



## Ethics Committee

### Terms of Reference

Updated: December 2016

### Mandate

The Ethics Committee identifies issues of professional responsibility and develops recommendations on policies concerning substantive matters of professional responsibility for consideration by the Benchers. The Committee also interprets existing rules and provides advice to individual members and to the members at large on matters of professional responsibility and publishes Committee opinions of general interest to members in the Benchers' Bulletin.

### Composition

1. Under Rule 1-47, the President may appoint any person as a member of a committee of the Benchers and may terminate the appointment.
2. The Committee generally consists of nine or twelve members.

### Meeting Practices

1. The Committee operates in a manner that is consistent with the Benchers' Governance Policies.
2. The Committee usually meets nine times per year on the day before each Bencher meeting.
3. Its opinions are usually reached by consensus, but in rare circumstances where consensus cannot be achieved, the Committee will vote on issues in accordance with the Law Society Rules and Roberts Rules of Order.
4. Quorum consists of at least half of the members of the Committee (Rule 1-16(1)).

### Accountability

The Committee is accountable to the Benchers and makes proposals for change to the Code of Professional Conduct for British Columbia ("the BC Code") to the Benchers who have final responsibility for changes to the Code.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

1. The Committee's duties and responsibilities are advisory in nature.
2. The Committee maintains communications with the Federation of Law Societies of Canada's Standing Committee on the Model Code of Professional Conduct, observes developments in the Model Code, and makes recommendations to the Benchers concerning contemplated amendments to the Code of Professional Conduct for British Columbia.
3. The Committee considers ethical issues referred for its review by the Benchers or by the Executive Committee.
4. In some cases the Committee considers issues raised by individuals and it may, where appropriate, issue ethics opinions for the purpose of providing guidance to members of the legal profession.
5. The Committee is also responsible for some of the annotations to the Code of Professional Conduct, either by issuing opinions to stand as annotations or by reviewing case summary annotations at the request of staff.