



Jay Chalke, Q.C.
Public Guardian
and Trustee

Message from the Public Guardian and Trustee

I am pleased to welcome you to this issue of *Reaching Out*, our newsletter for adult clients of the Public Guardian and Trustee (PGT). As you will see from its contents, this has been another busy year for the PGT and the pace shows no signs of slowing down.

While law reform is important, our service delivery is a primary focus as it affects you directly, and we're always working to provide you with faster, better results. I'm pleased to report that our performance measurements saw excellent results this past year.

In 2009/10, the PGT received a total of 26,940 receipts on behalf of adult clients, of which we processed 95 per cent within five days. We also made a total of 157,519 disbursements on behalf of adult clients, 98 per cent of which were made within 15 days. We were also able to personally visit virtually all of our Committee of Person clients at least once in the year.

Participating in class action lawsuits to ensure that eligible persons receive compensation if they have been harmed is becoming a major activity. Please note that there are two very important deadlines coming up that may affect you if you were a resident of Woodlands school or if you attended an Indian Residential School. If either of these applies to you, the deadline for us to submit a claim on your behalf is September 2011. Please contact your case manager immediately if either of these might apply to you as otherwise, you will lose the chance to apply for compensation.

I invite you to enjoy this newsletter and welcome your suggestions for how we can serve you better. If you have questions about your individual circumstances, please bring them forward to your case manager.

YOURS SINCERELY,



Jay Chalke, Q.C., Public Guardian and Trustee

Our Four Regional Teams

Greater Vancouver Region

700-808 West Hastings St.
Vancouver, BC V6C 3L3
Tel: 604.775.1007
Fax: 604.660.9498

Vancouver Island Region

NEW LOCATION!
1215 Broad Street
Victoria, BC V8W 2A4
Tel: 250.356.8160
Fax: 250.356.7442

Lower Mainland Region

700-808 West Hastings St.
Vancouver, BC V6C 3L3
Tel: 604.775.1001
Fax: 604.660.9479

Interior-North Region

1345 St. Paul Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 2E2
Tel: 250.712.7576
Fax: 250.712.7578

Toll free calling is available through Service BC. After dialing the appropriate number for your area (below), request to be transferred to the Public Guardian and Trustee.

Vancouver:	604.660.2421
Victoria:	250.387.6121
Other areas of BC:	800.663.7867

email: mail@trustee.bc.ca

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What does the Public Guardian and Trustee do for you?

Some of the many ways your case manager may assist you include:

Financial matters:

- ✓ Applying for benefits and pensions to which you may be entitled
- ✓ Paying your bills
- ✓ Developing a budget and keeping you up to date on your finances
- ✓ Filing your income tax returns (through our Tax Department)
- ✓ Investing your money (with professional guidance from our Investments Department)



Personal matters:

- ✓ Contacting you to become familiar with your situation, understand your wishes and make decisions to the extent possible based on your wishes

Legal matters:

- ✓ Pursuing remedies if you have legal issues

Property matters:

- ✓ Ensuring your assets have been identified, are secure, and are insured
- ✓ If you own a home, arranging for repairs and maintenance on your property
- ✓ Arranging for the sale of your home if required

We strive to ensure our services are individualized, equitable, and accessible

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is a Committee of Estate?

A: A substitute decision maker for the financial and legal needs of an individual

Q: What is a Committee of Person?

A: A substitute decision maker for the health and personal care needs of an individual

Q: What If I am not satisfied with a decision made by my case manager?

A: If you are dissatisfied with a decision made by your case manager, you may ask the manager to review the decision. If you are still not satisfied, you may ask that the decision be reviewed by the Director of Services to Adults. A further review is possible depending on the circumstances. For more information about the review process, contact your case manager.

Q: Can I have someone else manage my finances?

A: If you would like a family member to manage your finances for you, please contact your case manager or have your family member contact your case manager who can provide more information regarding how to start this process.

Did you know?

- The PGT made 656 health care decisions as Temporary Substitute Decision Maker (TSDM) between the period April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010

Important Notices About Class Actions

Woodlands

IMPORTANT DEADLINE INFORMATION - September 19, 2011

This class action applies to former residents of Woodlands. A settlement for this class action was approved by the Supreme Court of BC on July 7, 2010 and claims are now being considered. Klein Lyons has been appointed Class Counsel for this class action. **The deadline to file a claim for compensation is September 19, 2011. This will be your last opportunity to apply.** The Public Guardian and Trustee is responsible for representing the interests of our clients who are Class Members. We also have a role in assisting other Class Members who are not our clients with making a claim where required, along with locating Class Members who have not yet come forward to file a claim. **Please speak directly with your case manager** to discuss your involvement in this class action.

