

This is the full text of the email to Legal Aid Alberta lawyers from LAA's president

July 2, 2024

Hello Team LAA. The Legal Aid Alberta Governance Agreement has expired, and the Government of Alberta has decided not to renew it. This means LAA is currently without a contractual agreement to provide legal aid services to Albertans.

LAA has been actively negotiating a new Governance Agreement with the Government of Alberta (Ministry of Justice) and the Law Society of Alberta for several months. Despite the good faith efforts of LAA and the Law Society in the negotiation process, the Ministry suddenly halted negotiations and terminated the Governance Agreement.

The Governance Agreement provides the necessary framework for Legal Aid Alberta to manage and deliver legal aid services independently in Alberta. Without a Governance Agreement in place, Legal Aid Alberta will no longer be able to issue certificates as of 4:30 p.m. on July 9, 2024.

We understand the concern this situation will bring to our community of employees, roster lawyers, clients, and Albertans. As we work through this period of uncertainty, it is essential that we remain professional and focused on serving disadvantaged Albertans.

We are committed to keeping you informed as we seek a resolution and prepare for operational changes before July 9. Information for employees will be shared by email and posted on the Loop as it becomes available. Messages for roster lawyers will be posted in Roster Resources, and if necessary, information for our clients and the public will be made available on our website.

We anticipate these developments will attract media attention. Please know that our Communications team is here to support you. As per our Communications Policy, please direct all media inquiries to communications@legalaid.ab.ca.

We also remind you to adhere to LAA policies regarding social media use, the Code of Conduct and Ethics, and privacy. Thank you for your unwavering dedication to LAA and Albertans. Together, we will navigate this challenging time and continue to uphold the values and mission of Legal Aid Alberta.

Please read the message to stakeholders below from Board Chair Ryan Callioux on behalf of the Legal Aid Alberta Board of Directors. This message will be shared with Roster Lawyers and other partners this afternoon.

Thank you. Gianpaolo (John) Panusa, KC
CEO and President Legal Aid Alberta