

# ASSESSMENT AND INVESTIGATION SERVICES

## SERVICES TO ADULTS

### **AIS Vision**

Our vision is to ensure that adults who require support and assistance, receive services that meet their individual needs and maintain their independence to the highest degree possible.

We are active in communities, and work directly with the adult. We are a resource to community agencies, and support them in their efforts to develop alternatives, where possible, to formal authority.

We advocate for solutions that are least intrusive, and are consistent with the adult's wishes, culture, and lifestyle.

### **Public Guardian and Trustee Mission**

The Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia is appointed to safeguard and uphold the legal and financial interests of children; manage the legal, financial and personal care interests of adults needing assistance in decision-making; and administer the estates of deceased and missing persons.

### **Who we are**

Assessment and Investigation Services (AIS) Regional Consultants respond to all requests for the Public Guardian and Trustee to act as a substitute decision-maker for a vulnerable adult. We may be asked to assist by:

- ▶ Investigating actions of trustees, representatives or attorneys under Powers of Attorney when the adult is incapable and concerns about financial management have been raised.
- ▶ Exercising Public Guardian and Trustee protective measures, including temporarily freezing bank accounts or preventing property transfers during the investigation process.
- ▶ Pursuing authority for the Public Guardian and Trustee, usually to act as Committee of Estate, as decision maker of last resort.
- ▶ Consulting on complex risk situations involving abuse, neglect or self-neglect of vulnerable adults.
- ▶ Providing information on formal/informal options available to assist.

### **When we investigate**

While there are many options or agencies that may assist a vulnerable adult, if there are concerns about the actions of a substitute decision-maker or there appears to be a need for one, the Public Guardian and Trustee may assist. We investigate when:

- ▶ there is an immediate risk of harm to the adult's assets
- ▶ there is reason to believe that the adult is not capable of managing his/her financial or legal affairs, and
- ▶ no other suitable person (family or friend) has the authority or is willing and able to act on the individual's behalf.

When we investigate, we follow these principles:

- ▶ All adults are presumed to be capable until the contrary is demonstrated.
- ▶ No one should have a decision-maker appointed by the Court until other alternatives have been considered.
- ▶ Everyone is entitled to the least intrusive but most effective support.

## Ways to assist

There are several options to assist adults who are not able to manage:

- ▶ If an adult is capable, s/he can appoint an attorney under the *Power of Attorney Act*, or a representative under s. 9 of the *Representation Agreement Act*.
- ▶ S/he may also consider appointing a representative with limited powers under s. 7 of the *Representation Agreement Act* for routine financial matters.
- ▶ Health and Welfare Canada can appoint a Pension Trustee for Canadian federal pensions.
- ▶ The Public Guardian and Trustee can be appointed Committee of Estate by certificate issued by the Director of a Mental Health Unit, or
- ▶ The Supreme Court of BC can appoint a Committee of Estate or Committee of Person.

## Contact Information

Assessment and Investigation Services takes referrals and reviews allegations of financial abuse of vulnerable adults in the community to determine if substitute decision-making authority is required.

If you require further information or you would like to make a referral, please contact us at the telephone or fax number of one of our regional offices, or toll-free through Enquiry BC at 1-800-663-7867 and they will connect you.

### Greater Vancouver Region

700-808 West Hastings Street  
Vancouver, BC V6C 3L3  
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Fax: (604) 660-9498

*Vancouver, North Shore, Richmond,  
Delta, Sunshine Coast*

### Vancouver Island Region

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Tel: (250) 356-8160  
Fax: (250) 356-7442

*Vancouver Island from Nanaimo and  
North, including Powell River and Gulf Islands*

### Lower Mainland Region

700-808 West Hastings Street  
Vancouver, BC V6C 3L3  
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Fax: (604) 660-9479

*Burnaby, Tri-Cities, North Fraser and Fraser Valley*

### Interior-North Region

1345 St. Paul Street  
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*Interior and Northern BC, east and north  
of Hope*

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