



PRESS RELEASE

4.7 % INDEXATION OF THE LEGAL AID ELIGIBILITY THRESHOLDS AS OF MAY 31, 2017

Montreal, May 31, 2017 – As of **today**, the legal aid eligibility thresholds increase by **4.7 %**, which is equal to the percentage by which the minimum wage increased on May 1, 2017. On **January 1, 2016**, the legal aid eligibility thresholds at no cost 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 person who is single and works a 35-hour week at minimum wage, **\$20 475** per year, has access to a lawyer, at no cost, within the framework of the legal aid system. Moreover, legal aid services are free to a family of two adults and two children whose income is less than **\$33,575**.

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 Yvan Niquette, 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 that may be claimed from them. 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 composition of the person's family and the person's financial situation. The eligibility scale for legal aid under the **contributory scheme** will also increase by **4.7 %**.

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

Class of Applicant	Maximum Annual Income
For a single person	\$20,475
For an applicant whose family is comprised of:	
one adult and one child	\$25,050
one adult and 2 children or +	\$26,742
spouses without children	\$28,494
spouses with 1 child	\$31,881
spouses with 2 children or +	\$33,574

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

Class of Applicant	Maximum Annual Income
For a single person	\$28,599
For an applicant whose family is comprised of:	
one adult and one child	\$34,984
one adult and 2 children or +	\$37,348
spouses without children	\$39,801
spouses with 1 child	\$44,529
spouses with 2 children or +	\$46,894

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 Quebec. 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 Homologation Assistance Service (HAS) and the Service administratif de rajustement des pensions alimentaires pour enfants (SARPA), a child support recalculation service.

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

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