



May 9, 2018

Lisa Lapointe
Office of the Chief Coroner
PO Box 9259
Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC
V8W 9J4

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CHIEF CORONER

Dear Ms. Lapointe,

RE: Verdict at Inquest into the death of: Du, Phuong Na (Tony) and 2014-03800-007

I write in reply to your letter of April 30, 2018. In your letter, you have requested that the Legal Services Society (LSS) respond to recommendation 27 which asks LSS to "provide funding for independent counsel to represent families at Coroners Inquests."

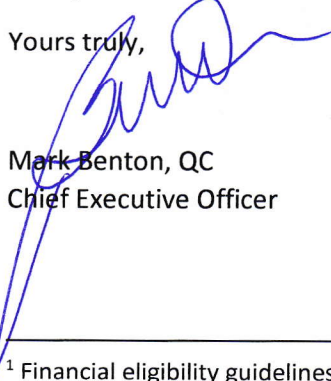
Funding lawyers to represent families at Coroner Inquests is outside the scope of LSS's standard services. The Ministry of Attorney General funds LSS to pay for lawyers to represent people in court who meet our financial eligibility guidelines¹ and who:²

1. Are facing criminal charges and a likelihood of jail.
2. Have a family law problem and require an immediate court order to ensure their, or their children's, safety.
3. Are facing an immigration proceeding that could result in their removal from Canada.

LSS can provide management services for government agencies such as the Coroner's Office that need to provide legal representation to individuals. The usual protocol for management services is that LSS, on behalf of the agency, will appoint a lawyer who agrees to represent the client in accordance with the standard terms for legal aid retainers. LSS manages the case pursuant to its policies and bills the ministry responsible for the government agency for the cost of the retainer plus a management fee.

If the Office of the Chief Coroner wishes to pursue such an arrangement with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, we can provide further information.

Yours truly,


Mark Benton, QC
Chief Executive Officer

¹ Financial eligibility guidelines: https://www.lss.bc.ca/legal_aid/dolQualifyRepresentation.php.

² What follows is a simplified explanation. For more details, see:
https://lss.bc.ca/legal_aid/legalRepresentation.php.