

Demographic Data Collection Questionnaire (Draft)

Survey Instructions: The Demographic Data Collection Questionnaire is part of the Law Society's effort to:

1. build a clearer picture of who makes up the profession,
2. identify where inequalities may exist to explore systematic barriers,
3. and inform policies that promote equity and fairness.

This survey has 10 demographic questions that capture characteristics closely linked to experiences of inequality namely: gender, sexual orientation, Indigenous identity, racial identity, disability, citizenship/immigration status, first language, religion, socio-economic background, and first-generation lawyer status. There is also an open-ended question at the end for additional information.

Each demographic question starts with a heading identifying the topic, followed by a short information that (1) explains the demographic characteristic, and (2) gives an illustrative example of how the data might be used listed under "*What This Data Can Help Answer*". And right after the information box, respondents will see the survey question along with the answer choices. Each question also includes a self-describe option.

Your data will **never** be used at the individual level. In other words, your responses will only be used in aggregate, so the analysis is conducted at the group level rather than for any individual. In general, your data will **never** be used for any purpose beyond those described here.

Because the data is linked to your member profile, access is strictly limited to a small, designated team at the Law Society, including select IT and Policy staff. While the survey is not fully anonymous, no identifying information is used in analysis.

Findings will be reported at the aggregate level to inform the public and the legal community. Any quotes from open-ended responses are presented in a way that prevents identification. Data will be reported accurately and respectfully, aiming to highlight systemic inequities without stigmatizing any group.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may leave any question blank, and you can still submit the survey even if you choose not to answer any of them.

By completing and submitting this survey, you confirm that you have read and understood these instructions, as well as the more detailed version provided in the Demographic Data Collection Information Sheet [here](#).

This data collection is authorized in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, RSBC 1996, c. 165, s. 26 (c). If you have any questions about the collection of this information or this project generally, please contact Kerry Holt, Chief Operating Officer at KHolt@lsbc.org.

1. Gender

Gender refers to the social, cultural, and personal dimensions of being a male, female, or another gender category. It encompasses two key aspects:

- *Gender identity*: how an individual identifies and expresses their gender in everyday life, including roles and behaviors (man, non-binary, two-spirit, woman).
- *Gender congruence*: whether an individual's gender identity aligns with the sex assigned at birth (cisgender) or differs from it (transgender).

People may also use other terms like agender, gender-fluid, gender-queer, intergender, or others that reflect their unique gender experiences. Individuals are encouraged to self-describe if they feel comfortable doing so.

What This Data Can Help Answer: Are certain gender groups more likely to stay in the profession than others?

How would you describe your gender? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Non-binary person
- ☐ Two-spirit (for Indigenous individuals only)
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Cisgender (my gender matches the sex I was assigned at birth)
- ☐ Transgender (my gender differs from the sex I was assigned at birth)
- ☐ Prefer to self describe: _____

2. Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation refers to who a person is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to. It also includes how a person identifies based on these attractions and their connection to others with similar attractions. This question focuses specifically on the identity aspect of sexual orientation. You may choose from the terms listed below or provide another identity that best describes you.

What This Data Can Help Answer: Are lawyers of different sexual orientations more likely to leave the profession than others?

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Asexual
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Gay
- ☐ Lesbian
- ☐ Pansexual
- ☐ Queer

- ☐ Straight
- ☐ Two-spirit (for Indigenous individuals only)
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

3. Indigenous Identity

In Canada, Indigenous identity refers to one's First Nations, Métis, or Inuit identity. Indigenous peoples have distinct languages, cultures, relationships to the land and ways of living together that are unique and predate contact with settlers. Many Indigenous people identify as belonging to their specific Nations.

What This Data Can Help Answer: What is the representation of Indigenous peoples in the legal profession in B.C.?

Do you identify as an Indigenous person in Canada? Select all that apply.

- ☐ First Nations (Status)
- ☐ First Nations (Non-status)
- ☐ Métis
- ☐ Inuit
- ☐ Indigenous to Canada (but prefer not to specify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit)
- ☐ I do not identify as Indigenous
- ☐ I identify as Indigenous to another part of the world
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

4. Racial Identity

Racial identity refers to an individual's sense of self and belonging to a particular racial group. Race is not a biological fact, but is a social construct – an idea created and shaped by society. It is commonly discussed in terms of physical features, geographic region, nationality, or cultural/ethnic heritage.

What This Data Can Help Answer: What racial groups make up practising lawyers in B.C.?

How would you describe your racial identity? Select all that apply.

- ☐ African, Black, or Caribbean
Examples: Afro-American, Afro-Canadian, Jamaican, Nigerian
- ☐ Arab
Examples: Egyptian, Lebanese, Palestinian, Syrian.
- ☐ East Asian
Examples: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Mongolian, Taiwanese
- ☐ South Asian
Examples: Bangladeshi, Indian, Indo-Caribbean, Pakistani, Sri Lankan
- ☐ Southeast Asian

Examples: Filipino, Indonesian, Malaysian, Thai, Vietnamese

☐ West and Central Asian

Examples: Armenian, Iranian, Israeli, Tajikistani, Turkish

☐ Latin American

Examples: Brazilian, Colombian, Mexican, Peruvian, Salvadoran

☐ White or European

Examples: Anglo-European, Eastern/Western European, English, French, Scottish

☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

5. Disability

Disabilities can be defined as impairments that interact with barriers in ways that keep people from fully and effectively participating in society on an equal basis with others. This includes disorders, syndromes, injuries, conditions, chronic illness etc. For the purposes of this survey, please consider disabilities that have lasted, or are expected to last, six months or longer.

