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## New LSS Tariffs

As announced in the recent Message to the Tariff Bar, the Legal Services Society will implement simplified tariffs for new criminal and family referrals on June 29, 2010. The simplified tariffs will apply to all referrals with a date of interview/assignment after June 28, 2010. You can continue to bill referrals issued prior to June 29, 2010, under the existing tariff until your referral stop date (or for a maximum period of two years from June 29th).

The simplified tariffs involve the consolidation of multiple tariff items into a more flexible structure. The Criminal Tariff now totals just 25 tariff items with three new offence levels: summary, indictable, and major. The Family Tariff now totals just 9 items, including a new closing fee. To see full highlights of the changes and a brief summary of the new tariff items, please go to [Highlights of the new LSS tariffs](#) page on the LSS website at [www.lss.bc.ca](http://www.lss.bc.ca).

### Length of new referrals

All criminal and family referrals issued as of June 29, 2010, will have a service stop date of two years from the date of interview/assignment, meaning that referrals will end after two years. Currently, referrals have a service stop date of three years. LSS is shortening the service stop date in order to increase cost certainty in its budgeting processes. Upon request, LSS will consider extending the service stop date beyond two years, for example, where counsel has a court date set for an upcoming hearing.

### Changes to General Terms and Conditions

Updates to the *General Terms and Conditions* will be effective June 29, 2010, **for both new and existing referrals**. Changes include clarification that LSS may conduct a post payment review on accounts beyond two years from the date of payment if there is difficulty accessing court records. Also, referral lawyers must retain timekeeping records for five years from the last date of payment.



### **New LSS tariff guide**

Two new tariff guide chapters (in the renamed *LSS Tariffs* guide) for the criminal and family tariffs will be available on June 29, 2010, on the LSS website at [www.lss.bc.ca](http://www.lss.bc.ca) under Lawyers — LSS Tariffs. As well, the *Introduction* and *General Terms and Conditions* chapters have been combined, with new convenient links to appropriate up-to-date sections of the LSS website.

You will also see that tariff guide forms (previously in appendices) are available on the LSS website under Lawyers — Forms and questionnaires. Paper billing information will be available in the *Guide to Paper Billing* on the LSS website under Lawyers — LSS Tariffs.

### **Billing online**

Please note that from June 29, 2010, all new referral lawyers will be expected to use our online billing services (e-billing and direct deposit) available on the LSS website under Lawyers — Lawyer e-services. LSS will still accept paper billing forms from lawyers who were taking legal aid referrals prior to June 29, 2010.

Further background on this Notice to Counsel will be provided in an upcoming edition of the Legal Aid Fax.

As always, we welcome your feedback regarding the new LSS tariffs. If you have any comments, please e-mail them to [lawyersresources@lss.bc.ca](mailto:lawyersresources@lss.bc.ca).

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