

# B3: Better Billing Bulletin

Issue #29 | April 2010

## Lawyer Payments regionalized

Legal Aid Ontario is regionalizing its Lawyer Payments Unit to serve lawyers better, create efficiencies and reduce administrative costs.

As of April 1, Lawyer Payments staff have been divided into three regions: GTA, Southwest, North & Central East. Each regional team will now be responsible for settling and paying all accounts and disbursements within its region.

- LAO Regional Organization

## How will this change impact me?

The change will make it easier for you to contact who handles your accounts and disbursement requests. If your certificate was issued in the GTA, your GTA Regional Lawyer Payments Team will settle your discretion requests, deal with your reviews, and process your disbursement authorizations. Regional staff will become familiar with your billing patterns and any support you might need.

## Who do I contact if I need to speak with someone?

The Lawyer Service Centre remains your first point of contact for matters such as the status of accounts, billing support and Legal Aid Online enquiries.

- Lawyer Service Centre: (416) 979-9934 or 1-866-979-9934

For matters such as urgent disbursement requests, discretion reviews status and expedites, please contact the Lawyer Payments admin for the region where the certificate was issued.

- Legal Aid Ontario: (416) 979-2352 and/or 1-800-668-8258
- GTA Lawyer Payments Admin – Sharon Ext. 4714
- Southwest Lawyer Payments Admin – Heather Ext. 6242

- North & Central East Lawyer Payments Admin – Susan Ext. 6487

## Getting paid – we’re running behind!!

We are trying very hard to pay you faster and ask for your patience during this period of restructuring. We are currently working on discretion and other accounts submitted in January; however, we have a plan in place to reduce the processing delays and hope to be back on track by June.

If your account is within tariff and submitted Online correctly, it will ‘match’ and be paid within 24 to 28 days.

If your account fails to ‘match’ Online, it becomes part of our ‘match exceptions’ inventory of unpaid accounts that require staff intervention. We aim to pay 70% of these accounts within 30 days and 90% within 60 days, providing we receive all the information required such as a discretion letter and detailed accounts.

If you are experiencing financial hardship and your account is outside our 60 days service commitment, please contact your regional lawyer payments administrator to request the matter be expedited. For an “expedite”, we require a written request briefly outlining your financial hardship and the account you would like expedited. Please note, expedites will be granted on three accounts only during this restructuring period (April – June). We apologize for the delays.

## Complex Criminal Cases and Block Fees

For more information please refer to:

- Implementation of Revised Tariff Rates and Enhanced Rate for Complex Criminal Cases
- Block fees will improve legal aid for clients and lawyers
- Information for lawyers > Block Fees

## Tariff & Billing Handbook

Consult our Handbook regularly for billing information.

## Questions?

Please let us know if you have questions or if there are topics you'd like to see us cover by contacting the Lawyer Service Centre at [pl-lsc@lao.on.ca](mailto:pl-lsc@lao.on.ca)



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