



PRESS RELEASE

1.90% INDEXATION OF THE LEGAL AID ELIGIBILITY THRESHOLDS AS OF MAY 31, 2016

Montreal, May 31, 2016 – As of **today**, the legal aid eligibility thresholds will increase by **1.90%**, which is equal to the percentage by which the minimum wage increased on May 1, 2016. On **January 1, 2016**, the legal aid eligibility thresholds were increased, with the minimum wage as a reference point.

The current indexation therefore maintains the eligibility thresholds at this level.

As a result, a single person with an annual income of **\$19,565** will have access to a lawyer, at no cost, within the framework of the legal aid system. Moreover, legal aid services will be free to a family of two adults and two children whose income is less than **\$32,081**.

The Québec legal aid plan includes a component for individuals whose income falls between the eligibility thresholds for free legal aid and the maximum thresholds requiring a contribution (contributory legal aid). According to M^e Denis Roy, Chairman of the Commission des services juridiques, the contributory scheme offers a unique formula that allows individuals to be represented in court by a lawyer while knowing, in advance, the maximum amount of their legal fees and costs. The contributory scheme allows an individual to receive legal services if his or her income, assets and liquidities match the eligibility scale in effect and if the individual pays a contribution ranging from \$100 to \$800, depending on the person's situation. The eligibility scale for legal aid under the **contributory scheme** will also increase by **1.90%**.

The new eligibility scale for services at **no cost** is as follows:

Class of Applicant	Maximum Annual Income
For a single person	\$19,565
For an applicant whose family is comprised of:	
one adult and one child	\$23,936
one adult and 2 children or + spouses without children	\$25,553
spouses with 1 child	\$27,227
spouses with 1 child	\$30,464
spouses with 2 children or +	\$32,081

The new eligibility scale for legal aid under the **contributory scheme** is as follows:

Class of Applicant	Maximum Annual Income
For a single person	\$27,327
For an applicant whose family is comprised of:	
one adult and one child	\$33,429
one adult and 2 children or +	\$35,688
spouses without children	\$38,032
spouses with 1 child	\$42,549
spouses with 2 children or +	\$44,809

About the Commission des services juridiques

The Commission des services juridiques is the agency charged with applying the *Act respecting legal aid and the provision of certain other legal services* in Québec. Legal aid may be granted to anyone who is financially eligible, in order to cover various legal services involving civil, family, administrative, criminal, health, immigration or youth law matters. It is also the agency charged with offering the services provided for in the *Act to promote access to justice in family matters*, namely, the Homologation Assistance Service (HAS), which has been in effect since October, 10, 2013, and the Service administratif de rajustement des pensions alimentaires pour enfants (SARPA), a child support recalculation service which has been in effect since April, 1st, 2014.

For more information, please visit the Web site of the Commission des services juridiques at: <http://www.csj.qc.ca>.

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