

# JUSTICE MATTERS: CBA'S AGENDA FOR JUSTICE

The importance of a timely, effective and equally accessible legal system can't be overemphasized, and is key to a healthy democracy. One of CBA's goals is to advocate for the improvement of the administration of, and equal access to, justice. This can only be achieved through increased government resourcing and support.

## JUSTICE SPENDING IS CURRENTLY ~1% OF THE GOVERNMENT BUDGET

**AN UNDERRESOURCED JUSTICE SYSTEM AFFECTS US ALL**





<p><b>ALBERTANS</b></p> <p>Increased taxes + decreased community well-being &amp; safety</p>	<p><b>JUSTICE SYSTEM</b></p> <p>Over-burdened system + lack of capacity to lead change + risk to judicial independence</p>	<p><b>GOVERNMENT</b></p> <p>Increased spending on health services, family services, social support services, incarceration, &amp; much more</p>
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## ~100% OF CANADIANS WILL EXPERIENCE A JUSTICE PROBLEM IN THEIR LIFETIME

**WHO IS AFFECTED MOST?**

1 INDIGENOUS	2 VULNERABLE	3 DISABLED	4 ISOLATED
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## CURRENT BARRIERS TO JUSTICE

<p><b>BACKLOGS &amp; DELAYS</b></p>  <p>Delayed justice significantly impacts social &amp; economic well-being.</p>	<p><b>DIMINISHED CAPACITY</b></p>  <p>An overburdened system is not efficient, effective, or sustainable.</p>	<p><b>UNEQUAL ACCESS</b></p>  <p>Citizens lacking financial means, who are isolated and/or are disabled, face more barriers.</p>	<p><b>UNEQUAL OUTCOMES</b></p>  <p>Vulnerable groups are over-represented in the system, entrenching marginalization.</p>
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## CAUSES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• process inefficiencies</li> <li>• increased case load</li> <li>• legal aid restrictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• limited pro bono &amp; community clinic options</li> <li>• increased case complexity</li> <li>• population growth</li> <li>• shortage of judges &amp; support staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rural court closures</li> <li>• systemic bias</li> <li>• lack of holistic approaches</li> </ul>
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<p>DELAYS HAVE RESULTED IN <b>\$800 MILLION</b> PER YEAR IN INCREASED HEALTHCARE &amp; SOCIAL COSTS</p> 	<p><b>SELF-REPRESENTED PARTIES LOSE MORE OFTEN</b> THAN REPRESENTED ONES &amp; REQUIRE MORE TIME AND RESOURCES FROM THE COURTS</p> 	<p><b>THE WORKING POOR &amp; MINIMUM WAGE EARNERS DON'T QUALIFY</b> FOR PROGRAMS LIKE LEGAL AID ALBERTA</p> 	<p><b>~70%</b> OF THOSE IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEM OFTEN STEMMING FROM PAST TRAUMA</p>
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# JUSTICE MATTERS: CBA'S CALLS TO ACTION

The CBA is calling on the government to increase funding and invest resources in infrastructure, technological innovation, judicial complement, and support staff to improve functioning, access, and effectiveness in the administration of justice.



## ADEQUATE RESOURCES

**JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE**  
GUARANTEES JUDGES ARE NOT SUBJECT TO IMPROPER STAKEHOLDER INTERFERENCE OR INFLUENCE.

### CALL TO ACTION

- Ongoing commitment to principled determination of adequate judicial compensation.
- Invest in additional support staff and a centralized software management system.

### BENEFIT

- Attract the most qualified judicial candidates, decrease backlog, and maintain judicial independence.



## EFFECTIVE OUTCOMES

**FAMILY LAW CASES**  
ACCOUNT FOR 35% OF ALL REPORTED CIVIL COURT CASES.

### CALL TO ACTION

- Commit to long-term support of multi-disciplinary approaches between courts, government, legal community, social and health organizations, educators, and researchers. e.g. the Reforming Family Justice Initiative.

### BENEFIT

- Healthy outcomes for individuals and families, regardless of means, capacity, or social situation.

## PATHWAYS TO JUSTICE



## INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

**7/10 GRADUATES**  
FROM CALGARY'S DRUG TREATMENT COURT HAVE NO NEW CRIMINAL CHARGES OR CONVICTIONS POST-TREATMENT.

### CALL TO ACTION

- Increase support for rehabilitative and restorative alternatives to incarceration e.g. Drug Treatment Court (DTC).
- Advance the implementation of the Calls to Action outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Report.

### BENEFIT

- Decreased recidivism and victimization / marginalization of vulnerable groups.



## EQUAL ACCESS

**FOR EVERY \$1**  
SPENT ON LEGAL AID, ~\$6 OF PUBLIC FUNDS ARE SAVED ELSEWHERE.

### CALL TO ACTION

- Build on the 2018 commitment to advance legal aid and advance the role of the pro bono sector.
- Implement technology (digital filing, automation, video conferencing).

### BENEFIT

- Expanded eligibility, financial support, and technology implementation ensures equal access and a fair trial for all.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [CBA-ALBERTA.ORG](http://CBA-ALBERTA.ORG)