

The Death of DEI? Not so fast

PRESTON PARSONS, Partner, Overholt Law LLP

Accelerating attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion policies, programs, and initiatives in the USA, and some recent spillover effects into Canada, have some wondering whether Canadian businesses can roll back such programs too. However, while our neighbours may think the border between us is an artificial line, a very different legal landscape exists here that Canadian employers would do well to keep in mind.



On January 20, 2025 — the day that the new administration of the United States of America took office — 26 executive orders were signed, the second of which was to rescind various past executive orders and actions, including affirmative action policies. Since then, further executive orders by the US administration have targeted, among others, DEI programs in both the public and private sectors, the recognition of non-binary gender identities, and — most recently — non-English speaking truck drivers.

These are not the only developments south of the 49th parallel in recent years to target DEI initiatives. For example, two years ago, affirmative action programs fell in the crosshairs after the US Supreme Court ruled that race-based college admissions policies were unconstitutional, rolling back decades of judicial precedent supporting such policies. Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in that decision¹ that while affirmative action

bclma

FEATURES

- 1 THE DEATH OF DEI? NOT SO FAST**
Employers have contractual, policy, and legislative obligations to consider.
- 7 NEWCOMERS EVENT**
- 8 IS YOUR WEBSITE TANKING YOUR CASELOAD AND HIJACKING YOUR EVENINGS?**
Make your website work for you.
- 14 WHAT ARE 'FAMILY-BUILDING' BENEFITS?**
And does your firm need them?

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

MEMBER SNAPSHOT

Samuel Becker	6
Janiene Chand	21

WELCOME & KUDOS

11

ASK A COACH

12

THE SOUNDING BOARD

17

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

West Coast Title	
Search Ltd.	18

RECIPE

19

SAVE THE DATE

20

Editorial Committee

Heather Orchison, Chair
BCLMA
general@bclma.org

Stephanie Marsh, TOPICS Editor
Pier Blue Consulting
Direct: 613-857-8053
stephanie@pierblue.ca

Lorin Birnie, TOPICS Advertising
Cozen O'Connor LLP
Direct: 778-357-3274
lbirnie@cozen.com

Janiene Chand
Allen / McMillan LLP
Direct: 604-282-3987
janiene@amlc.ca

Lifen Lee
Hastings Labour Law Office
Direct: 604-609-6699
ll@hlllo.ca

TOPICS Production

Doris Pfister Murphy
DPM Word Projects

LOOKING FOR A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY?

The TOPICS Editorial Committee welcomes new volunteers to help us connect with association members through our informative newsletter! Our fun and collaborative group seeks BCLMA members to suggest ideas and help source thought-provoking articles that will benefit all subsections.

We meet formally at four lunch-hour planning meetings per year (lunch provided) to plan the next edition. We also host meetings virtually for volunteers who live and work in the valley or the interior, or on the island or the coast!

Don't miss this rewarding opportunity to build valuable relationships, and contribute to the BCLMA and to our legal community across the province.

No business writing skills required – just your enthusiasm!

Contact Committee Chair Heather Orchison at general@bclma.org if you have any questions, need additional information, or feel ready to join!

Who We Are

Founded in 1972, the BCLMA is a non-profit organization with more than 630 members from 185 law firms across BC. The BCLMA's goal is to provide educational and networking opportunities, enhance skills as legal administrators and managers, and provide professional and personal benefits to its registrants.

Member Services

The BCLMA provides opportunities to network with other law firm administrators and managers at annual spring and winter socials, and monthly subsection meetings. We host an annual Managing Partners Event, and a large conference every other year.

Newsletter Services

TOPICS is a public newsletter. Contact the Editorial Committee to provide comments on articles, to offer suggestions for articles in future issues, or to augment the circulation list. We welcome your feedback! Please send comments to general@bclma.org.

Submissions

Please contact Heather Orchison at general@bclma.org if you have an article or story idea you would like to submit. Please note that our prescribed article length is 1000 words. All submissions will be subject to review by the editorial board.

Copyright Reproduction Rights

TOPICS is copyrighted. However, we encourage you to circulate or copy this newsletter unmodified for your own internal or private use.

The newsletter, its contents or its material may not be sold, intact or modified, nor included in any package or product offered for sale.

©2025 BCLMA, CANADA. This issue and the newsletter's archive are all available in PDF format at www.bclma.org

programs were well-intentioned, “[m]any universities have for too long wrongly concluded that the touchstone of an individual’s identity is not challenges bested, skills built, or lessons learned, but the color of their skin.” Justices Ketanji Brown Jackson and Sonia Sotomayor each wrote scathing dissents: Justice Brown stating that “[w]ith let-them-eat-cake obliviousness, today, the majority pulls the ripcord and announces ‘colorblindness for all’ by legal fiat”, and Justice Sotomayor writing that the majority’s ruling “cements a superficial rule of colorblindness as a constitutional principle in an endemically segregated society.”

Unfortunately, the all-out assault on DEI by the current US administration over the past few months has pushed many organizations in the US to rebrand, roll back or outright abandon their DEI initiatives and commitments. Some companies and organizations in Canada are also shifting away from DEI initiatives, some as a result of those same executive orders, which, while of no legal force and effect in Canada, have caused concern that continued DEI initiatives put a target on some Canadian companies’ cross-border operations or US-based office locations. It is also possible that some Canadian companies simply wish to scale back DEI

initiatives because they feel they can, or because they want to, based on the changing political winds down south.

After decades of progress, is this a death knell for DEI in Canada?

A DIFFERENT LEGAL LANDSCAPE

There are no Canadian “executive orders” targeting DEI on a national basis. The Supreme Court of Canada, along with human rights tribunals across the country, have created decades of our own jurisprudence that has unequivocally not been rolled back. Within the current legislative and jurisprudential frameworks, it is not foreseeable that our highest court would rule that DEI programs are unconstitutional.

