

# Law Society of British Columbia

February 8, 2024

**Sent via e-mail only to:**

BVatne@davidsonlawyers.ca

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Sent via e-mail only to:**

jvanallen@davidsonlawyers.ca

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Donald J. Avison, KC**  
Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer

Dear Brianna Vatne and Davidson Lawyers LLP:

**Re: Innovation Sandbox Proposal**

Thank you for your proposal to participate in the Law Society of British Columbia's ("LSBC") Innovation Sandbox.

Through the Innovation Sandbox, LSBC is seeking to expand access to legal services by enabling innovative solutions that address areas of unmet legal need but which would otherwise contravene the *Legal Profession Act*, the Law Society Rules or the Code of Professional Conduct.

The LSBC Executive Committee has reviewed your proposal to provide services and has agreed to issue to you this "no action" letter.

## 1. Services

You propose to offer the following legal and coaching services (the "Services") in family law matters within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of British Columbia and the Provincial (Family) Court of British Columbia, offered through Davidson Lawyers LLP by Brianna Vatne, without direct supervision:

- (a) coaching self-represented litigants who would maintain control of their own legal matter;
- (b) providing general information and procedural guidance in order to help clients understand and navigate the applicable court systems;

- (c) assisting clients with gathering and organizing appropriate documentation;
- (d) filing and serving of court forms/documents (in person and online);
- (e) scheduling court appearances;
- (f) review/revision and drafting of correspondence and various legal documents/ pleadings/court forms;
- (g) helping clients understand the purpose of applicable legal documents, pleadings, and court forms;
- (h) assisting with preparation of financial statements and supporting documentation;
- (i) calculating child support/Section 7 expenses (including retroactive amounts);
- (j) calculating spousal support (including retroactive amounts);
- (k) preparing clients for participation at applications, mediation sessions and court appearances, including what to expect, how to address the court/judge, behavioral expectations and what documents to bring;
- (l) conducting legal research;
- (m) providing legal advice (excluding highly complex legal matters, which will be referred to a lawyer Davidson Lawyers LLP);
- (n) negotiating on behalf of clients for matters within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Court;
- (o) appearing in court on behalf of clients for matters within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Court;
- (p) setting expectations for clients by explaining to them a range of possible outcomes in connection with their legal matter; and
- (q) providing referral assistance by referring individuals to other lawyers at Davidson Lawyers LLP when appropriate.

## **2. No Action**

Based on your proposal (copy attached) and any additional information you provided or LSBC obtained in relation to your proposal, LSBC will not initiate action to prevent Brianna Vatne from providing the Services and will not initiate action against Davidson Lawyers LLP lawyers under Law Society Rule

2-14 and/or Chapter 6 of the Code of Professional Conduct for British Columbia for facilitating the Services (“no-action”) provided the following conditions are met:

- 2.1 The information you have provided in support of your proposal is accurate and complete in all respects.
- 2.2 Your provision of the Services does not present a risk of harm to the public or undermine the integrity of the administration of justice.
- 2.3 You provide information to LSBC regarding your provision of the Services on the first business day of each month in the approved form and more frequently if requested.
- 2.4 You provide any client to which you intend to provide the Services with a retainer letter that outlines the terms of service to the client and includes the following disclosure prior to commencing any engagement:

*My services to you are not provided by a lawyer regulated by the Law Society of British Columbia. As a result: (a) I could be required to disclose to third parties your communications with me and any documents you provide in relation to my advice and assistance as such communications will not be subject to solicitor-client privilege; and (b) I am not required to have professional liability insurance. (c) There is no statutory complaint process in relation to the services that I provide and (d) the Law Society of British Columbia has not evaluated or verified my competence, character, and/or fitness to provide the services. For more information about the Law Society’s innovation sandbox visit <https://lawsociety.bc.ca/sandbox>.*

- 2.5 You abide by such provisions of the *Legal Profession Act*, the LSBC Rules and the LSBC Code of Professional Conduct that, if you were a member of LSBC, would apply to your provision of the Services.
- 2.6 You consent to the disclosure by the Law Society of your personal information, including your name and the scope of Services which you may provide, this no-action letter, and the modification or rescission of the no-action letter, generally on its website and in response to inquiries from the public or regulatory bodies and for the purpose of informing

the public about you and the Services you may provide in conjunction with your participation in the Innovation Sandbox.

- 2.7 If you intend to represent clients before the Provincial Court, you acknowledge that this no-action letter does not grant you audience to appear and that you may require permission from the presiding judge to do so. This “no action” letter must also be filed with the court in relation to any proceeding before the Provincial Court.
- 2.8 You cooperate fully with any investigation into any complaint LSBC receives about the Services and/or your conduct in relation to the provision of the Service and you respond promptly to requests from the LSBC for any information and/or documents in relation to the provision of Services.
- 2.9 You indemnify and save harmless LSBC, its Benchers, officers, agents and employees from all claims, demands, losses, damages, costs, fines, penalties and expenses that LSBC, its Benchers, officers, agents or employees may sustain, incur, suffer, or be put to at any time, either before or after this Agreement ends, which are based upon, arise out of or occur, directly or indirectly, by reason of any act or omission in your provision of the Services.
- 2.10 You do not assert, imply or otherwise suggest in any way that the no-action letter is an approval, endorsement or certification of the quality of your Services or of your qualifications, competence or fitness to provide the Services.

### **3. Rescission**

The Law Society may rescind this no-action letter at any time on written notice if:

- 3.1 You fail to meet any of the conditions set out in Part 2 of this letter.
- 3.2 You provide services beyond the scope of your proposal that constitute the practice of law as defined in the *Legal Profession Act*.
- 3.3 You engage in, or propose to engage in, conduct in relation to the provision of the Services that presents a risk of harm to the public or undermines the integrity of the administration of justice.

- 3.4 Material information that you failed to disclose comes to our attention or misinformation is discovered.

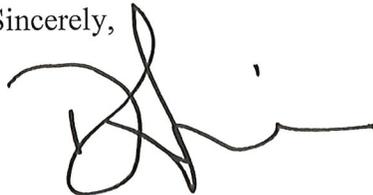
#### **4. Acknowledgement**

By acceptance of this letter, you acknowledge that:

- 4.1 This no-action letter is not an endorsement of the quality of the Services you provide or of your qualifications, competence or fitness to provide the Services.
- 4.2 Nothing in this no-action letter makes you a member of LSBC.
- 4.3 The issuance of this no-action letter is not an agreement on the part of LSBC, its Benchers, officers, agents and employees, to insure or indemnify you or your clients for any claims, demands, losses, damages, costs, fines, penalties and/or expenses that may arise in relation to your Services and you will remain solely responsible.
- 4.4 This no-action letter will take effect from the date of this letter and remain in effect until LSBC provides written notice of modification or rescission or otherwise determines that other regulatory measures are appropriate in relation to the Services.
- 4.5 If the LSBC determines that some or all of your Services require a licence, you agree to submit an application in that licensing process if you wish to continue providing the Services.

Thank you again for your proposal and we trust that you will be successful in providing the Services to the public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Avison', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Don Avison, KC (*he/him*)  
Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer