

Demographic Data Collection: Information Sheet (Draft)

Purpose of the Survey

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. inform policies that promote equity and fairness.

Your participation helps ensure the results reflects the full diversity of the profession. The findings will be valuable for the legal community, given the wide range of demographic characteristics being considered.

What is involved

This survey has 10 demographic questions.

You'll be asked about gender, sexual orientation, Indigenous identity, racial identity, disability, citizenship/immigration status, first language, religion, socio-economic background, and first-generation lawyer status. These characteristics are included because they can shape people's experiences and contribute to inequalities within the profession.

On the questionnaire, each question begins with a heading identifying the demographic topic. This is followed by a short information box that aims to support additional clarity and has two components. This box (1) explains the demographic characteristic being asked about and (2) provides an example of the kinds of questions the data could help answer; these examples are illustrative only and should not be taken as commitments to specific analysis. *The survey question will appear immediately after the information box, followed by the answer choices.* Should the listed options be insufficient, a self-describe field is provided in all questions.

Most questions on the questionnaire are adapted from the Government of British Columbia's demographic survey and were carefully selected, refined, and adapted to the legal profession based on feedback from lawyers, benchers, senior leadership at the Law Society, and the public. The survey ends with an open-ended question inviting any additional information.

How your data will (and will not) be used

Your data will **never** be used at the individual level. For example, it will not be used in relation to a specific licensee in any discipline process, any individual call and admission to the bar of BC, or in any matter involving the Lawyers Insurance Fund. 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.

We will use this data for two types of aggregate-level analysis. First, descriptive analysis helps us understand the demographic makeup of the profession. This includes summarizing, visualizing, and describing key information using measures such as frequencies, percentages, and bar graphs. This step gives us a clearer picture of who makes up the profession.

Second, we may conduct relational analysis, where your demographic data could be linked with other information from your member profile, depending on the research question. Linked variables could include practising versus non-practising status, firm size, legal education

background (NCA or Canadian law degree), age at which people leave the profession, as well as information from the professional conduct processes. The goal of linking demographic data with other data is to identify whether certain groups experience unequal outcomes, which may point to systemic inequalities that need to be examined and addressed.

In general, your data will **never** be used for any purpose beyond those described here.

How Your Data Will Be Managed

All data will be kept strictly confidential and stored on password-protected computers and servers. Once you complete and submit the survey, your data will be managed by a small, designated team at the Law Society. Because the data collected is attributable, meaning it is linked to your member profile at the backend, access is strictly limited to this team, which includes select members of the IT and Policy teams.

Depending on the research question, IT staff may either provide the demographic data on its own or link it with other information from your member profile. Once the necessary file is prepared, all identifying details are removed, and a de-identified file is transferred to the Policy team for analysis. This ensures that, although the survey is not fully anonymous, no identifying information remains in the data used for analysis.

How your Data will be Reported

When reporting findings to inform the public and the legal community, results will be analyzed and presented at the aggregate level. Any quotes from open-ended responses will be presented in a way that ensures they cannot be linked to any individual. Care will be taken to present the data accurately and respectfully, with the goal of identifying systemic inequities rather than stigmatizing any group

Voluntary Participation

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. You can also request that your demographic data be removed at any point by writing to us at policy@lsbc.org. Your information will be permanently deleted upon request; however, please note that data already published in aggregate form cannot be altered or removed.

Potential Risks

Some questions may bring up difficult feelings or memories. If you need support, mental health resources are available to licensees through the [Lawyer Well-Being Hub](#), such as Telus Health One, the Lawyer Assistance Program, and our Equity Advisor.

Privacy Notice and Contact Information

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 Kerryn Holt, Chief Operating Officer at KHolt@lsbc.org.