While it would take turning a significant blind eye to avoid the fact that there are some in Canada who support the aforementioned US developments, absent a significant political sea change in the “true North strong and free”, DEI is here to stay. Given this, employers must be cautious about the reputational and legal implications of any decisions to roll back DEI initiatives.



IT'S NEVER THIS OBVIOUS

R•JOHNSON
Relentless LEGAL RECRUITMENT

www.rjohnsoncorp.com 604.687.7555

(While) there are some in Canada who support the aforementioned US developments, absent a significant political sea change in the “true North strong and free”, DEI is here to stay.

GOING BACKWARDS ON DEI WILL COST YOUR BUSINESS

In terms of reputational harm, populations in Canada who have benefited from DEI initiatives are not likely to take kindly to having that progress pulled out from under them. Furthermore, DEI proponents, researchers, and boardrooms across the country have experienced the key truth that DEI illuminates: stronger, better decisions can be reached when you have the benefit of a diverse team at the table. Any attempts to ignore this will not reflect kindly on organizations that consider rollbacks, which would likely lead to

reputational harm manifesting through lower employee morale, higher turnover, and a less diverse applicant pool. The latter will result in many candidates going elsewhere, which is arguably going to be to the advantage of competitors.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Employers must remain mindful of their contractual, policy, and legislative obligations. These issues engage the employer’s obligations and employee’s rights under workers compensation and human rights legislation.

In BC, the *Human Rights Code* applies to all private businesses and prohibits employment discrimination based on a number of enumerated grounds, such as in the hiring of candidates or conditions of employment. It also lawfully permits affirmative action or employment equity programs. For federal employers operating within BC, the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and/or the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* apply, with similar protections. Workers’ compensation legislation further requires that employers create and maintain protections against bullying and harassment in the workplace. As such, ensuring workplaces are free of discrimination is a fundamental obligation of all employers in Canada.



Need to Track Down Elusive Defendants?

Results Driven Debt Collection Services Since 1997

- Locate Critical Witnesses
- Locate Beneficiaries
- Family Law Locates
- Locate Exigible Assets
- Rush Services Available
- Bulk Rates Available
- Consumer and Commercial Debt Collection Services

IRS
IN-HOUSE RECEIVABLE SERVICES LTD

Call Now 877-282-0197 Ext.114
sales@irscollections.ca ■ IRScollections.ca

The removal of DEI policies and initiatives in a workplace may function to convey the message to employees that discrimination is somehow suddenly acceptable.

The removal of DEI policies and initiatives in a workplace may function to convey the message to employees that discrimination is somehow suddenly acceptable, enabling an increase in discriminatory conduct including bullying and harassment on protected grounds. Given that most workplaces are more diverse now than at any prior point in Canadian history, any such increase will only create new headaches for employers – and additional liability for claims.

Affirmative action and DEI emerged as concepts precisely because individuals belonging to certain groups were not given the opportunity to be fairly evaluated on the basis of

merit. Eliminating such programs does nothing to address the impacts of adverse impact or systemic discrimination and unconscious biases that are actively at work, and may result in liability against the employer.

WHAT'S TO COME

Multiple lawsuits are currently challenging the US executive orders regarding DEI. It remains to be seen how those will shake out, and what will happen politically in the US in the coming months and years. We would be naïve to think that such developments could not happen here in Canada, but in the meantime, employers should think twice before following suit.



Preston Parsons is a partner at Overholt Law, practicing in the areas of employment and labour relations, human rights, and privacy law. Overholt Law is a boutique employment and labour relations firm located in downtown Vancouver, British Columbia. For more information regarding Overholt Law, please visit overholtlawyers.com.

1 *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023)

Where Legal Professionals Do Work



World's #1 Trusted Cloud Platform



- Built & Optimized for the Cloud
- Access Documents Anywhere at Anytime
- Highest Security of any Cloud-Based DMS
- Internal & External Built-In Collaboration
- Industry Leading Tech Support 24/7/365

Call BCS to Request a Demonstration
(916) 677-4277

Baker Cadence Solutions is here to help with any & all of your NetDocuments needs



baker+cadence | solutions, LLC

www.bakercadence.com | (916) 677-4277 | info@bakercadence.com

Offering Industry-Leading Legal Software Implementation and Training Since 1997

MEMBER SNAPSHOT

SAMUEL BECKER



Q
&A

Tell us about your current role.

As IT manager, I lead a dedicated team responsible for managing the firm's technology infrastructure, ensuring efficient and secure operations. My role involves overseeing IT operations, implementing new technologies, and ensuring that we provide great support to our users so that they can do their best work.

What do you enjoy the most about your role?

I enjoy the constant drive to improve and change, keeping up with ever-evolving technologies not just specific to the legal industry, but in the broad landscape of IT. The growth of AI is just the latest example of emerging technologies that we are seeing explode in its potential applications and shake up the standards.

When did you join the BCLMA?

2022

What is the greatest value you receive from the BCLMA?

The ability to connect with so many new people and reconnect with familiar faces through the organization and its events. The community that's been built by the BCLMA is incredibly valuable professionally, as well as personally.

What advice would you give to young professionals developing their legal career?

Ask why often. Knowing how to do something will help you to tackle that particular situation, but understanding why it is done that way can be key to applying that knowledge to new circumstances or finding improvements in the processes and bringing more value to your role.

If you could pick a song title to describe your legal career, what would it be?

WarGames

My dream vacation:

A quick trip home to England to visit family before shooting off to a sunny beach with an open bar for a few weeks.

My favourite quote or joke:

"To improve is to change, to be perfect is to change often."
– Winston Churchill.

