

# TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION of BC

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August 7, 2020

Sunny Dhaliwal  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Citizens Services  
[Sunny.dhaliwal@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Sunny.dhaliwal@gov.bc.ca)

Salman Azam  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Attorney General  
[Salman.azam@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Salman.azam@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Mr. Dhaliwal and Mr. Azam:

On behalf of the Trial Lawyers Association of BC, I write in response to the decision taken by the Ministry of Citizens' Services to not renew the lease of The Law Courts Inn. The decision appears to have been made without any consultation or input from The Lawyers' Inn Society, or the legal profession. I echo and endorse the recent positions taken in the letters of Ken Armstrong, CBABC President, and Adam Howden-Duke, President of the Lawyers' Inn Society.

Put summarily, for over four decades the Law Courts Inn has held tremendous value for the judiciary, courthouse staff, and many legal associations (TLABC, the CBABC, and the Law Society, among others) and other organizations including not-for-profits. It is worth noting the Law Courts Inn also hosts professional development and networking events from diverse ethnic communities engaged in the administration of justice, the provision of pro-bono legal services to vulnerable and marginalized British Columbians, and gender equality and women's legal organizations.

Day to day, in terms of the practice of law at the province's busiest courthouse, the Law Courts Inn is a collegial, efficient and affordable meeting place for the bench, the bar, and the public to gather for lunch. The practicality for trial lawyers in having a convenient and central location for counsel to enjoy an expedient meal on afternoon breaks is important. This convenience is especially true for lawyers who do not have downtown offices, who are attending at the Vancouver courthouse from elsewhere in the lower mainland or throughout the province. Of particular import to the administration of justice, the Law Court's Inn is a quiet, spacious venue where lawyers, clients, experts and witnesses can meet efficiently and quietly to prepare for evidence and submissions in the afternoon session.

We join the CBABC, the Vancouver Bar Association, Courthouse Libraries BC, among countless legal professionals, in requesting that the Ministry reconsider their decision and renew the lease with The Lawyers' Inn Society.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JR', is placed on a light blue rectangular background.

John Rice  
President  
Trial Lawyers Association of BC

cc. Honourable Robert Bauman, Chief Justice of British Columbia  
Honourable Christopher Hinkson, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia  
Honourable Melissa Gillespie, Chief Judge of the Provincial Court of British Columbia  
Adam Howden-Duke, Lawyers' Inn Society  
Craig Ferris QC, Law Society of British Columbia  
Ken Armstrong ,CBABC President, 2019-20  
Honourable David Eby, Attorney General of British Columbia  
Honourable Anne Kang, Minister of Citizens' Services  
Jill Kot, Deputy Minister, Citizens' Services  
Michael Lee, MLA (Official Opposition Critic for Attorney General)