

# Annual Report

July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015



Centre for  
Public  
**cplea**  
Legal Education  
Alberta

**Photos**

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@LawNowMag  
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[youtube.com/CPLEAlberta](https://youtube.com/CPLEAlberta)



## Our Mission

The Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta's mission is to enhance the accessibility and quality of justice realized in Canada.

We address our mission by creating learning opportunities and building learning communities that facilitate the creation, management, exchange, and integration of knowledge among people within the justice system and between them and the general public.

## Our Mandate

The Legal Resource Centre of Alberta Ltd., operating as the Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta (CPLEA), was incorporated provincially in 1975 as a non-profit company with the mandate "to contribute to, advance and promote the legal knowledge and education of the people of Canada." We were registered as a charity in 1977 and subscribe to Imagine Canada's Ethical Fundraising and Financial Accountability Code.

# Our Team

## BOARD

Gordon McKenzie  
President

Lois Gander  
Vice President

Hugh Neilson  
Treasurer

Erika Hagen

Jim McCartney

Lynn Parish

The Honourable Judge Susan  
Richardson

Carrie Sharpe

## STAFF

Amelia Martin  
Executive Director / Lawyer

San San Sy  
Interim Executive Director

Joan Braun  
Executive Director

Laura Collison  
Program Assistant

Lesley Conley  
Library Specialist & Community Education Liaison

Ryan Day  
Adult Educator

Marilyn Doyle  
Library Technician

Rochelle Johannson  
Lawyer

Teresa Mitchell  
Lawyer / Editor, LawNow Magazine

Josh Perdue  
Receptionist

Dave Pettitt  
Web Coordinator

Kristy Rhyason  
Communications Coordinator

Nicole Teall  
Program Assistant

Tracie Teall  
Finance & Operations Coordinator

# Our Volunteers & Contributors

The Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta would like to thank all the volunteers and LawNow contributors who supported our organization.

Without our dedicated volunteers, we would be unable to provide our many programs and services. We are extremely appreciative of their support.

Joshua Beckie  
 Shaun Bernstein  
 Peter Bowal  
 John-Paul Boyd  
 Peter Broder  
 Alexandra Brunet  
 Marian Bryant  
 Sarah Burton  
 Caitlin L. Butler  
 David Butt  
 Sean Callbeck  
 Robin Campbell  
 Carl Conradi  
 Stephen Da Cambra  
 Sarah Dargatz  
 Charles Davison  
 Adam Driedzic  
 John Edmond  
 Chris Felling  
 Francisco Etelvir Dantas Filho  
 Craig Forcese  
 Rob Frenette

Magdalena Ganczak  
 Matthew Gordon  
 Suman Gupta  
 Aleksandar Gvozdenovic  
 Juliana Ho  
 Troy Hunter  
 Mark G. Jones  
 Egon Jonsson  
 Ana Kraljevic  
 Victoria Kubinski  
 Irving Kulik  
 Stephanie Laskoski  
 Johnathon Layton  
 Brian Lines  
 Maciej Lipinski  
 Melissa Luhtanen  
 Colin McKay  
 Logan Melville  
 Paul Messner  
 Grady Mitchell  
 Stephen Moore  
 Hugh Neilson

Robert Normey  
 John Redmond  
 Kent Roach  
 Jordan Rodney  
 Nicole Romanow  
 Preet Sain  
 Amy Salmon  
 Cole Sloan  
 Mark Smith  
 Nick Smith  
 Luke Stephenson  
 Christopher Tang  
 Brad Taylor  
 Filip Titi  
 Alina Turner  
 Ivan Via  
 Kenneth R. Warren  
 Senator Charlie Watt  
 Lana Wells  
 John Winterdyk  
 Kymbat Yermekbayeva



# Our Funders

Our funders make the work we do possible. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of:

