provided to March 31, 2024, the Commission estimates \$898,930 (2023 - \$923,446) will be incurred on approximately 3,559 (2023 - 3,028) outstanding appointments issued to the private bar over and above both the billings paid to date and work performed but not yet billed.

The Commission carries leases for office equipment. Minimum lease payments for the next five fiscal periods, not including taxes, are as follows:

2025	\$ 98,850
2026	\$ 74,138
2027	---
2028	---

8. Related Party Transactions

These financial statements include transactions with related parties. The Commission is related to all Saskatchewan Crown Agencies such as ministries, corporations, boards, and commissions under the common control of the Government of Saskatchewan, as well as its key management personnel and their close family members. Additionally, the Commission is related to organizations where they have key management personnel and/or their close family members in common. Transactions with these related parties are in the normal course of operations and are settled on normal trade terms.

Facilities, vehicle rentals, office supplies, and miscellaneous office services are acquired from a related party. These transactions are recorded at agreed upon rates and settled on normal trade terms. Other operating transactions with related parties are settled at prevailing market prices under normal trade terms. These transactions and amounts outstanding at year end

are as follows:

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Expenses	\$ 2,469,353	\$ 2,234,023
Accounts payable	59,150	74,299
Accounts receivable	---	---

Each year, the Commission receives 98% (2023 – 99%) of its operating revenue as a government transfer from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice and Attorney General recorded as appropriations, and 2% (2023 – 1%) from grants and other sources. The Commission depends on funding from these sources for the continuance of its operations. During the year the Commission received \$32,433,000 from the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General (2023 - \$30,236,000).

In addition, the Commission pays Provincial Sales Tax on all its taxable purchases. The Commission also received transcripts services without charge from the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General.

During the year, the Commission made payments of \$127,242 (2023 - \$127,242) to the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission Benefit Plan Surplus Fund (Fund) that is set up under the collective bargaining agreement between C.U.P.E. Local 1949 (Union) and the Commission. As outlined in the agreement, the Fund is jointly administered by the Commission and the Union through the Labour Management Relations Committee. The Commission provides the Fund with day-to-day administration. The intent of the Fund is to cover increased premium costs of the extended health care benefits for members of C.U.P.E. Local 1949. The increased premium costs are initially paid by the Commission, and for the year the Fund reimbursed the Commission \$158,474 (2023 - \$129,809) for the increased premium costs. The Fund had a balance of \$501,307 (2023 - \$513,711) which is not included in the Commission's statement of financial position.

Other transactions with related parties and amounts due to or from them are described separately in these financial statements and the notes thereto.

9. The Law Foundation of Saskatchewan Legal Aid Endowment Fund Trust

A Trust Deed exists between the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan and the Trustees of The Law Foundation of Saskatchewan Legal Aid Endowment Fund Trust (Trust). The Trust was established with an endowment to assist in the Commission's mandate by:

- a) improving access to justice for persons whose own financial resources are inadequate;
- b) enhancing the ability of all Commission employees to provide legal aid service to clients, including education, research and the acquisition of research, teaching and library materials by the Commission;
- c) providing funds for research in legal and social areas related to legal aid and access to justice; and
- d) assisting otherwise in the Commission's mandate in ways not traditionally covered by government funding, and with particular emphasis on novel or innovative programs or delivery methods.

An endowment amount of \$2,100,000 (2023 - \$2,100,000) has been provided to the Trust and only the net income from the Trust is available for the beneficiaries. The transactions and amounts in the Commission's financial statements related to activities of the Trust at year end are as follows:

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Grants	\$ 80,996	\$ 49,485
Deferred contributions	---	20,125

The Trust has five trustees, three of which are members of the Commission. They include:

- The Chair of The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission
- A commissioner of The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission, appointed by the Law Society of Saskatchewan
- A commissioner of The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission, appointed by the Minister of Justice (Saskatchewan)

The Commission has authorized the utilization of its staff as may be reasonably required from time to time to provide administrative support to the Trust at no fee.

10. Budget

These amounts represent the operating budget approved June 2023 by members of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission.

