

Legal Aid in Canada

The annual legal aid report presents data on legal aid delivery in Canada. This infographic presents trend data over five years from 2017-18 to 2021-22.

Expenditures began to increase in 2021-22 after a pandemic low, while administrative costs continue trending downward*



↑ **Expenditures***
\$978 million in 2021-22

↓ **Admin Costs***
\$168 million in 2021-22

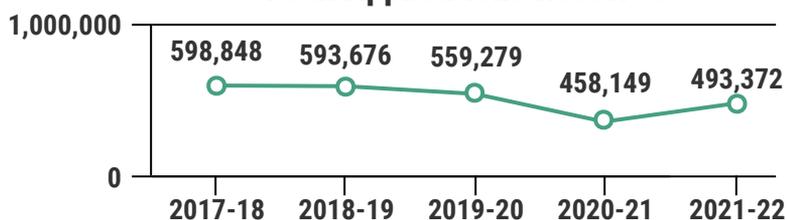
Legal aid plan revenues have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels*



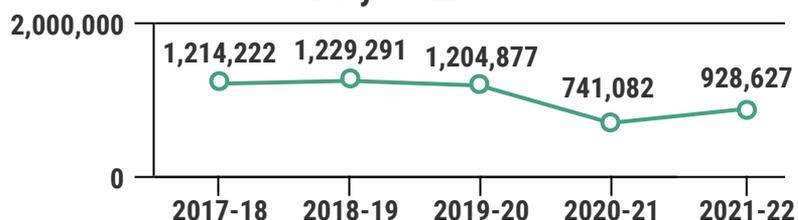
*Expenditures, costs, and revenue are reported in 2022 constant dollars to make comparisons between years more accurate. Constant dollar comparison calculated on March 6, 2023

The number of legal aid applications and duty counsel assists began to return to pre-pandemic levels in 2021-22 after hitting a pandemic low

Total Applications Received

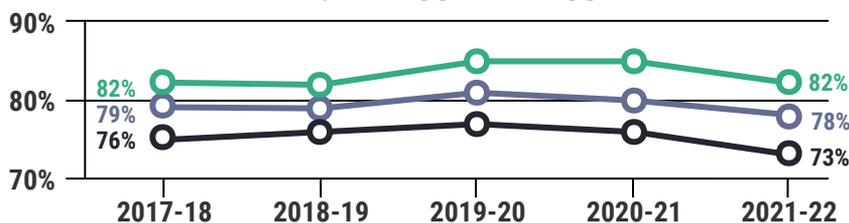


Duty Counsel Assists²



The approval rate of legal aid applications increased slightly between 2017-18 and 2019-20, and has decreased in the past two years.

Percentage of Approved Applications



**includes Immigration and Refugee (I&R) matters

Application Characteristics³

The majority of legal aid applicants are male. A large proportion of applicants are between 18 and 34 years of age. These proportions have remained stable over the past 5 years.



■ **Male applicants (61%)**



■ **Applicants aged 18-34 (43%)**



■ **Criminal applications (53%)**



■ **Main reason for application refusal (55%)**

Slightly more than half of applications are for criminal matters and the most common reason for refusing an application is financial ineligibility. Application type has remained stable, and the proportion of applications refused for financial ineligibility has increased in the past two years.

Notes:

1 Expenditures: payments made by legal aid plans to private law firms for the delivery of legal services and the costs of legal services delivered by legal aid plan staff.

2 Duty counsel assists: services provided by a lawyer at a location other than a legal aid office, generally at court or a place of detention. Most often, the services provided are brief, and pertain to provision of summary services, docket court appearances, or representation at a first appearance or plea court.

3 5-year average proportion