

Summary of Notes Presented at the January 22 Legal Services Forum
By Pro Bono Law Alberta Edmonton Branch

Who we are:

- Pro Bono Law Alberta (PBLA) is a provincial not-for-profit organization that promotes access to justice in Alberta by engaging the legal community to provide pro bono (free) legal services for Albertans in need.
- PBLA administers programs that provide free legal assistance to individuals and non-profits; works with law firms to develop pro bono policies and projects; identifies and brokers partnerships between law firms and community groups with legal needs; leverages pro bono resources in the community through work with other non-profit organizations; and fosters a culture of pro bono service in the legal profession.
- PBLA is not a legal clinic and does not offer direct legal services to the public. PBLA programs are 100% run by volunteers.

What we do:

- PBLA administers the Civil Claims Duty Counsel Project (CCDC) and the Queen's Bench Amicus Program (QB Amicus) at the courthouses in Calgary and Edmonton.
- These programs are designed to assist self-represented litigants with civil matters in Provincial Court (Civil) and Civil Masters and Justice Chambers. However, assistance is subject to meeting program guidelines and is not guaranteed.

Our Programs in Edmonton:

We run the CCDC and QB Amicus Programs program in the Edmonton courthouse.

Civil Claims Duty Counsel Program

- Venue: 2nd Floor, Provincial Court Ante Room 262A
- Times:
 - Tuesdays 10am – 2pm
 - Wednesdays 12noon – 4pm
 - Thursdays 9am – 4pm
- Volunteer lawyers can provide :
 - Summary legal advice
 - Procedural information
 - Help preparing for trials, motions and other appearances
 - Help completing forms

- This Program does not assist with:
 - Family, criminal or corporate law matters
 - Matters in Court of Queen's Bench or other Appeal Courts
 - Pre-trial conferences and mediations
- Program procedure: 30 mins, first-come first-served service. Assistance is subject to meeting program guidelines and is not guaranteed.
- We also make referrals to other non-profit legal organisations

Queen's Bench Amicus Program

- Time: Wednesdays 9am – 12:30pm
- Venue: Law library, Justice (Courtroom 316) and Masters (Courtrooms 212 and 213) chambers
- Volunteer lawyers provide assistance in Morning Chambers ONLY.
 - Applications
 - Motions
 - Other appearances
- This Program does not assist with:
 - Family, criminal or corporate law matters
 - Matters in Provincial Court or other Appeal Courts
 - Pre-trial conferences and mediations
 - This program is not an advice clinic
- Program procedure:
 - First-come first-served service.
 - Volunteer lawyers help explain Chambers procedure to litigants and assist them in delivering their submissions if need arises.
 - Assistance is offered to only those who have a matter in Chambers that day.
 - Assistance is subject to meeting program guidelines and is not guaranteed.
- The Role of the Amicus:
 - Amicus curiae means 'friend of the court'.
 - The amicus's client is the Court, and the amicus gives objective, neutral, dispassionate advice to the Court to assist the Judge or Master in deciding the matter before him or her.
- Referrals:
 - We refer clients to other non-profit legal organisations if we cannot provide the assistance they need.