Indian Residential Schools

IMPORTANT DEADLINE INFORMATION - September 19, 2011

Anyone who resided at an Indian Residential School is eligible for a Common Experience Payment of \$10,000 for the first year of residence, plus \$3,000 for each school year (or part year) after that. **The deadline for applying for the Common Experience Payment is September 19, 2011. This will be your last opportunity to apply for the Common Experience Payments.** Anyone who suffered physical or sexual abuse at an Indian Residential School, whether they resided there or not, may make a claim for additional compensation. **The deadline for applying for the Independent Assessment Process is September 19, 2012. Please contact your case manager right away** if you resided or suffered abuse at an Indian Residential School. For more information, please visit the web link: www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/rqpi/index-eng.asp

Hepatitis C

There are two class action lawsuits for people who were infected with Hepatitis C from a blood transfusion before September 28, 1998. The first claims deadline for both lawsuits was June 30, 2010. However, a claim may still be made within 3 years of the date a person first learned he or she was infected with Hepatitis C from a blood transfusion, or within 1 year of a person becoming an adult. Family members and dependants may also receive compensation if the infected person's claim is accepted and they apply within certain deadlines. Furthermore, the deadline may be extended for one of the class actions if the person failed to submit an application before the June 30, 2010 deadline through no fault of his or her own. **Please contact your case manager right away if you were infected with Hepatitis C from a blood transfusion before September 28, 1998** and you first learned of the infection within the last 3 years, or if you failed to submit an application through no fault of your own (or if you know of a PGT client to whom this applies).

Payday Loans

There are a number of class actions against different payday loan and money cashing businesses. The deadline for some of them has already passed, but some are still open. Claims that are still open include Cash Factory, Yellow Cash Center, Sorensen's Loans til Payday, and A OK Payday Loans. Please contact your case manager right away if you have dealt with any of these companies.

Riverview Hospital Satellite Office

As a result of significant downsizing of Riverview Hospital, the PGT has decided to close our satellite office. Riverview used to be a point of service for more than 200 of our clients, but in recent years that number has been reduced to less than 20 clients. Because of this greatly reduced demand, the satellite office was closed in January 2011. Service to those clients who continue to reside at Riverview Hospital is being provided from our Vancouver office.

Changes in Long Term Care Facility Accommodation Rates

Effective January 31, 2009, the Ministry of Health changed the accommodation rates for clients living in long term care facilities from a daily per diem to a monthly rate based on the client's income. The PGT reviewed the information provided by the Health Authorities for each of our clients to ensure they were being charged the appropriate rate based on their income. Our review consisted of verifying income tax returns filed for our clients and assessing their current income tax situation.

In some instances, our office contacted the Health Authorities to request a reassessment of the rate based on the client's current income to ensure the client had funds available to meet his/her daily needs. The PGT is conducting this review annually for our existing clients and any new clients for whom we are appointed to manage their finances.

Changes to Registered Disability Savings Plans

What is an RDSP?

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) is a savings plan designed specifically for people with disabilities in Canada. It allows access to substantial federal bond and grant funds in order for persons with disabilities to build savings. We are pleased to announce that close to 500 of our adult clients now have RDSP accounts established.

Recent Changes

Several reforms important to people with disabilities became Canadian law in December 2010 when Bill C-47 was passed by the Senate and given Royal Assent. At this time the federal government announced some significant changes to RDSPs. Changes to RDSPs include:

Carry Forward Provisions for RDSP Grants and Bonds

Effective 2011, Canada Disability Savings Grant and Bond entitlements can be carried forward. When a person opens an RDSP, Canada Disability Savings Bond entitlements will automatically be calculated and paid into the plan for the preceding 10 years (but not before 2008, when the RDSP was launched).

RRSP/RRIF Rollover to a Registered Disability Savings Plan

The new provisions will permit parents and grandparents to rollover RRSPs and RRIFs, at death, to the RDSPs of financially dependent children and grandchildren, on a tax deferred basis. The rollover is effective for persons whose deaths occurred on or after March 4, 2010.

For more information visit www.rdsp.com or contact your case manager.