**Alberta Government Services**

**Alberta Human Rights Education & Multiculturalism Fund**

**Alberta Law Foundation**

**Alberta Real Estate Foundation**

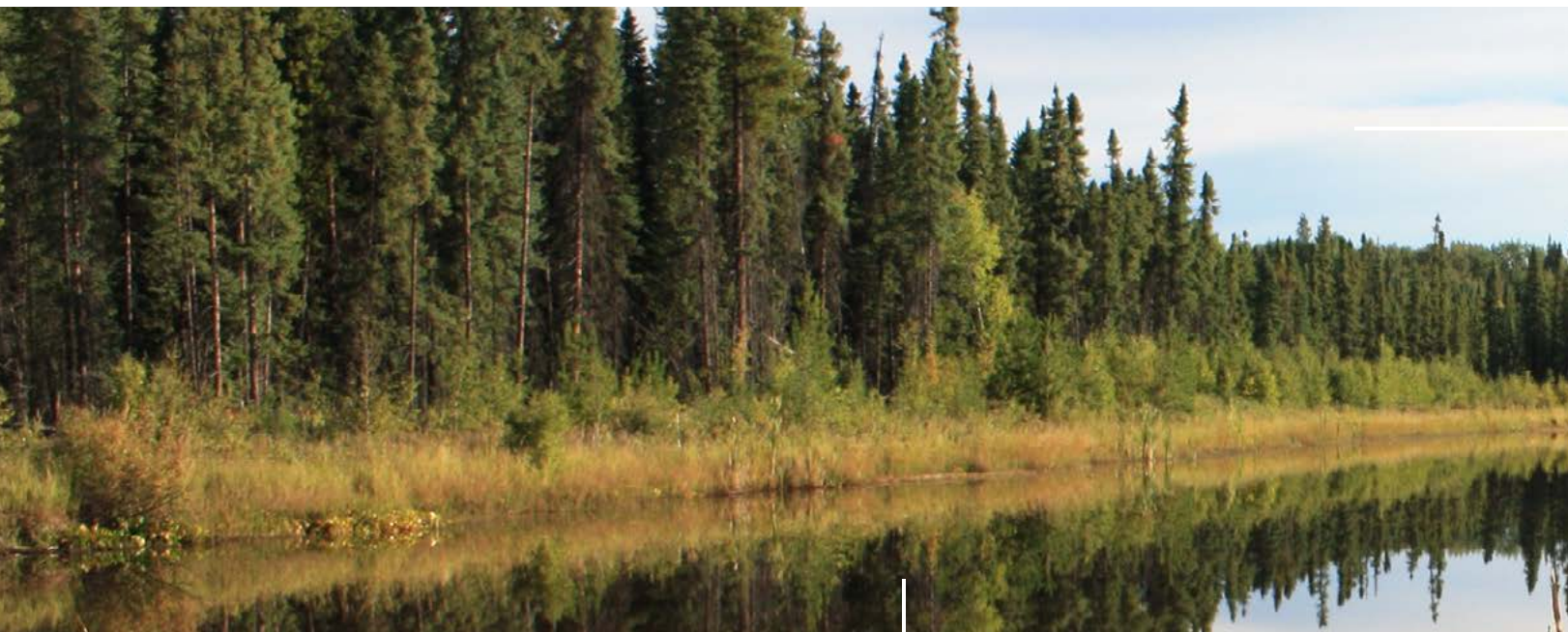
**Justice Canada**

**Homeward Trust Edmonton**

**Human Resources & Skills Development Canada**

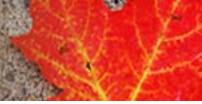
**Service Alberta**

**Status of Women Canada**



# Programs & Projects

Canadian Legal FAQs



[www.law-faqs.org](http://www.law-faqs.org)

Canadian Legal FAQs provides information about the law in Alberta and Canada using a question and answer format. In January 2015, a new and improved FAQs website was launched. The site is now mobile responsive and more user friendly, featuring simplified navigation, enhanced readability, and improved search functionality.

Canadian Legal FAQs continues to be one of CPLEA's most popular sites with over 222,000 visits in 2014-15. CPLEA staff updated and reviewed more than 60 FAQs on seven different topics including: Adoption Records, Adult Interdependent Relations, Consumer Law, Family Law, Grandparents Rights, Pre-Trial Applications, and Marriage.

**Over 222,000  
website visits**

In 2014-15, the most popular FAQ topics were: Youth and the Law, Marriage, Family Law, Employment Law, Adult Interdependent Relationships, Travel, and Landlord and Tenant Law.

Canadian Legal FAQs is supported with funding from the Alberta Law Foundation.