The last movie I saw:

Moana 2

The last book I read:

Dogman: Lord of the Fleas

If I could pick a movie title to describe my life, it would be:

Dumb and Dumber

EVENT REPORT

OCCASION Newcomers Networking Event

DATE May 22, 2025

VENUE Commodore Lanes

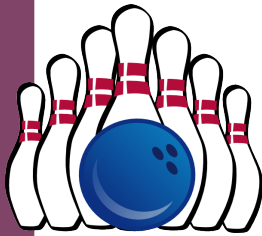
**PREMIER
SPONSORS**

AXIS
Insurance

**COM-PRO/
NextGen
Automation**
Managed IT
solutions

LawyerDoneDeal Corp.
Conveyancing technology

WHAT MADE IT SO SPECIAL



Did you know that the Commodore Lanes at Commodore Bowling & Billiards is now Canada's oldest surviving bowling centre? Opening in September 1930, Commodore Lanes has welcomed thousands of bowling enthusiasts over the past 95 years.

BCLMA hosted this special event to welcome new members to the association. The event kicked off with a (much-needed!) bowling tutorial. The tips surely helped to improve all the scorecards!

Win or lose, all attendees left with bowling-themed goodie bag.

The BCLMA thanks everyone who participated and helped organize the event, and sends another warm welcome to all new members to the BCLMA! We look forward to seeing you again soon!

THANK YOU, EVERYONE, FOR MAKING THIS EVENT A SUCCESS!



Purpose-Built
Software

Realti



AI-powered data imports



Secure ID verification



Task management



Document sharing

All included in the per file fee.

bclma
premier business
partner
2025



Is Your Website Tanking Your Caseload and Hijacking Your Evenings?

JON MORRISON, Owner & Consultant, Get Clear Consulting

It's 8:47 p.m.

You're exhausted already but there's more work to do. Court papers are stacked up on the coffee table, your phone's buzzing with tomorrow's reminders, and your notifications have started pinging from nagging client emails:

"Hi, do you handle wrongful dismissal claims?"

"What's your hourly rate?"

"How soon can we talk?"

Every minute you spend answering those questions is a minute you're not resting, spending time with loved ones, or doing anything you enjoy. If your practice runs lean on staff and heavy on demand, as most boutique firms do, your website isn't helping you like it should.

In fact, it's stealing your billable hours, stalling your growth, and quietly burning you out.

But your website should be saving your time and helping you attract the right clients.

Did you know a website could do that? Maybe that's why so many firms overlook the opportunity the right website offers.

FOUR ESSENTIALS OF A HARDWORKING WEBSITE

1. LEAD WITH *THEIR* STORY – NOT YOURS

People visit a law firm's website because something went wrong, not because they're killing time. They arrive stressed, often outside business hours, craving clarity on three things:

1. Can you solve my problem?
2. What does success look like?
3. How do I get started?

If your home page launches into "Our firm was established in 1987..." the opportunity is missed. They hit the back button. Opportunity missed.

Open with the problem (“Wrongful dismissal keeping you up at night?”), paint the finish line (“Sleep better knowing your job and reputation are protected”), and lay out a simple path (“Book a 15-minute call → Get a clear plan → Defend your rights”).

Lead with empathy first and expertise second. That’s how you keep the right people interested in what you do.

2. DESIGN THAT SCREAMS CREDIBILITY

If someone arrives at your site and it looks like it was made with a BlackBerry and a trackball, they’re going to judge you. Your site has to look good to compete with the big firms. Modern sites are simple. They need white space. Headlines you can scan at a traffic light. Long paragraphs get skimmed or skipped, especially on mobile (more than 70% of website traffic).

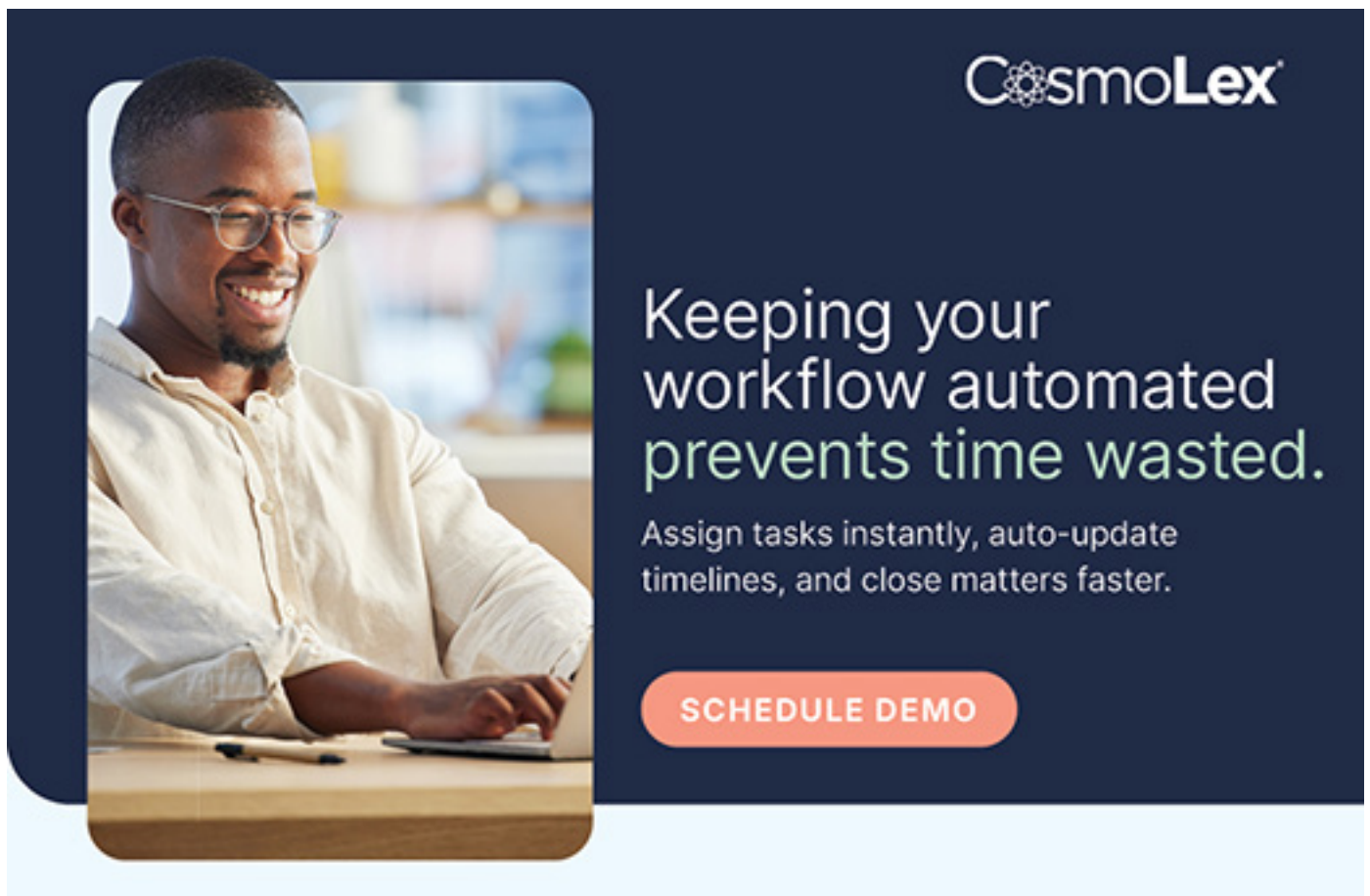
Clean design also filters out bad-fit clients: bold practice-area labels and clear pricing cues deter the tire-kickers who will only drain resources.

