

# INFORMATION SHEET

March 19, 2010

Ministry of Social Development

## **OUTSTANDING WARRANTS**

Effective June 1, 2010

- Changes to the BC Employment and Assistance Program will restrict eligibility for income assistance or disability assistance for persons who have outstanding arrest warrants for indictable offences in BC or other provinces, as well as arrest warrants under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Canada).
- Individuals will be expected to take personal responsibility and resolve outstanding warrants before they are eligible for assistance in this province.
- Exceptions will be made for dependent children and highly vulnerable people, such as those who are pregnant or who are in the end stage of a terminal illness. If an adult in a family unit has a warrant, the remaining family members are still eligible for assistance.
- British Columbians wishing to resolve outstanding warrants can request repayable assistance to cover the least expensive, cost appropriate transportation for the warrant holder (and their family members as applicable) to return to the jurisdiction that issued the warrant.
- While dealing with an outstanding warrant, individuals and families may be eligible for repayable assistance if they can demonstrate undue hardship. This assistance is repayable, time limited and, in most cases, will only be provided for three months.
- Individuals will be required to disclose whether they have an outstanding warrant at application, as part of monthly reporting requirements, and during eligibility audits.
- Individuals will be required to consent to a third party check that may be conducted by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General for the purpose of determining or verifying whether an individual has an outstanding warrant.
- Failing to disclose the existence of an outstanding warrant when required to do so may result in sanctions of ineligibility or reduced assistance, or overpayments.

If you have any questions, see your employment assistance worker or call the ministry toll-free, at: 1-866-866-0800

## **Resolving an outstanding warrant:**

- **Providing the following documents may demonstrate that an outstanding warrant is resolved: promise to appear, recognizance, undertaking, appearance notice, or request for waiver.**
- **Applicants or recipients who wish to resolve an outstanding warrant are advised to seek legal advice.**
- The following information may be of assistance:

Several groups in British Columbia provide free legal services. The Legal Services Society is responsible for the administration of legal aid in British Columbia and may be contacted at:

Legal Services Society  
Vancouver Regional Centre  
Suite 425 – 510 Burrard St.  
Vancouver, B.C. V6C 3A8  
Telephone: 604 408-2172 (Greater Vancouver)  
Toll Free: 1 866 577-2525 (no charge, elsewhere in BC)  
Facsimile: 604 681-2719  
Website: [www.legalaid.bc.ca](http://www.legalaid.bc.ca)

Access Justice and Pro Bono Law of British Columbia promote, co-ordinate and facilitate the delivery of free legal services. They can be contacted at:

Access Justice and Pro Bono Law  
of British Columbia  
106 – 873 Beatty St.  
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2M6  
Telephone: 604 878-7400  
Toll Free: 1-877-762-6664  
Facsimile: 604 893-8934  
Email: [appointments@accessjustice.ca](mailto:appointments@accessjustice.ca)  
Website (Pro Bono Law): <http://probononet.bc.ca>  
Website (Access Justice): [www.accessjustice.ca](http://www.accessjustice.ca)

Information on how to find free legal advice and assistance is available at the Access Justice and Pro Bono Law websites.

The Salvation Army's Pro Bono Lawyer Consultant Program exists to support, co-ordinate and encourage the delivery of pro bono services in communities of the Salvation Army's British Columbia south division. The program assists people who are ineligible for legal aid and meet the required income guidelines. Services include free legal advice on criminal law matters. The Salvation Army's Pro Bono Lawyer Consultant Program may be contacted at:

The Salvation Army  
Pro Bono and Justice Services  
555 Homer St.  
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1K8  
Telephone: 604 694-6647  
Facsimile: 604 681-3005  
Email: [probono@sallyann.org](mailto:probono@sallyann.org)

The University of British Columbia Law Students' Legal Advice Program (LSLAP) offers free legal advice and representation. LSLAP clinicians (law students at the University of British Columbia assisted by members of the bar) can provide legal advice on almost every area of the law, represent clients who meet their admission criteria in certain types of hearings and draft certain types of legal documents. LSLAP can be reached at:

UBC Law Students' Legal Advice Program  
University of British Columbia  
Faculty of Law – Room 158  
1822 East Mall  
Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z1  
Telephone: 604 822-5791  
Facsimile: 604 822-1661

The Lawyer Referral Service of the Canadian Bar Association (telephone: 1-800-663-1919) will provide the name of a lawyer who can be consulted for up to 30 minutes for a fee of \$25 plus GST and PST. Information about the Lawyer Referral Service is available from the Canadian Bar Association – British Columbia website at:  
[www.cba.org/bc/Public\\_Media/main/lawyer\\_referral.aspx](http://www.cba.org/bc/Public_Media/main/lawyer_referral.aspx).

Clicklaw ([www.clicklaw.bc.ca](http://www.clicklaw.bc.ca)) is a website aimed at enhancing access to justice in this province. Clicklaw identifies legal information and education resources available to British Columbians. The website provides practical information about citizens' legal rights and responsibilities and options to solve legal problems, along with access to resources to help learn about the laws that affect British Columbians and how the legal system works.