



Legal
Services
Society

British Columbia
www.lss.bc.ca

Media Release

For immediate release

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Additional federal funding for immigration and refugee legal aid

The Legal Services Society has received confirmation that the federal government will provide additional funding to ensure continued legal aid services for immigrants and refugees.

LSS announced last month it would stop taking applications for immigration and refugee services effective August 1, 2017, due to a lack of funding to keep up with increased demand.

The new funding allows LSS to maintain services until November 2017 and federal-provincial discussions regarding immigration and refugee legal aid in BC are concluded.

“Refugees are an extremely vulnerable group. Many have faced persecution and torture and they need help to navigate our complex legal system,” said Mark Benton, QC, Chief Executive Officer of the Legal Services Society. “This new funding demonstrates the federal government’s commitment to helping those who need our support and assistance.”

The need for increased funding is the result of the global refugee crisis, which resulted in a 145 percent increase in legal aid refugee cases at LSS over the past three years. The new funding is necessary at this time because LSS, unlike other legal aid plans, cannot reallocate funding from other services to cover a deficit in immigration services.

The [Legal Services Society](http://www.lss.bc.ca) is BC’s legal aid provider. Services include legal advice, information, and representation for financially eligible people who are facing serious family, child protection or criminal matters, and some immigration, mental health and prison law issues. www.legalaid.bc.ca

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