3. GOOGLE IS THE NEW REFERRAL GATEKEEPER

If your site loads like dialup, lacks keywords (“immigration lawyer Burnaby”), or hasn’t posted fresh content since Trudeau’s first term, you’re invisible. Google is the bouncer at the club where 90% of prospects decide whom to hire, and it only lets in pages wearing the right nametags.

That means planting the exact phrases your clients frantically type at midnight – “Tenant eviction lawyer Surrey” or “ICBC claim help” – in strategic hotspots: your page titles, H1 headlines, meta descriptions, image alt-text, and even your Google Business Profile.

Each placement is a neon sign that shouts, “This page solves your problem!” Layer in localized schema so your five-star reviews surface right on the search results, keep a steady trickle of fresh blog posts answering common questions, and you move from the back alley of page two to the velvet-roped VIP section of page one where the clicks (and the cases) actually happen.



The advertisement for CosmoLex features a dark blue background. On the left, there is a rounded rectangular image of a smiling Black man with glasses, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt, sitting at a desk with a pen and a tablet. To the right of the image, the CosmoLex logo is displayed in white. Below the logo, the headline "Keeping your workflow automated prevents time wasted." is written in white, with "prevents time wasted." in a light green color. Underneath the headline, the text "Assign tasks instantly, auto-update timelines, and close matters faster." is written in white. At the bottom right, there is an orange rounded rectangular button with the text "SCHEDULE DEMO" in white capital letters.

4. EFFORTLESS UPDATES—OR NOTHING GETS UPDATED

Too many firms have a site built for them, but the designer never hands over the keys to control the content. This is a problem because your firm is always evolving. You're adding new associates, fresh testimonials, and changing your hours. If editing a sentence means filing an IT ticket, your site will become stale and die.

Every law firm should be taking advantage of software that makes managing content quick and simple.

COMPLIANCE AND ACCESSIBILITY: THE SILENT DEALBREAKERS

Lawyers preach risk mitigation; your website should, too. Here are some things to be aware of:

- » **SSL & jurisdiction-appropriate hosting** keep data secure.
- » **ADA/ACA accessibility** broadens reach and prevents complaints.
- » **Law Society advertising rules** are baked into copy and design.
- » **Automated backups and updates** safeguard against cyber nightmares.

Skip just one of these and the sleekest site can still cost you trust—or an ethics headache.

THE OVERNIGHT TUNE-UP

If you feel like you're losing online and need a quick win with your website, download our free checklist "10 Things You Can Improve on Your Site Overnight" at getclear.ca/law.

This resource will help you focus on the words on your site, get the call to action right, speed upload times, and tick off compliance basics right away.

WHAT A HIGH-PERFORMANCE SITE DELIVERS

Here are some of the benefits of a winning website:

- » **Pre-sold clients.** By the time someone books that first call, they've learned what they need and they already trust you.
- » **Referral conversion.** Instead of business cards, people pass out website addresses to promote you. Word-of-mouth leads will still vet you online. A clean and clear site seals the deal.
- » **Fewer mismatches.** Speak directly to your ideal client, and pricing deters time-wasters.
- » **Evenings reclaimed.** Your site answers questions while you rest.

LET YOUR WEBSITE PULL THE LATE SHIFT

At Get Clear, we've launched sites for numerous boutique firms, earning more than 65 five-star reviews along the way. Are you ready to trade midnight emails for a website that hustles harder than a junior associate?

Visit getclear.ca/law, grab the checklist, and book your free 15-minute homepage audit.

Your practice is stressful enough. Your website should make your life easier.



Jon Morrison, MBA, TEDx speaker, and author of "Now Start With Who" is the Lead Consultant and founder of Get Clear Consulting, a boutique agency that has launched hundreds of high-performing websites for lawyers, clinicians, and professional service firms across North America. Jon blends business strategy with story-driven messaging to help small practices punch above their weight online, earning them more clients, more credibility, and a lot more free evenings.

Thinking about making
a career move?