11. Subsequent Events

On April 16, 2024, CUPE Local 1949 and the Commission agreed on a new Collective Bargaining Agreement. Once finalized the tentative agreement is a three-year agreement that will have retroactive salary increases that will take effect October 1, 2022. The estimated amount of retroactive salary for the year ended March 31, 2024, is \$703,064 for both in-scope and out-of-scope staff and has been accrued at March 31, 2024, to Employees Salaries and Benefits Liability and Salaries and Employees Benefits Expense. The Commission approved the revised agreement on April 30, 2024. The settlement of the amounts owing will occur in the next fiscal period.

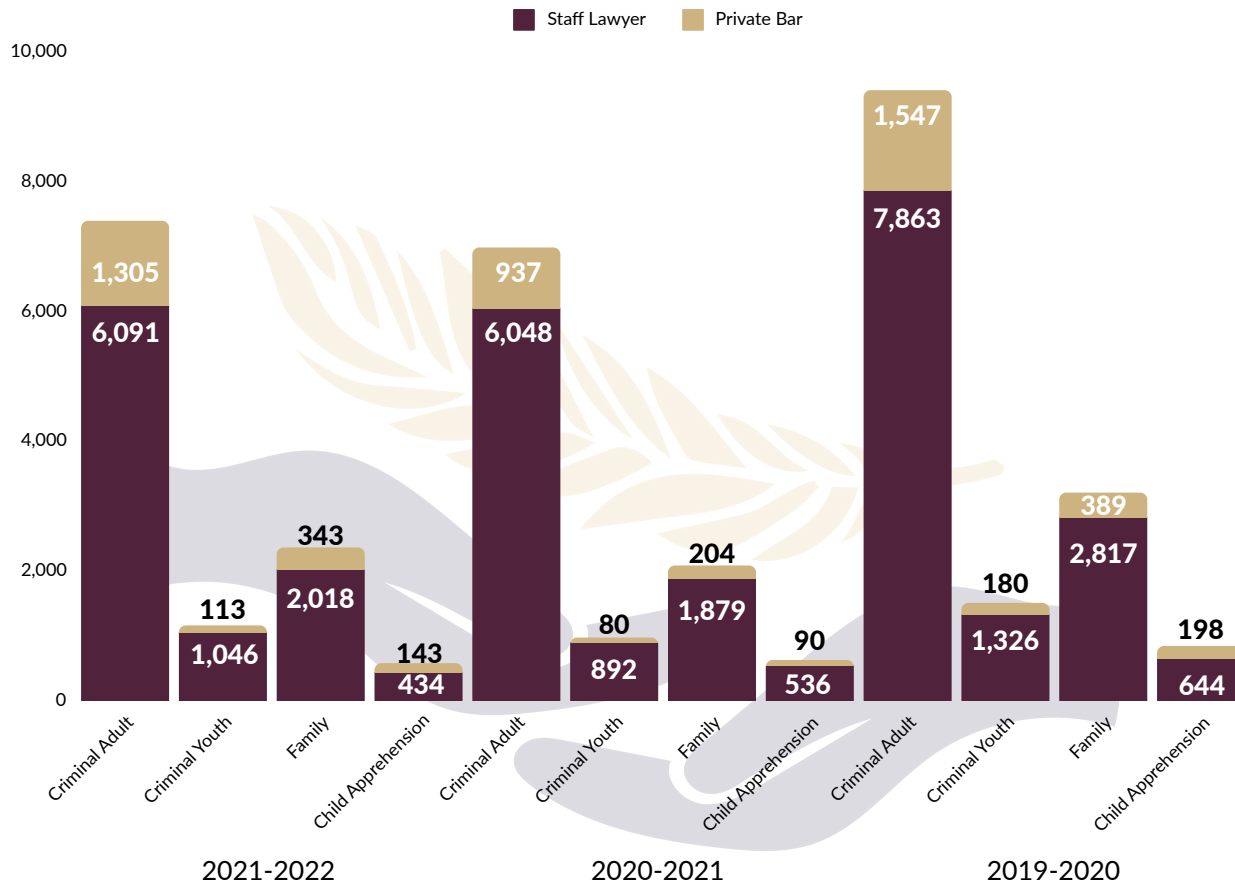
THE SASKATCHEWAN LEGAL AID COMMISSION
SCHEDULE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATING EXPENSES
For the Year Ended March 31

