



AMICI CURIAE  
FRIENDSHIP  
SOCIETY



Make an appointment:  
**LEGALFORMSBC.CA**  
**778.522.2839**

# DO YOU NEED FREE HELP COMPLETING YOUR LEGAL FORM?



We provide free services based on the principle of equal access to justice regardless of your means.

Left to right: A participant listens in while paralegal Stacie Ayukawa(standing) discusses an affidavit with Jennifer Lin, lawyer.

## Amici Curiae Friendship Society CV

Current to September 6,, 2019

## Overview

Accessing the legal system independently is a challenge for ordinary British Columbians. Most people do not know how to properly prepare their own legal forms for a court or a tribunal matter, yet more are resolving legal matters on their own.

Amici Curiae is a non-profit society offering free workshops that help the public complete the legal forms necessary to present a matter to court or a tribunal. Powered by legal professionals and assisted by the legal community. No legal advice is given. The public service programme was launched by Dom Bautista, Executive Director of Law Courts Center, a continuing professional development provider, encouraged by then Supreme Court of BC Chief Justice Donald Brenner. The first workshop was held in February 8, 2011, in partnership with Access Pro Bono BC and the Ministry of the Attorney General Justice Access Centre (Vancouver). Since then, workshops have been established through a network of strategic partnerships.

## Key features of the legal forms workshops

- The free workshops are open to the public.
  - Appointments are confidential and are at least one hour long.
  - Individuals can return as needed.
  - Everyone is welcome. (There is no income test.)
- Our workshops help people complete their legal forms relating to:
  - BC Court of Appeal , Supreme Court of BC, Provincial Court of BC
  - Federal Court of Canada
  - Tribunals (ie BC Human Rights, and Civil Resolution).
- List: <https://www.legalformsbc.ca/legal-subject-areas.html>
- We do not assist in criminal matters, in drafting of wills, and actions against lawyers for professional negligence.

### **Workshop venues:**

- Atira Women's Resource Society (Vancouver)
- Battered Women's Support Services (undisclosed location in Vancouver)
- Carnegie Community Learning Centre (**Indigenous**)
- CHIMO Community Services (Richmond)
- Justice Education Society (Vancouver)
- Surrey Libraries Central Branch (Surrey)
- Vancouver Public Library Kensington Branch (Vancouver)

### **Nature of workshops**

- Workshops are generally held on Wednesday or Thursday evenings
- Each workshop has its own schedule; workshops are held between January to November. Emergency services are available.
- Services at workshops are provided by a team of volunteers that include:
  - Paralegals, newly called lawyers and law school students work one-on-one with clients to complete their forms
  - Lawyers who review the forms for completeness; lawyers do not give summary legal advice.
  - Law librarians who conduct legal research when required.
  - Law firm accountants who help with financial statement affidavits.
  - Pets who provide emotional and therapeutic support to volunteers and clients.

### **How to book an appointment**

- Individuals must have an appointment.
  - They may file online: <http://www.legalformsbc.ca/contact-us.html>
  - write to: [legalformsbc@gmail.com](mailto:legalformsbc@gmail.com), or
  - call 778.522.2839.
- An intake coordinator will answer within three business days to decide if we can help the person.

## **References**

[Here](#) is a message from former Chief Justice of BC Finch 3/21/11:

*I welcome the creation of the Paralegal Pro Bono Program and Access Pro Bono's partnership with the Law Courts Center in its evening Pro Bono Paralegal Program at the Vancouver Justice Access Centre. The Program is unique in Canada in engaging paralegals as primary pro bono legal service providers who work under the supervision of a lawyer to provide assistance to those who would otherwise find themselves with no help at all.*

[Here](#) is a message from Attorney General of BC Eby 02/15/19:

*A key priority for the Ministry of Attorney General is to increase access to justice for British Columbians. Equal access is a vital element of our justice system and is a guiding principle for the ACFS. The society has built a strong reputation for the quality of its service and its commitment to those who need assistance resolving legal matters.*



## Board of Directors

Justice Joel Groves

*Supreme Court of BC, Vancouver, BC*

Vicky Law

*Counsel, Equitas Law Group, Vancouver, BC*

Ladan Khamsi

*Trust Auditor, Law Society of BC, Vancouver, BC*

Jennifer Lin

*Counsel, Catalyst Legal LLP, , Vancouver, BC*

Amber Prince

*Counsel, Atira Women's Resource Society, Vancouver, BC*

Patricia Terlecki

*Paralegal, Twining Short & Haakonson, Barristers, Vancouver, BC*

Sandy Steward

*President, Sitka Solutions Inc., Delta, BC*

## Executive Director

Dom Bautista

*Law Courts Center, Richmond BC*