**Connect with Canada's
Legal Recruitment Experts**

zsa.ca



SARA ADEL
Recruitment Consultant
sadel@zsa.ca
(604) 283-9318



WELCOME & KUDOS

New Member Firms and their Representative

Susan Robb **Beacon Law Centre** Sidney
Kevin Cherkowski **Cherkowski Marsden LLP** Vernon
Pars Maguire **Grossman LLP** Vancouver
Joe Logue **Preszler Injury Lawyers** Vancouver
Anna Filip **Yan Muirhead LLP** Vancouver

New Representatives for Existing Member Firms

Claudia Mendoza **Watson Goepel LLP** Vancouver
Sara Fry **McQuarrie Hunter LLP** Surrey

New Individual Members

Tammy George **Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang** Vancouver
Janiene Chand **Allen / McMillan LLP** Vancouver
Marissa Fyles **Bennett Jones SLP** Vancouver
Rubyna Jinnah **Boughton Law Group** Vancouver
Olivia Sarna **Boughton Law Group** Vancouver
Nicole Williams **CBM Lawyers LLP** Langley
Dawn Halliday **Clark Wilson LLP** Vancouver
Carlos Mascio **Jenkins Marzban Logan LLP** Vancouver
Sanja Culina **JFK Law LLP** Vancouver
Adriana Tercero **Klein Lawyers LLP** Vancouver
Darlene Hickey **Lawson Lundell LLP** Vancouver
Eduardo De Souza **Lawson Lundell LLP** Vancouver
Jas King **Lawson Lundell LLP** Vancouver
Michelle Yang **Lindsay Kenney LLP** Vancouver
Amelia Capell **MLT Aikins LLP** Vancouver
Alice Nixon Jones **Northpoint Legal LLP** Vancouver
Eva Tong **Northpoint Legal LLP** Vancouver
Jessica Sorah **Norton Rose Fulbright Canada LLP** Vancouver
Shala Gutierrez **Owen Bird Law Corporation** Vancouver
Hardip Samra **Preszler Injury Lawyers** Vancouver
Kuljit Sidhu **Roper Greyell LLP** Vancouver
Nathan Robertson **Roper Greyell LLP** Vancouver
S.Y. Lee **Slater Vecchio LLP** Vancouver
Carla Burgos **Watson Goepel LLP** Vancouver
April Higgs **Warnett Hallen LLP** Vancouver

Name Change

Lindsay LLP is now Northpoint Legal LLP



realaml.com (226) 741-0268

Simply Everything Pre-Matter

- ✓ **Three LSBC-Compliant Virtual Verification Tools**
Pay-per-use, fast & secure.
- ✓ **Free Client Identification Forms**
Collect SOF & trigger verifications seamlessly.
- ✓ **Trusted By 1,000 Firms Across Canada**
Your go-to AML & IDV partner.

Create a Pay-Per-Use Account

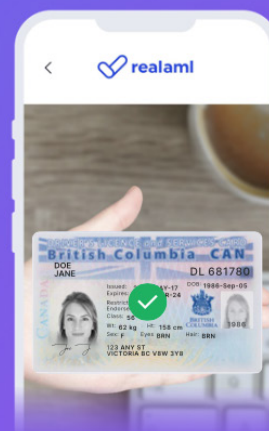
Book a Live Demo

SOC 2

ISO 27001



Enterprise-Grade Security & Compliance



BUILDING STRONG TEAMS

LEGAL AND ACCOUNTING & FINANCE RECRUITMENT

forgerecruitment.com

@forgerecruitment



BCLMA Ask a Coach

DEAR COACH:

How do I deal with a toxic person at work?

Signed,
Frustrated and Fed-Up

DEAR FRUSTRATED AND FED-UP,

First, I want to say how truly sorry I am that you're facing this. When you describe someone as "toxic," I'm interpreting that to mean you're dealing with a person whose behaviour is emotionally or professionally harmful – or has the potential to be. That's not something anyone should have to tolerate, and the toll it can take on mental health and confidence is real and significant.

When navigating a toxic relationship at work, your top priority must be your own well-being. I say this recognizing that – especially within a law firm environment – navigating these issues is sensitive and complex. You will need to choose your actions dependent on your professional context, your relationship with this person, and how safe or supported you feel. With that in mind, here are a few potential paths forward:

Set boundaries – Are there ways to limit your interactions with this person? It might not always be possible, but consider what options exist to reduce or reframe the contact points that are causing harm. Even subtle shifts in how and when you interact can create some breathing room.

Name the behaviour (if safe to do so) – If you feel it's safe and appropriate, consider addressing the behaviour directly. Sometimes, people genuinely don't realize the impact they're having. A simple, respectful approach might sound like: "I'm not comfortable with [specific behaviour]. Would you be willing to [alternative]?" Of course, you'll want to use words that feel authentic to you.

Use internal resources – Most organizations have respectful workplace or anti-harassment policies, and even if what you're experiencing doesn't meet the formal definition of "bullying," it still matters. The intent of those policies is

to foster a workplace free from harm. You might consider speaking with the contact listed in your firm's policy to explore your options. If there is no formal policy, consider speaking with a leader that you trust at the organization. They can provide you with support and help you figure out how (and who) can raise this issue.

Get external support – If you're not comfortable addressing this internally, or just need a safe and confidential space to process, it can be helpful to speak with a completely external and objective resource, such as a professional coach or therapist. These professionals can help you sort through your options, understand your needs, and figure out a course of action that protects your well-being and integrity.

In closing: You deserve to feel safe, respected, and supported at work. No one should have to endure toxic behaviour. The fact that you're seeking support shows strength and self-respect.

Warmly,
Megan



Megan (Meegan) McAllister is a professional coach and leadership development facilitator and strategic workplace culture consultant, specializing in the legal industry and law firm management. She is on a mission to create a ripple effect of better workplaces, leaders, careers and lives. www.meganmcallister.ca/

Call for Submissions

Do you have an idea for an article that you think would benefit BCLMA members? Are you itching to put pen to paper (or more likely fingers to keyboard) or do you have an article already written that you'd like to share? We are always looking for submissions!

Please contact Heather Orchison at general@bclma.org if you have an article or story idea you would like to submit. Please note that our prescribed article length is 1000 words.

All submissions will be subject to review by the editorial board.



Servicing Vancouver's
Law Offices Since 1989

FACILITIES MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION MANAGERS

ppl.ca | 604.254.4499 | info@ppl.ca



Experts Partnering on Experience

People and relationships are our business

Axis Insurance is Western Canada's leading provider of risk management and insurance services to law firms.