	2024		2023
	Budget (note 10)	Actual	Actual
Head Office Administrative and Operating Expenses			
Leased accommodation	\$ 276,352	\$ 234,662	\$ 171,814
Computer leases, maintenance, and support	257,587	302,525	248,601
Stationery and office supplies	67,000	31,046	31,628
Telephone	41,350	34,822	18,562
Postage	8,116	17,405	14,053
Photocopying	4,150	2,798	3,053
Periodicals	1,025	1,845	1,835
Expenses related to Endowment Fund Grant	30,625	80,996	49,485
Expenses related to Law Foundation Grant	393,400	64,244	7,152
Pandemic Expenses	---	42	4,878
Professional fees and legal costs	120,000	214,783	69,641
Other operating expenses	794,219	675,158	579,225
Total Head Office Administrative and Operating expenses (statement 2)	\$ 1,993,824	\$ 1,660,326	\$ 1,199,927
Area Office Administrative and Operating Expenses			
Leased accommodation	\$ 1,131,484	\$ 1,108,688	\$ 1,187,703
Computer leases, maintenance, and support	205,413	164,297	339,675
Stationery and office supplies	218,000	234,017	177,795
Telephone	108,650	113,743	122,524
Postage	57,884	53,871	52,320
Photocopying	57,850	62,549	55,336
Periodicals	22,975	19,752	16,947
Other operating expenses	373,021	355,315	427,981
Total Area Office Administrative and Operating Expenses (statement 2)	\$ 2,175,277	\$ 2,112,232	\$ 2,380,281

APPENDIX A: 2021-2022 Annual Report Corrected Data

NOTE: Data inconsistencies were identified through an internal review process. These inconsistencies were reported to the Federal Legal Aid Directorate and the Ministry of Justice, and reported herein.

New full-service files opened by Area Offices

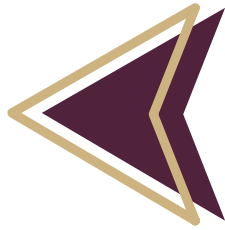


New Files by Type Opened by Area Office in Fiscal Year

	Criminal Adult			Criminal Youth			Family		
	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 2020-2021	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 2020-2021	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 2020-2021
Battlefords	528	604	672	73	105	130	89	129	152
Head Office	105	60	51	12	4	4	99	82	68
Meadow Lake	601	651	684	73	89	102	113	125	147
Melfort	231	315	304	50	72	85	62	69	74
Moose Jaw	200	213	229	44	35	45	101	138	153
Northern	809	921	961	58	122	165	79	108	130
Prince Albert	909	955	1033	113	151	194	143	171	194
Regina City	708	801	853	228	247	322	465	551	586
Regina Rural	559	589	632	42	69	82	195	256	284
Saskatoon City	615	804	832	220	253	283	365	478	529
Saskatoon Rural	59	272	298	13	33	44	59	123	123
South East	242	259	281	31	33	35	69	91	103
Swift Current	109	119	116	15	26	30	83	78	87
Yorkton	416	522	551	74	78	87	96	130	142
Staff Total	6091	7084	7499	1046	1318	1609	2018	2531	2771
Private Bar	1305	1295	1396	113	146	167	343	346	356
Total	7396	8378	8894	1159	1464	1776	2361	2877	3127

