

July 9, 2026

Letter from the President, Bud Melnyk, KC

I've been in the role of President since February 26, 2026, and I know how important it is to listen to the thoughtful perspectives about what is going on in the legal profession and to share updates from the Law Society of Alberta on how we continue to regulate in the public interest.

Today, I want to take a moment to share an update on changes to the *Legal Profession Act* (LPA) and how the Law Society is responding to the *Regulated Professions Neutrality Act* (RPNA). I would also like to share a brief update on the Alberta Law Foundation.

As you may recall, the RPNA and LPA amendments were passed by the provincial government in December 2025 and will come into force on September 1, 2026. The Law Society has reviewed the legislative changes to assess their implications for the strategic work and day-to-day operations of the Law Society.

We know the legislative changes represent a shift in how the Law Society will regulate the legal profession in some respects, and we recognize that change creates uncertainty. However, what remains certain is that our commitment to the public interest as the independent regulator of the legal profession has not changed and our focus remains on ensuring that competent, qualified lawyers serve the people of this province.

Our standards for professional conduct set out a clear roadmap for lawyers on issues of competence and ethics, and lawyers must comply with the Code of Conduct, the Rules of the Law Society of Alberta, and the LPA.

Amendments to the *Legal Profession Act*

The key changes that will come into force on September 1 include:

- A new purpose statement for the Law Society, codifying the existing common law that the Law Society regulates the legal profession in the public interest, and must ensure the independence, integrity, competence and ethical conduct of lawyers.
- Enhanced ability for the Law Society to expeditiously address vexatious complaints; and
- Limits to the education the Law Society can prescribe as mandatory.

We will see additional amendments come into force at a later date, including a change to the appeal process whereby appeals from Law Society disciplinary decisions will be heard by the Court of King's Bench of Alberta.

As always, we encourage lawyers to stay up to date on amendments to the [Act, Code and Rules](#). The Law Society will continue to share updates on any changes through eBulletins and on the website.

Regulated Professions Neutrality Act

The RPNA is a new piece of legislation that applies to all professional regulators in the province of Alberta. The Law Society is among the first regulators for whom this legislation will come into force.

There are three key components of the legislation, which together narrow the focus of the Law Society to regulating lawyers on matters of competence and ethics. Professional regulators must:

- no longer sanction the expressive off-duty conduct of their members, subject to some specific exceptions;
- not mandate cultural competence education or training; and
- not promote or affirm certain principles and ensure that their instruments, bylaws and decisions adhere to certain principles of neutrality.

Here is a high-level snapshot of some changes that you will start to see communicated as the Law Society prepares for the RPNA to come into force:

- Commentary for Rule 6.3-1 in the Code of Conduct will be updated to ensure the language complies with the neutrality principles.
- The Path: Your Journey Through Indigenous Canada will no longer be mandatory for new lawyers joining the Law Society or lawyers transferring from other jurisdictions as of September 1.
- The Professional Development Profile (PDP) —the guideline lawyers use to complete their annual CPD plan —has been updated to remove two domains (“Cultural Competence, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion” and “Truth and Reconciliation”).
- The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee was not re-established for the 2026–27 committee year and the Lawyer Competence Committee was renamed the Lawyer Competence and Ethics Committee.
- The Indigenous Mentorship Program and the Indigenous Summer Student Program will conclude at the end of their current program cycles in the summer of 2026.

Alberta Law Foundation Update

The Alberta Law Foundation is moving to a single annual grant cycle, beginning with an open call on September 1, 2026. This is important because we know that the organizations that work alongside the Foundation carefully plan for their funding and any changes can raise questions.

To learn more about the new cycle, I encourage you to visit the Foundation website and read the [frequently asked questions](#). If you have questions about this change, please reach out directly to the Foundation for more information.

As always, we appreciate the ongoing engagement from the profession in these important matters that impact the regulation of the legal profession in Alberta.

Sincerely,

Bud