Specialized solutions for law firms include:

- Excess Professional Liability Insurance
- Office Package
- Privacy & Cyber Liability
- Crime (inc. Employee Dishonesty)
- Group Excess Liability
- Employee Benefits & Group Retirement Planning
- Personal Insurance (Home, Auto, Travel, Life)

Let us know how we can help you today!

axisinsurance.ca



Raquel Cooper CAIB

Vice President
Professional and Financial Services
(604) 629.2670
raquel.cooper@axisinsurance.ca

Mario Montagliani B.A., C.I.P.

Vice President, Risk Management
Professional and Financial Services
(604) 699.2064
mario.montagliani@axisinsurance.ca

Phil Moir

Account Executive
Professional and Financial Services
(604) 699.2077
phil.moir@axisinsurance.ca



What are ‘family-building’ benefits?

JOSH RUITERS, Sales and Partnerships Manager, Sprout Family

Let's rewind to a time before work-from-home debates dominated headlines – before the pandemic forever changed how we work. A time when HR, thought leadership, and media were united around a common message: Millennials are ruining everything! (A quick Google search of "Millennials ruined..." will reveal endless articles written on the subject.)

It is well-known that Baby Boomers represent the largest generation in history, followed closely by their children, the Millennials, who comprise the second-largest generation. Today, Baby Boomers are between the ages of 57 and 77 while Millennials range from 29 to 44. As Boomers move into retirement, Millennials have become the largest demographic in the workforce. Their growing influence has reshaped workplaces, industries, and policies, including the way companies support employees in their personal lives.

The biggest shift? Millennials are reaching life milestones – like homeownership and starting families – and at a later stage than previous generations. This delay is driven by various factors: some decide to complete postgraduate education before settling down, others prioritize career ambitions, and some – while focusing on other goals – haven't met the right person yet.

This shift has led to changes in industries investing in and prioritizing family-building needs. Insurance carriers have expanded coverage options for fertility treatments, new

fertility clinics are opening nationwide, and policies are being introduced to improve access to reproductive technologies such as invitro fertilization (IVF), a treatment that has historically been privately funded and prohibitively expensive. These developments aren't coincidental but rather a direct response to the reality that one in six families now require some form of assistance on their family-building journey.

And it's not just Millennials driving this shift. While previous generations tended to wait to address their fertility until they were ready for children, nearly half of Gen Z was found to be worried about their fertility despite not currently trying to conceive. A 2023 study by HRC Fertility found that nearly half of Gen Z is already concerned about their fertility despite not currently trying to conceive.¹ This generation is taking a more proactive approach, seeking fertility testing and fertility preservation (like egg freezing) to address their “fertility anxiety”.

In response, more organizations are looking to incorporate family-building support into their employee benefits packages. These benefits range from fertility treatments like IVF, surrogacy assistance, and adoption support, recognizing that modern families are built in diverse ways. The increasing availability of these benefits reflects changing societal norms and a broader recognition that families are formed in diverse ways. A study by Sun Life found that more than 50% of Canadian employees consider family-building benefits important, highlighting the growing demand for such support in the workplace.²

Integrating family-building benefits into an organization's offerings yields several strategic advantages:

1. TALENT ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

In competitive industries, like law, offering comprehensive benefits packages can differentiate a firm as an employer of choice. Employees with fertility benefits are more likely to stay longer and recommend their employer³ reducing turnover and associated recruitment costs.

2. ENHANCED EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND PRODUCTIVITY

Navigating the complexities of fertility treatments, surrogacy or adoption can be emotionally and financially taxing. By providing support, employers alleviate stress, enabling employees to focus more effectively on their professional responsibilities. This support fosters a culture of empathy and understanding, contributing to higher job satisfaction and productivity.

3. COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION (DEI)

Inclusive family-building benefits demonstrate a firm's dedication to DEI principles. They acknowledge and support the varied ways individuals and couples may choose to build their families, including LGBTQ2+ employees and single parents. Such benefits serve as actionable initiatives, moving beyond DEI rhetoric to tangible support.

4. POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL REPUTATION

Firms that prioritize employee well-being through comprehensive benefits are viewed favourably in the marketplace. This positive reputation can attract clients who value corporate social responsibility and enhance the firm's

With the
most experienced
recruiters and the
largest network of lawyers,
paraprofessionals, and
legal leaders, you can
rely on us to find
exactly who you need.

hunterwest.ca
(604) 609-6188



HUNTER WEST
LEGAL RECRUITMENT

**YOUR TRUSTED LEGAL
SEARCH EXPERTS**

brand image. For instance, Dentons was recognized as one of Canada's Top 20 Family-Friendly Employers for its exceptional family-friendly benefits, including an enhanced parental leave policy.⁴

Law firms considering the integration of family-building benefits can take the following steps:

1. ASSESS EMPLOYEE NEEDS

Conduct surveys or focus groups to understand the specific family-building challenges employees face. This assessment ensures the benefits offered are relevant and valuable.

2. PARTNER WITH SPECIALIZED PROVIDERS

Collaborating with organizations like Sprout Family can streamline the implementation of comprehensive family-building programs. Sprout offers personalized support, including fertility health assessments, connections to surrogacy agencies, and guidance on adoption processes, ensuring employees receive expert assistance tailored to their unique situations.

3. DEVELOP INCLUSIVE POLICIES

Ensure that policies encompass all aspects of family-building, from fertility treatments to adoption support. This inclusivity reflects a genuine commitment to supporting diverse paths to parenthood.

4. COMMUNICATE BENEFITS CLEARLY

Educate employees about the available benefits through workshops, informational sessions, and comprehensive resource materials. Clear communication ensures employees are aware of and can effectively utilize the support offered.

5. FOSTER A SUPPORTIVE CULTURE

Encourage open discussions about family-building challenges to reduce stigma. Providing access to counseling services or support groups can further assist employees in navigating their journeys.

As the workforce continues to evolve, so too must the benefits and support systems provided by employers. The increasing demand for family-building benefits is a direct response to shifting demographics and changing societal expectations. With more employees facing challenges on their path to parenthood, organizations that prioritize comprehensive family-building support will not only foster a more inclusive and supportive workplace but also enhance employee satisfaction and retention. As this trend continues, businesses that adapt to these needs will be better positioned to attract and retain top talent in an increasingly competitive job market.