	Duty Counsel Service Adult			Duty Counsel Service Youth			Therapeutic Courts			Child Apprehension		
	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 20-21	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 20-21	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 20-21	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 20-21
Battlefords	833	847	907	52	85	108	55	53	59	0	22	32
Head Office	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	6	5	11	8	7
Meadow Lake	613	626	605	29	48	51	0	0	0	17	33	37
Melfort	328	307	246	15	24	22	0	0	0	14	13	10
Moose Jaw	170	228	243	7	18	27	4	8	12	24	23	24
Northern	385	431	384	18	49	55	0	0	0	14	35	38
Prince Albert	1006	1259	1343	76	151	206	0	0	0	41	64	74
Regina City	1604	1747	1819	44	155	134	369	461	527	93	97	93
Regina Rural	49	56	63	1	4	5	19	25	24	75	71	66
Saskatoon City	968	1271	1746	122	216	249	131	142	166	99	109	112
Saskatoon Rural	0	19	37	0	0	0	3	17	15	13	58	54
South East	60	64	75	5	3	4	1	3	3	10	6	5
Swift Current	76	126	132	3	9	11	0	0	1	13	11	11
Yorkton	413	374	376	20	35	39	0	0	0	10	20	20
Staff Total	6505	7355	7976	392	799	912	590	715	813	434	571	584
Private Bar	2259	1996	1606	29	32	36	24	45	40	143	146	153
Total	8764	9351	9582	421	831	948	614	760	853	577	716	737





Note for the previous table: In the last five years, management moved Montreal Lake from Prince Albert Area Office to Northern Area Office, and moved Spiritwood from Battlefords Area Office to Saskatoon Rural Area Office to Prince Albert Area Office.

Duty counsel numbers include PB lawyer work as ADRs and contracts.

Other Services Provided in the Fiscal Year

	Duty Counsel Advice Closed	Duty Counsel Advice Closed	Summary Advice Closed	Summary Advice Closed
	2021-2022	5-year average	2021-2022	5-year average
Battlefords	3	3	0	2
Head Office	0	0	0	4
Meadow Lake	0	2	3	5
Melfort	0	1	0	53
Moose Jaw	2	6	1	15
Northern	1	3	1	10
Prince Albert	11	6	0	47
Regina City	4	6	10	16
Regina Rural	11	19	33	42
Saskatoon City	7	4	2	6
Saskatoon Rural	0	0	0	4
South East	0	3	58	105
Swift Current	0	8	3	8
Yorkton	0	2	0	4
Staff Total	39	63	111	321
Private Bar	13,686	14,031	0	0
Total	13,725	14,094	111	321



Files by Type Closed by Area Office by Fiscal Year

	Criminal Adult			Criminal Youth			Family		
	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 2020-2021	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 2020-2021	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 2020-2021
	Battlefords	444	592	651	68	110	136	52	129
Head Office	1	6	9	1	0	1	0	4	4
Meadow Lake	553	634	655	71	89	101	135	122	140
Melfort	287	301	297	46	74	85	55	66	69
Moose Jaw	180	228	231	35	41	48	94	151	146
Northern	822	853	951	63	130	174	58	118	126
Prince Albert	869	906	953	97	158	188	87	152	171
Regina City	664	760	749	193	262	317	449	532	521
Regina Rural	600	591	629	38	73	89	212	258	266
Saskatoon City	637	721	687	214	252	275	349	409	370
Saskatoon Rural	126	279	301	9	36	45	90	100	91
South East	187	240	264	13	29	34	81	90	95
Swift Current	87	106	101	20	26	33	86	72	80
Yorkton	448	518	553	67	78	89	94	120	138
Staff Total	5905	6734	7031	935	1358	1613	1842	2324	2365
Private Bar	1429	1394	1377	133	169	180	376	409	375
Total	7334	8128	8409	1068	1527	1793	2218	2733	2739

	Duty Counsel Service Adult			Duty Counsel Service Youth			Therapeutic Courts			Child Apprehension		
	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 20-21	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 20-21	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 20-21	2021-2022	5-year Average	5-year Average without 20-21
	Battlefords	833	863	933	52	88	114	57	52	57	1	24
Head Office	0	355	532	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Meadow Lake	613	690	682	29	52	57	1	1	1	13	34	38
Melfort	328	309	247	15	23	22	1	1	1	21	13	12
Moose Jaw	170	231	244	7	18	27	7	4	8	28	25	23
Northern	385	449	405	20	52	58	1	1	1	7	33	31
Prince Albert	1006	1328	1391	76	154	207	0	1	1	38	64	68
Regina City	1604	1764	1804	44	156	136	317	465	496	111	100	89
Regina Rural	49	54	62	1	4	5	29	23	24	113	73	72
Saskatoon City	968	1898	2378	123	232	259	108	119	127	112	105	100
Saskatoon Rural	0	19	38	0	0	0	3	16	15	34	59	52
South East	60	65	76	5	3	4	1	1	1	4	5	5
Swift Current	76	174	163	3	11	13	0	2	2	12	11	11
Yorkton	413	374	376	20	36	39	0	0	0	16	20	22
Staff Total	6505	8572	9330	395	835	941	525	688	734	510	570	558
Private Bar	2259	2364	1545	27	21	27	57	57	55	141	155	144
Total	8764	10936	10875	422	852	973	582	744	790	651	725	702



