



January 22, 2021

**Sent via email**

Lisa J. Hamilton, QC  
Hamilton Fabbro  
1400 - 1030 West Georgia Street  
Vancouver V6E 2Y3

Dear Lisa:

**Re: 2021 Mandate for Access to Justice Advisory Committee**

Thank you for agreeing to accept the appointment as Chair of the Access to Justice Advisory Committee for 2021.

The 2021-2025 Strategic Plan and the Terms of Reference along with the particular priorities outlined below should guide the Access to Justice Advisory Committee in its work this year.

The mandate from the Terms of Reference for the Access to Justice Advisory Committee is:

*Access to justice is an existential issue for the legal profession in British Columbia and requires that the Law Society actively engage in review and reform of the administration of justice to ensure that it works for all citizens of British Columbia. The Committee should monitor and advise the Benchers about key access to justice issues, with particular emphasis on access to legal services, and on legal aid issues and recommend to the Benchers as necessary actions or initiatives to address issues as they arise. This advisory function supports the Law Society's strategic planning process and the Vision for Publicly Funded Legal Aid and ensures the Society is addressing its part in ensuring access to justice.*

I expect that you will guide the Access to Justice Advisory Committee in its work over the year in a manner that reflects its terms of reference, the

Bencher Code of Conduct and the Bencher governance policies regarding committees, always ensuring we remain committed to evidence-based decision-making that takes into consideration the impacts of policies on our members and the public and that we act in the public interest.

**Dean Lawton, QC**  
President

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In particular, please keep in mind that the Benchers have directed that:

- a) Bencher committees are to help the Benchers do their job, not to help the staff do its jobs. Committees ordinarily will assist the Benchers by preparing policy alternatives and implications for Bencher deliberation.
- b) Bencher committees do not exercise authority over staff.
- c) In keeping with the Benchers' broader focus, Bencher committees will normally not have direct dealings with current staff operations.

I expect you and the members of Access to Justice Advisory Committee to work in a professional and respectful manner with the staff assigned to support the Advisory Committee.

During 2021, I would like to see the Access to Justice Advisory Committee make substantial progress on the following priorities:

1. *Advocate for greater access to non-adversarial dispute resolution in family law matters; and*
2. *Maintain and enhance measures adopted in response to the COVID pandemic that have improved the access to legal services and access to the justice system.*

As Chair of Access to Justice Advisory Committee, please ensure that all members of the Access to Justice Advisory Committee understand they are expected to abide by the Bencher Code of Conduct and the Law Society's workplace policies and that the Access to Justice Advisory Committee is expected to act within its Terms of Reference.

I look forward to hearing about the work of Access to Justice Advisory Committee over the balance of the year and trust that you and the Access to Justice Advisory Committee will make substantial progress on the priorities in this letter.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Lawton', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dean Lawton, QC  
President, Law Society of BC