**LawCentral**  
Alberta

[www.LawCentralAlberta.ca](http://www.LawCentralAlberta.ca)

In 2014-15, the *LawCentral* suite of websites were condensed into one main portal website – [LawCentralAlberta.ca](http://LawCentralAlberta.ca) – to improve access and ease of use. Content on the website is available in French and English. *LawCentral Alberta* connects Albertans, including our Francophone community, with reliable legal information resources and services on a wide variety of issues. All of the links on *LawCentral Alberta* are reviewed and vetted by CPLEA staff before being added to the website, making *LawCentral* an excellent starting point for anyone who needs more information about their legal rights and responsibilities.

There were over 37,000 visits to the website in 2014-15. This number is expected to grow over time as CPLEA staff continue to promote the site to stakeholders and work on improving the site's search engine optimization.

*LawCentral Alberta* is supported by funding from the Alberta Law Foundation.

# LAWNOW [www.LawNow.org](http://www.LawNow.org)

relating law to life in Canada

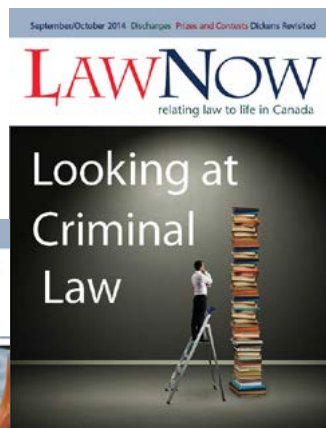
LawNow is our free public legal education magazine, published online bi-monthly. It is CPLEA's longest running program. For many, it is the most well-known and public face of our organization.

LawNow continues to cover a wide range of topics concerning the law and social justice for Albertans and all Canadians. The contents are organized by themes, special reports and a variety of columns, all written by dedicated volunteers who share our passion for public legal education. In the 2014-2015 year, LawNow featured articles by fifty-three different contributors.

*"I can't believe I haven't stumbled upon LawNow until now but I recently discovered this publication and love everything about it."*

The magazine's presence and reach on the internet continues to show tremendous growth. In 2014-15, there were more than 214,000 visits to [www.lawnow.org](http://www.lawnow.org). This represents an increase of almost 80%. LawNow also continues to reach out to the community through its e-mail newsletter, now distributed to over 1000 readers and organizations. This interest and enthusiasm for LawNow is very gratifying to all of us at CPLEA.

LawNow is funded by the Alberta Law Foundation.







## LAWS FOR LANDLORDS AND TENANTS IN ALBERTA

[www.landlordandtenant.org](http://www.landlordandtenant.org)

In 2014-15, through our Residential Tenancies Legal Information Program, we launched a redesigned and reformatted Laws for Landlords and Tenants in Alberta website ([www.landlordandtenant.org](http://www.landlordandtenant.org)). The new mobile friendly website features streamlined content, improved navigation features, enhanced search capability, and a refreshed visual design. There were almost 275,000 visits to the website in 2014-15, representing an increase of 18% over the previous fiscal year.

CPLEA staff delivered 17 workshops across Alberta to over 400 people, including high school students, service providers, police officers, as well as tenants and landlords. 100% of participants who completed evaluation forms indicated that they were better prepared to be a landlord or a tenant, that they better understood their rights and obligations, and that they would recommend the session to others.

*"We all appreciated the information presented and learning more about the procedures that are in place when issues arise. We also appreciated that the information was presented in a way that is easy for people who do not have English as a first language"*

In response to the economic decline in Alberta, a new resource was produced for tenants facing unemployment. If Your Employment Ends... Tips for Tenants in Alberta provides information for Albertans facing financial difficulties who may need to move out of their rental accommodations.

Publication downloads from the new website increased dramatically in 2014-15, almost tripling, with close to 23,000 resources being downloaded. Over 7,500 print resources were distributed. More than 30,500 resources were distributed in print and online over the course of the fiscal year.



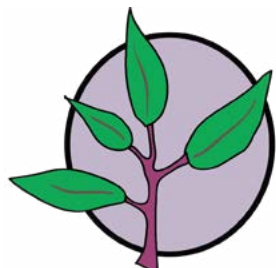


## CONDO LAW FOR ALBERTANS

[www.condolawalberta.ca](http://www.condolawalberta.ca)

Funded by the Alberta Real Estate Foundation, phase one of Condo Law for Albertans neared completion by the end of 2014-15. This multi-phase project will help educate Albertans about their rights and responsibilities under the *Condominium Property Act* and impending amendments to the Act.

