

Law Courts Center  
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.

Where you will find us:

- Alina Womersley Resource Society
- Carnegie Community Learning Centre
- CHMO Community Services (Richmond)
- Sutney Libraries (City Centre)
- Uncontested Divorce and Family Law Workshop
- Vancouver Public Library (Kensington)

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

# Amici Curiae Friendship Society CV

[www.legalformsbc.ca](http://www.legalformsbc.ca)

Current to February 28, 2020

Powered by legal professionals and assisted by the legal community, Amici Curiae Friendship Society helps British Columbians prepare their legal forms for free.

## 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 workshops that help the public complete the legal forms necessary to present a matter to court or a tribunal. No legal advice is given. The public service paralegal 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.
  - There is no income test.
- Our workshops help people complete their legal forms in *non-criminal* legal matters at the:
  - BC Court of Appeal
  - Supreme Court of BC
  - Provincial Court of BC
  - Federal Court
  - Tribunals (ie BC Human Rights and Civil Resolution).

### **Workshop venues:**

- Atira Women's Resource Society
- Carnegie Community Centre (**Indigenous**)
- CHIMO Community Services
- Justice Education Society
- Surrey Libraries Central Branch
- UBC Indigenous Community Legal Centre
- Vancouver Public Library Kensington Branch

### **Nature of workshops**

- Workshops are held on Wednesday or Thursday evenings
- Each workshop has its own schedule; generally workshops are held between January to November. Emergency services are available.
- Services at workshops are provided by a team of volunteers that includes:
  - Legal Professionals<sup>1</sup> who 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.

### **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 two 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.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Legal professionals include: paralegals, law school and articling students, law accountants and librarians.



## Board of Directors

Justice Joel Groves

*Supreme Court of BC, Vancouver, BC*

Lynda Hydamaka MA, RMT, RTC, MTC

*Registered [Master] Therapeutic Counsellor & Educator, Vancouver, BC*

Vicky Law

*Counsel, Equitas Law Group, Vancouver, BC*

Ladan Khamsi

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

Sharon Cahill Kearney

*Sources, Surrey, BC*

Jennifer Lin

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

Judge Nancy Phillips

*Provincial Court of BC, 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*