

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 2018-19 to 2022-23.



In 2022-23 expenditures continued to climb towards pre-pandemic levels, while administrative costs remained in a downward trend.*

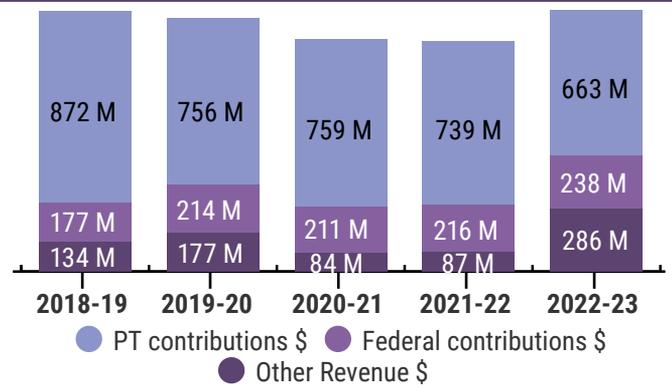


↑ Expenditures*
\$1034 million in 2022-23

↓ Admin Costs*
\$112 million in 2022-23

*Expenditures, costs and revenue reported in 2023 constant dollars calculated on February 28, 2024.

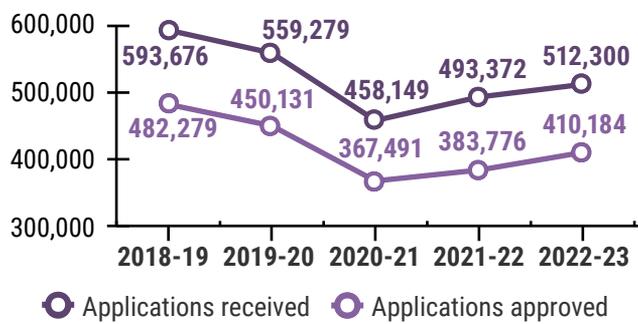
In 2022-23 federal funding for legal aid increased 34% from 2018-19 levels.



Source: Table 1 - Legal aid plan revenues, by type of revenue, 2018-19 to 2022-23 (Figure uses constant 2023 dollars as calculated February 28, 2024).

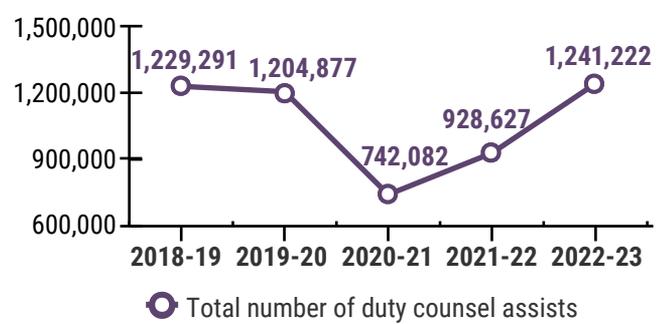
Applications for legal aid are still down compared to pre-pandemic levels, but have increased over the past two years. The provision of duty counsel services has surpassed pre-pandemic levels, services were up 8% compared to five years ago.

Total Applications Received



○ Applications received ○ Applications approved

Duty Counsel Assists²

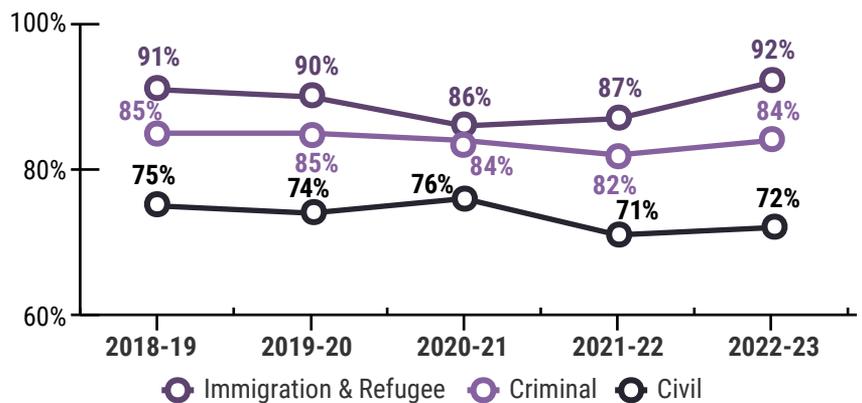


○ Total number of duty counsel assists

Source: Legal Aid in Canada reports 2018-19 to 2022-23 - Table 3 and Table 4.

Source: Legal Aid in Canada reports 2018-19 to 2022-23 - Table 9.

Percentage of Approved Applications



Source: Legal Aid in Canada reports 2018-19 to 2022-23 - Table 3 and 4.

The overall approval rate for all applications was 80% in 2022-23, which has remained stable over time. Approval rates vary by application type with approval rates for all types up in 2022-23 from 2021-22.

Application Characteristics

Applicants for legal aid tend to be male and young. Overall, 6 in 10 applicants are male, while 4 in 10 applicants are young adults between the ages of 18-34. These proportions have remained consistent over the past five years.

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 slightly over time.



■ Male applicants (60%³)



■ Applicants aged 18-34 (42%³)



■ Criminal applications (53%³)



■ Main reason for application refusal (58%³)

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.



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