As part of phase one of the project, CPLEA staff developed a new website with plain language legal information for Albertans interested in purchasing a condo or currently living in a condo. In 2014-15, the website was designed and content was produced for the website. CPLEA staff also began production of complementary printable resources. The website was publicly launched in September 2015.



## WillowNet

[www.WillowNet.ca](http://www.WillowNet.ca)

### Abuse and the Law in Alberta

CPLEA launched a new website, WillowNet: Abuse and the Law in Alberta ([www.willownet.ca](http://www.willownet.ca)) in January 2015. This website was designed in partnership with Northern Lakes College and its community stakeholders.

WillowNet consolidates information from CPLEA's former websites RoseNet and VioletNet and features new plain language content based specifically on the needs of post-secondary students, as identified through our work with Northern Lakes College. This project was funded by Status of Women Canada.

# Alberta Human Rights Act



## Discrimination in the Workplace

How Are You Protected?

### Laws for Alberta's Multicultural Communities: Rights at Work

CPLEA received funding from the Alberta Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund to develop resources for youth on employment law and discrimination. The need for these resources was based on research CPLEA conducted in 2013 on the legal information needs of multicultural communities in Alberta.

In 2014-15, CPLEA staff produced videos, infographics, quizzes, and FAQs for youth on employment law and their rights under the Alberta Human Rights Act. These resources were all published online at [www.cplea.ca/rightsatwork](http://www.cplea.ca/rightsatwork). Multicultural youth and immigrant-serving agencies were consulted throughout the resource development process to ensure they reflected the needs and learning patterns of multicultural youth.

In early 2015, CPLEA received funding for a third phase of our Law for Alberta's Multicultural Communities project. CPLEA staff will be working on developing resources on renting and discrimination in 2015-16.



### Let's Talk: Elder Abuse

CPLEA concluded its three-year elder abuse project in 2014-15, producing a resource manual, facilitator guide, and workshop for intermediaries on how to use the law to prevent and reduce incidents of elder abuse. The resources are available online at [www.cplea.ca/publications](http://www.cplea.ca/publications). This project was funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

## Information & Referral

In 2014-15, CPLEA staff answered 1040 information and referral questions. Approximately half of our questions were received by e-mail and half by telephone. CPLEA also continued to see an increased number of questions being asked via Twitter and Facebook.

*“Thank you very much for your thorough response. You answered all the questions we had. Your services are appreciated.”*

CPLEA staff received the majority of questions about landlord and tenant issues, wills and estates, family law matters, consumer law, and employment law. In answering questions, staff rely on a variety of information sources including internal FAQs, our publically accessible resources, and materials produced by other agencies like Legal Aid Alberta. When Albertans require legal advice, they are referred to appropriate local service providers.

## Social Media

CPLEA continues to use social media to connect Albertans with legal information. We answer questions and link to resources to help people find the information they need. We also use social media to share our materials and inform people of our services, announce new resources, and spread the word about other legal service providers.



Our Facebook page helps us connect with individuals and organizations across Alberta. In 2014-15, we posted over 200 information items on our page and increased from 207 likes to 347, significantly expanding our social reach. Our Facebook page is also being used more frequently by Albertans looking for answers to their legal questions. Visitors can post questions on our page or message us directly.



Twitter has been an excellent way for us to connect with Albertans and share our resources. Almost 2,000 Albertans follow our two accounts - @CPLEAlberta and @LawNowMag. Over 600 tweets were posted last year. Our most popular tweets were related to family law and employment law issues.



Albertans use of mobile devices to access our websites continues to increase significantly. Both Canadian Legal FAQs and Laws for Landlords and Tenants were relaunched in 2014-15 as mobile responsive websites. This will improve Albertans' ability to access our content anywhere, anytime. It will also increase our search rankings on Google, leading to increased traffic to our websites. CPLEA publications are accessed in print and digital form by people across Alberta and Canada. In 2014-15, our publications were downloaded almost 60,000 times from our websites and more than 22,000 publications were distributed in print format.

Print resources were distributed at outreach events across Alberta and shipped to Albertans and non-profit organizations who requested them through our online store ([www.cplea.ca/store](http://www.cplea.ca/store)).

