

# Law Society of British Columbia 2024 Bencher By-Election

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

### 1. Election date

A by-election will be held in November 2024 to elect a Bencher of the Law Society of British Columbia in the County of Vancouver (District 1) to fill the vacancy left by the conclusion of President Jeevyn Dhaliwal, KC's term on December 31, 2024. Voting will take place from **Thursday, November 7 to 4:30 pm on Thursday, November 14**, and votes will be counted on **Friday, November 15, 2024**.

The term of the successful candidate will begin on January 1, 2025 and will end on December 31, 2025.

Nominations of candidates for election must be received by the Law Society by **4:30 pm on Tuesday, October 15, 2024**. To submit a nomination, please complete the [Candidate's Information form](#) and the [Nomination and Consent form](#), which must be signed by two nominators (who are eligible to vote in District No. 1 [County of Vancouver], and who are members in good standing) and must contain the nominee's consent to the nomination.

The 2024 Bencher by-election will be conducted in accordance with the [Legal Profession Act](#), [Law Society Rules 1-21 to 1-44](#), and the [Code of Professional Conduct](#). There is an expectation that candidates will conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner.

### **Benchers encourage diversity in candidates seeking office**

The Benchers believe that the Law Society's mandate to protect the public interest in the administration of justice is best served by leadership with diverse backgrounds and experience. Diversity that brings the skill and richness of talent reflected in the peoples of British Columbia strengthens our legal community and the community at large. All lawyers who meet the qualifications for Bencher and want to contribute to the governance of the profession are encouraged to stand for election. We particularly encourage women lawyers, Indigenous lawyers, racialized lawyers, 2SLGBTQI+ lawyers, lawyers with (dis)abilities, young lawyers, and those practising predominantly in solicitors' fields to stand for election, as these groups continue to be underrepresented among elected Benchers.

## 2. Candidate eligibility

[Law Society Rules 1-22 and 1-23](#) outline the qualifications required of a candidate for election as a Bencher and the nomination process.

Members of the Law Society are eligible to be a candidate for election as Bencher in this by-election provided the following applies:

- in good standing at the time of nomination,
- if a practising lawyer, maintain their chief place of practice or employment in District No. 1 (County of Vancouver), and
- if a retired or non-practicing member, reside in District No. 1 (County of Vancouver).

## 3. Nominations

Nominations must meet the following requirements:

- nominations must be in writing, signed by at least two members of the Law Society in good standing who are eligible to vote in District No. 1 (County of Vancouver),
- the nominee must consent in writing to the nomination, and
- the nomination and consent must be received by the Executive Director on or before **4:30 pm on Tuesday, October 15, 2024.**

Please complete and submit the required forms via. this [link](#).

## 4. Roles and duties of the Benchers

The Benchers are the Law Society's volunteer board of governors. They govern and administer the affairs of the Law Society in accordance with the [Legal Profession Act](#), set and enforce standards of professional responsibility for lawyers, and preside at discipline and credentials hearings as adjudicators.

Benchers can expect their duties to consume approximately seven or eight hours per week, four or five full days a month, or 200 hours per year. This is made up of preparation for and attendance at Bencher meetings; committee, task force or working group meetings; and sitting on hearing panels.

There are usually seven or eight Bencher meetings each year. Meetings take place either in hybrid format in Vancouver, or entirely virtually via Zoom, with the exception of one meeting each year, which is held in conjunction with a weekend retreat at a different location in the province. Bencher meetings are held on Fridays and generally run from 9:00 am to around midday/early afternoon.

For more information on the role of the Benchers, see the [Bencher Elections page](#) on the Law Society website.

At the first Bencher meeting after being elected as a Bencher, the Bencher must take an oath of office in the required form set out in [Rule 1-3](#).

## 5. Candidates' biographies and election statements on Law Society website

Candidates' biographical summaries and election statements will be available on the Bencher election page of the Law Society website and on the Simply Voting site after the close of nominations on October 15, 2024 and by the start of voting on November 7, 2024.

## 6. Voting

In accordance with [Rule 1-27 \(0.1\)](#), Bencher elections are to be held by electronic means, and the Law Society will use a third-party company, Simply Voting, to provide online voting for the 2024 Bencher By-Election.

In accordance with [Rule 1.27 \(0.3\)](#), online voting will take place from Thursday, November 7 to 4:30 pm on Thursday, November 14, and votes will be counted on Friday, November 15, 2024. Please note that following amendments to the election Rules approved by the Benchers at the July 5, 2024 Bencher meeting, the voting period will be one week in accordance with [Rule 1.27 \(0.3\)](#).

## 7. Important dates

Event	Time/Date
Nominations for candidacy in the 2024 Bencher By-Election open	Tuesday, September 17, 2024
Nominations for candidacy in the 2024 Bencher By-Election close	4:30 pm on Tuesday, October 15, 2024
Voting instructions are provided to eligible voters and voting begins	Thursday, November 7, 2024
Voting closes	4:30 pm on Thursday, November 14, 2024
Votes are counted and results are announced	Friday, November 15, 2024
Final Bencher meeting of 2024 (Bencher elected for 2025 is invited to attend as a guest)	Friday, November 29, 2024
New Bencher orientation session	Wednesday, February 5, 2025
First meeting day in 2025 for some Law Society committees	Thursday, February 6, 2025

First Bencher meeting of 2024 where new Bencher will take Oath of Office as set out in Rule 1-3 and Welcome/Farewell Dinner	Friday, February 7, 2025
Mandatory adjudicator training session(s) for new Bencher	Spring 2025 - Awaiting course dates

## 8. Further information

If you have questions about the election process, please contact Avalon Bourne, Manager of Governance & Board Relations, at 604.443.5706 (toll-free 1.800.903.5300) or [ABourne@lsbc.org](mailto:ABourne@lsbc.org).