APPENDIX B: 2022-2023

Annual Report Corrected Data

NOTE: Data inconsistencies were identified through an internal review process. These inconsistencies were reported to the Ministry of Justice and reported herein.

New full service files opened

	2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	Staff	Private Bar	Staff	Private Bar	Staff	Private Bar
Criminal Adult	8,724	1,821	6,091	1,305	6,048	937
Criminal Youth	1,046	113	1,046	113	892	80
Family	2,018	343	2,018	343	1,879	204
Child Apprehension	434	143	434	143	536	90
	12,222	2,420	9,589	1,904	9,355	1,311

Other services provided

	2022-2023		2021-2022		2020-2021	
	Staff	Private Bar	Staff	Private Bar	Staff	Private Bar
Duty Counsel Advice	50	14,796	39	13,948	43	14,457
Summary Advice	67	-	111	-	156	-
Duty Counsel Service (Adult)	7,578	1,902	6,505	2,259	6,113	2,222
Duty Counsel Service (Youth)	436	92	392	29	531	12
	8,131	16,790	7,047	16,236	6,843	16,691

Glossary

Alternative dispute resolution: Refers to the different ways people can resolve disputes without a trial.

Application: A formal written request for legal assistance. Related legal matters mentioned at the time of application are included on one application. Separate applications are counted for criminal, family, and to a very minor extent, civil and provincial offence matters.

Brydges Service: Refers to Duty Counsel Advice provided by telephone to detained persons by contract lawyers. This service is available to all individuals detained for a crime regardless of range of service or their eligibility for the full services of LAS.

Duty Counsel Advice: Immediate advice, by telephone or in person, to arrested or detained persons, irrespective of financial status, provided by a LAS staff lawyer or most likely through the Brydges Service.

Duty Counsel Service: Legal services provided by a lawyer to in-custody individuals where the person has not applied in writing requesting legal aid representation. Duty Counsel Service is provided irrespective of financial status and consists of either the entry of a guilty plea or a show cause hearing. If the client's case is not resolved, they are encouraged to apply for full-service representation.

Family Matters: Refers to proceedings related to divorce, separation, support, custody/access and other matters of a family law nature. These matters also include child protection proceedings.

Federal Criminal Matters (Adults): Refers to matters under the Criminal Code of Canada, Narcotic Control Act, Food and Drug Act or other Federal Statutes, if the proceedings are by way of indictment; or, if upon conviction and sentence, there is a likelihood of imprisonment or loss of livelihood.

Federal Criminal Matters (Youth) refers to matters under the Youth Criminal Justice Act.

Financial Eligibility: Refers to the process and decision made regarding an application based on the applicant's financial information about income, and dependents in assets; the decision can be in favour of or against eligibility.

Opened Files: These are applications that have been approved on or after April 1, 2023 and as of March 31, 2024 and have been worked on by a lawyer during this time frame. As of March 31, 2024, these files may be active, completed or abandoned by the client.

Summary Advice: Refers to the provision of legal advice, information or any other type of minimal legal service by a lawyer to an individual involving no more than a brief interview or telephone call.

Therapeutic Courts: Saskatchewan's Provincial Court has different Therapeutic Courts to address social and personal issues underlying or causing a person's criminal behaviour, such as addictions and mental illness. This includes Domestic Violence Court, Drug Treatment Court and Mental Health Court.





*Inclusive, responsive and equitable
justice in Saskatchewan.*