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**Over 81,000**  
**print & digital**  
**publications accessed**

Our most popular publications were our landlord and tenant resources and planning ahead series. Renting with a Pet and What to Do If the Place You're Renting is Being Sold were our two most popular resources, along with Making a Will, Being a Guarantor, and If Your Employment Ends... Laws for Tenants in Alberta.

## Community Engagement

The relationships that we have built within our community have been essential to our success. Our connections with other organizations help us to extend our reach across the province, offer us opportunities for collaboration, and provide us with an important means of information exchange.

In 2014-15, CPLEA staff participated in the following community events: Homeless Connect Edmonton, Law Day, Dial-a-Lawyer, St. Albert Seniors Expo, North Central Edmonton Block Party, Grey Matters Seniors Conference, and the Wetaskin Seniors Conference.

CPLEA staff conducted workshops for some of the following groups: Edmonton Multicultural Coalition, Alberta Food Bank Network, Edmonton Public Library, Adult Learning Council Network, Edmonton Immigrant Services Association, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo RCMP and service providers, Alberta Residential Landlord Association, HIV Edmonton, among others.

CPLEA continues to participate on the following committees: Alberta Residential Tenancies Advisory Committee, Reforming the Family Justice Sector, Public Legal Education Group of Edmonton, Constellation Justice Sector Group of Alberta, Alberta Legal Information Society advisory committees, Alberta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, CBA Access to Justice Committee, Public Legal Education Association of Canada, Edmonton Interagency Youth Services Association, among others.



## Additional Websites



Charity Central provides valuable information for Canadian charities to help them in understanding their responsibilities under the law in the areas of tax donation receipting, fundraising, and record keeping.

Charity Central offers plain language resource materials in both English and French and provides learning opportunities on accountability and transparency practices for registered charities and not-for-profit organizations. There were more than 26,000 visits to the site in 2014-15.



The Older Adult Knowledge Network (OakNet) provides legal information for older adults on issues like wills, personal directives, powers of attorney, personal and family relationships, elder abuse, and seniors' housing. In our next fiscal year, OakNet will be undergoing a visual redesign to improve accessibility, mobile responsiveness, and search engine optimization.



Women and the Law in Alberta is an online version of a booklet originally published by Calgary Legal Guidance. It provides information on women's legal rights and responsibilities in the areas of family law, employment, health, and the criminal justice system. There were over 40,000 visits to the site in 2014-15.



LawCentral Schools is designed for teachers and provides access to law-related resources as they relate to the Alberta curriculum. Teachers can use the website to find free lesson plans, assessment ideas, and multimedia.

### **Canadian Law & Modern Day Foreign Brides - [www.lawforforeignbrides.ca](http://www.lawforforeignbrides.ca)**

Legal information for women who come to Canada to marry through an arranged marriage, matchmaking agency, or mail order bride service.

# Financial Statements

Download CPLEA's complete 2014-15 Audited Financial Statements here: <http://www.cplea.ca/about-us/financial-statements>

**Legal Resource Centre of Alberta Ltd.**  
(Operating as Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta)

**Statement of Financial Position**

June 30, 2015

	2015	2014
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Cash (Note 3)	\$ 167,550	\$ -
Term deposits (Note 4)	50,521	101,173
Accounts receivable (Note 5)	1,634	16,254
Grants receivable	-	76,670
Goods and services tax recoverable	8,904	9,356
Prepaid expenses (Note 6)	94,518	14,548
	<u>323,127</u>	<u>218,001</u>
Property and equipment (Note 7)	51,616	68,804
Long term investments (Note 8)	505,659	516,302
	<u>\$ 880,402</u>	<u>\$ 803,107</u>
<b>Liabilities and net assets</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Bank indebtedness (Note 3)	\$ -	\$ 13,316
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	48,643	65,280
Deferred contributions (Note 9)	149,701	177,855
Grants payable	21,866	-
Current portion of deferred leasehold inducements (Note 10)	47,910	20,422
	<u>268,120</u>	<u>276,873</u>
Deferred leasehold inducements (Note 10)	45,113	40,339
	<u>313,233</u>	<u>317,212</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		
Endowment fund (Note 11)	505,659	516,302
Furniture and equipment fund (Note 12)	24,175	3,612
Net investment in property and equipment fund	22,914	25,749
Unrestricted fund	14,421	(59,768)
	<u>567,169</u>	<u>485,895</u>
	<u>\$ 880,402</u>	<u>\$ 803,107</u>

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