For the last 10 years, Joshua Ruiters has provided consulting services on how to actively engage and retain employees. His primary focus is working with organizations to create a culture where employees feel appreciated and valued. Josh recently joined Sprout Family as the partnership manager.

- 1 <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230822942805/en/New-Survey-Finds-Nearly-Half-of-Gen-Z-Worry-About-Their-Fertility-Yet-Are-in-No-Rush-to-Enter-Parenthood>
- 2 insurancebusinessmag.com
- 3 <https://collectivehealth.com/blog/benefits-shop-talk/family-building-and-its-role-in-health-benefits/>
- 4 dentons.com



**Proudly
CANADIAN**

*In these tumultuous and somewhat confusing times,
it's comforting to know who you're working with.
West Coast Title Search Ltd. was born in Canada,
operates from our three Canadian offices,
and remains to this day under
100% Canadian ownership and control.*

There's only one

West Coast Title Search Ltd.

So much more than our name suggests... since 1969

CORPORATE | COURT | LAND | PROCESS SERVING

So much more than our name suggests... since 1969

Vancouver • New Westminster • Victoria

Tel: 604-659-8600 • info@wcts.com • wcts.com

THE SOUNDING BOARD

YOUR BCLMA.
YOUR NEWS.

Summer is here and things are looking bright here at BCLMA!

The Board hosted the Annual General Meeting on April 3. We are pleased to announce that Dorothy Cheung was re-elected for an additional term and will stay on as Treasurer. We are also happy to welcome Janiene Chand, Claire Immega, and Jeff Pelletier as Directors. All board members look forward to a productive year.

The Newcomers Networking Event was held on May 22. Check out the details in this issue.

The subsections kept busy with valuable presentations and webinars for our members this spring. Visit our website for all [upcoming events](#).

We hosted the ever-popular annual Summer Social at D6 Lounge at Parc Vancouver in June. Watch for fun photos in the fall newsletter!

Save the date! Plan to attend the BCLMA Biennial Conference on April 30 and May 1, 2026 at the Vancouver Convention Centre East. The conference committee is in planning mode!

Read the full [President's Message](#) on our website.

bclma
BC Legal Management Association



Your legal IT, Fully Managed

With our acquisition of BMC Networks,
we've supported Canadian law firms
for over 27 years



Take IT off your to-do list

telus.com/Legal-FullyManaged



Get to Know... West Coast Title Search Ltd.

The BCLMA values its many important relationships with vendors across the province. These service providers co-fund our social events, sponsor learning sessions, support our newsletter, and much more! Our Sponsorship Spotlight brings you highlights of their portfolio of professional services and their generous support of the BCLMA.

About us

Our 100% Canadian-owned firm has offices in Vancouver, New Westminster, and Victoria, and a network of trusted agents who facilitate filing and serving documents in any jurisdiction in Canada. With more than 50 years experience, we have accrued unrivalled expertise in Process Serving, Court, Land Title, and Corporate registry services. We also provide registry services for PPR, MHR, Vital Statistics, Motor Vehicles, and more.

Services provided

A full range of registry services: Corporate, Court, Land Titles, as well as Personal Property, Mobile Homes, Vital Statistics, Motor Vehicles, and more – locally, nationally, and internationally.

How our services benefit legal firms

WCTS works on behalf of our clients to ensure their documents are registered and served as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Why our services are so important to law firms

Because our agents are in the registries daily, we are able to navigate the local policies and procedures of the various registries as quickly as possible.

Our differentiator

Transparent pricing with no hidden fees. Free pickup and delivery of documents to clients on regularly scheduled messenger runs within Metropolitan Vancouver. No fuel surcharges, or mileage charges. Flat-fee pricing for process serving in Metro Vancouver.

What our clients say

"I am so impressed and pleased with the work your office provides. Truly exceptional! Thank you!" – LV, Ministry of the Attorney General

We have supported the BCLMA since 2013

Why we support the BCLMA

The BCLMA is an essential component of our clients' firms, and we so deeply appreciate the work they do as part of the BC legal community.

Coordinates

wcts.com | E: info@wcts.com | P: 604-659-8600

Follow us



RECIPE

Watermelon Arugula & Feta Salad

A refreshing and simple summer salad!

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups seedless watermelon – cubed and chilled
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta
- 7 oz arugula
- 1/4 small red onion – thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and fresh pepper

DIRECTIONS:

1. Wash and dry arugula.
2. In a large bowl, whisk balsamic vinegar, extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper.
3. Toss with remaining ingredients and serve.

VARIATIONS:

- Substitute arugula with Romaine lettuce, butter lettuce, watercress, or mixed greens.
- Swap feta for goat cheese.



Recipe from skinnytaste.com

Save the Date

BCLMA Fall Educational – Addressing Burnout and Overwork in the Legal Profession

Date: Thursday, October 2, 2025

Time: 11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Location: Terminal City Club

BCLMA Annual Winter Social

Date: Thursday, November 6, 2025

Time: 5:15 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Fairmont Waterfront Hotel



Event Announcement – Save the Date

BCLMA Biennial Conference

April 30 – May 1, 2026

Vancouver Convention Centre East



BCLMA 2026 Conference & Marketplace
April 30 - May 1, 2026 | Vancouver Convention Centre East

Visit bclma.org for more information and to register for events.

RICOH

Unleash your inner legal eagle

Modernize workflows
and get back to the
business of law

Learn more



MEMBER SNAPSHOT

JANIENE CHAND



Q &A

Where did your legal career begin?

I joined a boutique law firm 16 years ago. Since then, I have built my legal career through various roles: legal secretary/receptionist, legal assistant, paralegal, and practiced as a lawyer before obtaining certification as a professional coach, in addition to completing courses related to neurodiversity and DEI.

Since my diverse experience provides me with a unique understanding of the different role perspectives and team dynamics within law firms, I started a coaching business for legal professionals and paraprofessionals.