Disabilities can:

- Be physical, mental, sensory, cognitive, communicative, etc.
- Be permanent, temporary, or episodic.
- Be visible or invisible.
- Include difficulties hearing or seeing even with aids (that is, hearing aids, cochlear implants, corrective lenses).

Barriers may include:

- Attitudes, architecture, communications, sensory information, systems, or technology.

What This Data Can Help Answer: What proportion of practising lawyers in B.C. have disabilities, and what kinds of disabilities do they experience?

Do you have a disability? Select all that apply.

☐ Chronic illness: a long-lasting or recurring health condition that requires ongoing medical attention and management.

Examples: Crohn's disease, Fibromyalgia, Type 1 Diabetes, Epilepsy, Cancer.

☐ Communication disability: Conditions that affect speech, language, or the ability to communicate effectively.

Examples: Stuttering, Aphasia, Non-verbal Autism.

☐ Physical disabilities: Conditions that affect movement, mobility, physical function, flexibility, dexterity.

Examples: Quadriplegia, Arthritis, Muscular Dystrophy.

☐ Mental health disabilities: Conditions that affect mental health and emotional well-being.

Examples: Depression, Anxiety Disorders, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Eating Disorders.

☐ Neurodivergence or learning disabilities: Conditions that impact thinking, learning, memory, or problem-solving.

Examples: Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.

☐ Sensory disabilities: Impairments related to the senses (vision, hearing, touch, taste, smell).

Examples: Blindness, deafness, Hard of hearing, Sensory Processing Disorder, Visual Impairment.

☐ I do not have a disability

☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

6. Citizenship/Immigration Status

Citizenship refers to a person's legal status as a Canadian, by birth or through naturalization. Immigration status reflects whether someone has moved to Canada from another country, which may affect their opportunities. We ask these questions to identify NCA candidates who are not Canadian and may encounter unique challenges related to immigration.

What This Data Can Help Answer: What are the similarities and differences in the experiences of NCA candidates who are Canadian citizens, permanent residents, temporary residents, or non-citizens/non-residents?

What was your status in Canada at the time you began your law studies?

☐ Canadian citizen

☐ Permanent resident

☐ Temporary resident (e.g., study or work permit)

☐ Not a Canadian citizen/resident (i.e., studied law in another country)

☐ Prefer to self-describe _____

7. English as First Language

First language is the language you learned first in childhood and still use most naturally. This is sometimes called your mother tongue or native language. We ask whether English was your first language, since growing up with the dominant language can influence experiences and opportunities.

What This Data Can Help Answer: How many practising lawyers grew up speaking English as their first language, and how might language background influence their experiences and opportunities in legal education and practice?

Is English the language you first learned during childhood and still use the most naturally?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

8. Religious Identity

Religious identity refers to your personal affiliation or identification with a religion or spiritual tradition. It can involve specific beliefs, practices, and community ties, but it may also reflect

individual experiences or choosing not to follow any religion. Religious identity can influence experiences in society, and minority faith groups may face systemic barriers or inequalities. We understand that some response options listed below may be broad, so individuals can self-describe or provide more specific answers if they wish.

What This Data Can Help Answer: What is the religious or spiritual composition of practising lawyers in B.C., and are certain faith groups underrepresented or facing barriers within the profession?

Which of the following best describe your religious or spiritual identity? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Christian
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ Indigenous spirituality
- ☐ Spiritual but not religious
- ☐ No religious or spiritual identity
- Examples: atheist, agnostic, humanist, secular*
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe/specify: _____

9. Socio-economic Status

Socio-economic status can be measured using both objective indicators (such as income, education, or occupation) and subjective assessments (how people perceive their social and economic position). In this question, we are interested in your subjective experience of your household's overall socio-economic background during your upbringing.

What This Data Can Help Answer: What socio-economic backgrounds do practising lawyers in B.C. come from, and how does subjective social status relate to an individual's experience in the profession?

Imagine a vertical ladder with 10 steps.

- The bottom rung (#1) represents people who are the worst off, those with the least money, the least education, the worst jobs, or no job at all.
- The top rung (#10) represents people who are the best off, those with the most money, the most education, and the best jobs.

Thinking about your family's situation during your upbringing, on which step of the ladder would you place your family? Please enter a number from 1 (worst off) to 10 (best off). ____

10. First-Generation Lawyer Status

Family exposure to the legal profession can influence access to legal education, career opportunities, professional networks, and familiarity with law. Identifying your generational status helps examine differences in experiences that may arise from this exposure.

- First-generation lawyer: The first in your immediate family (parents or guardians) to become a lawyer.
- Second-generation lawyer: At least one parent or guardian is or was a lawyer.
- Third-generation (or higher) lawyer: Parents/guardians and grandparents are or were lawyers.

What This Data Can Help Answer: What proportion of practising lawyers in B.C. are first-generation lawyers, and how might family exposure to the legal profession shape experiences in the legal profession?

Which generation of lawyers are you in your immediate family?

- ☐ First-generation: My parents/guardians are/were not lawyers
- ☐ Second-generation: At least one parent/guardian or guardian is/was a lawyer before me
- ☐ Third-generation or higher: Parents/guardians and grandparents are/were lawyers
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____

11. Closing Question

Would you like to provide any additional information to the Law Society regarding your demographic characteristics or for data collection on these topics?