Tell us about your current role.

In my current role as Manager, People and Development, I work closely with the lawyers and students on professional development, including time/practice management and business development. I also strategize with the partners on policy development, performance management, and legal talent acquisition.

What do you enjoy the most about your role?

The ability to contribute towards making a positive difference, as well as bring in relatability through my own background in the legal field.

When did you join the BCLMA?

2024

What is the greatest value you receive from the BCLMA?

The connections! I get to meet and learn from so many people who are willing to share their own experiences and provide guidance.

What advice would you give to young professionals developing their legal career?

Take the time to develop a strong foundation of systems and processes in your practice. It's easy to focus on the 'what' of your practice – just don't forget the 'how'.

If you could pick a movie title to describe your legal career, what would it be?

The Change Up

My favourite BC day trip location:

Victoria – a relaxing getaway!

My favourite restaurant – anywhere:

Chili Dragon – local with great gluten-friendly options!

The last movie I saw: *Here*

The last book I read: *New Happy*

In my spare time, I like to: Read books, try new recipes, paint, and spend time with family and friends.

SMALL BUSINESS BC AWARDS
BEST WORKPLACE WINNER

Cloud Services for Lawyers

Delivered by People Who Care

Looking for technology that enhances teamwork?
Hosted Desktops allow teams to easily connect and work together no matter where they are - office, court, Hawaii



making I.T. work for you

Call for more information (604) 639.6300 | www.i-worx.ca

HOSTED DESKTOPS . HOSTED EMAIL . HOSTED FILE SHARING .

bclma

Connect with us on Instagram



Follow @bclma
Tag us at #bclma

BCLMA Ask a Mentor

BCLMA's mentorship program provides advice to members just entering the legal industry, as well as seasoned professionals working through novel challenges or an extraordinary business situation.

Log in to the "Members Only" section of our website and click on the "Mentors" tab for details.



THE BCLMA TEAM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sandra Lowe, President
Jenkins Marzban Logan LLP
604-681-6564
slowe@jml.ca

Priscilla Martindale, Secretary
Richards Buell Sutton LLP
604-661-9231
PMartindale@rbs.ca

Dorothy Cheung, Treasurer
DuMoulin Black LLP
604-602-6815
dcheung@dumoulinblack.com

Keith Cassidy, Director / Business Partner Liaison
Borden Ladner Gervais LLP
604-640-4157
kcassidy@blg.com

Janiene Chand, Director / 2026 Conference Chair
Allen / McMillan LLP
604-282-3987
janiene@amlc.ca

Claire Immega, Director
Borden Ladner Gervais LLP
604-640-4085
CImmega@blg.com

Jeff Pelletier, Director
Harper Grey LLP
604-895-2852
jpelletier@harpergrey.com

THE BCLMA TEAM

SUBSECTION CHAIRS & CO-CHAIRS

FACILITIES & SERVICE MANAGEMENT



Robyn LaPlante, Chair
Stikeman Elliott LLP
604-631-1300
rlaplante@stikeman.com



Dean Lys, Co-Chair
Miller Thomson LLP
604-687-2242
dlys@millerthomson.com

FINANCE



Renata Drag, Chair
Edwards Kenny & Bray LLP
604-689-1811
rdrag@ekb.com



Mirela Gakovic, Co-Chair
Farris LLP
604-684-9151
mgakovic@farris.com

LITIGATION TECHNOLOGY & eDISCOVERY



Shauna Sigurdson, Chair
Lawson Lundell LLP
604-685-3456
ssigurdson@lawsonlundell.com



Heather Liesch, Co-Chair
Blake Cassels Graydon LLP
604-631-4615
heather.liesch@blakes.com

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

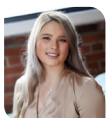


Maral Angha, Chair
Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP
604-691-6100
mangha@cassels.com



Julie Wettstein, Co-Chair
Farris LLP
604-684-9151
jwettstein@farris.com

MARKETING



Sara Habibovic, Chair
MLT Aikins LLP
604-682-7737
shabibovic@mltaikins.com



Alex Shelley, Co-Chair
Harris & Company LLP
604-891-2203
ashelley@harrisco.com

HUMAN RESOURCES



Lorin Birnie, Chair
Cozen O'Connor LLP
778-357-3274
lbirnie@cozen.com

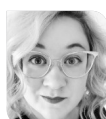


Marie Haughian, Co-Chair
Stikeman Elliott LLP
604-631-1478
mhaughian@stikeman.com



Natalia Yan, Co-Chair
Miller Titerle + Company
778-653-2806
Natalia@millertiterle.com

SMALL FIRMS



Kathleen Brett, Chair
MEP Business Counsel
604-891-1153
kbrett@meplaw.ca



Ishaleen Toor, Co-Chair
Segev LLP
604-629-5408
i.toor@segevlp.com

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT



Amelia Capell, Learning & Development Chair
MLT Aikins LLP
604-924-8733
acapell@mltaikins.com



Reena Cheema, Co-Chair
Whitelaw Twining LLP
604-899-1342
rcheema@wt.ca



Anne Ling, Co-Chair
Borden Ladner Gervais LLP
604-687-5744
AnLing@blg.com

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



James McIntosh, Chair
Harris & Company LLP
604-684-6633
jmcintosh@harrisco.com



Kevin Bahng, Co-Chair
Lawson Lundell LLP
604-685-3456
Kbahng@lawsonlundell.com



Gurmukh Ghag, Chair
Farris LLP
604-684-9151
gghag@farris.com

FRASER VALLEY SUBSECTION



Cheryl Scott, Chair
CBM Lawyers LLP
604-533-3821
cscott@cbmlawyers.com



Tim Wurtz, Co-Chair
Baker Newby LLP
604-792-1376
twurtz@bakernewby.com

BCLMA ADMINISTRATION

Jane Kennedy
Administrator & Membership Services
604-988-1221
info@bclma.org

Heather Orchison
Administrative Assistant
604-315-2087
general@bclma.org