

JUSTICE NAVIGATOR TRAINING

Program Overview

CPLEA is developing a training program for justice navigators in Alberta. Our goal is to equip justice navigators with legal information and education to support their work in helping Albertans.

We define a justice navigator as a non-lawyer who supports Albertans with legal issues. A justice navigator may be a librarian, social worker, housing coordinator, paralegal, teacher and more.

We anticipate launching the program in the spring of 2026.

About CPLEA

CPLEA's mission is to create resources that help ordinary people understand their rights and obligations under the law. We strive to improve both access to justice and the quality of justice available to Albertans.

For 50 years, we have produced free plain language resources on various legal topics in various formats. Our expertise consists of legal, web development, design, plain language and evaluation.

Core Competencies & Learning Outcomes

Though the work of justice navigators varies across sectors and between agencies, we've identified five core competencies. We believe all justice navigators should understand the following:

- The difference between legal information and legal advice
- How Canada's legal system works, including sources of law, levels of court and the role of administrative tribunals
- Common everyday legal issues and the laws that apply to those issues
- Best practices for referring clients for more help
- Options for getting legal help in Alberta

Individual agencies may have more specific core competencies for their justice navigators.

CPLEA's Justice Navigator Training will equip participants to meet these core competencies through six program-wide learning outcomes. After completing the program, participants will be able to:

1. Describe and apply the difference between legal information and legal advice
2. Describe everyday common legal issues and provide basic legal information about those issues
3. Identify when their client has a legal issue
4. Effectively advocate for their client
5. Identify options for resolving common legal issues
6. Know when and where to send their client for more legal help

Program Design

CPLEA's Justice Navigator Training program will consist of two components.

Basic legal education: Aimed at equipping justice navigators with a basic education on various legal topics, this portion will be a series of online, self-directed learning modules. Each module will take between 30 and 90 minutes to complete.

While we intend for participants to complete all 10 modules, participants will be able to complete whichever modules they choose. Participants will receive a completion certificate for each module.

Module topics may include:

- Legal Information vs. Advice: Understand and apply the difference to your work
- Advocate for Your Client: How to recognize a legal issue and support your client
- Our Canadian Legal System: The foundations of Canada's legal system
- Criminal Law: Navigate Canada's criminal justice system
- Civil Law: Navigate Alberta's civil law system
- Family Law: Navigate Alberta's family laws and common legal issues
- Employment Law: Navigate Alberta's employment laws and common workplace issues
- Consumer & Debt Law: Navigate Alberta's consumer and debt laws and common legal issues
- Housing Law: Navigate Alberta's tenancy and home buying laws and common legal issues
- Planning Ahead & Capacity: Understand Alberta's laws about Wills, Personal Directives and Enduring Powers of Attorney

Community of practice: We know many justice navigators possess extensive knowledge and experience. We aim to create a safe and productive space for peer-led sharing as well as opportunities for learning about specialized topics. This portion may consist of webinars and an online forum.

Development Process

Our goal is to build a program for justice navigators with the help of justice navigators.

Planning and development: To develop each module's content, CPLEA will partner with one or two justice navigators who already have expertise in the topic.

User testing: To ensure each module meets the needs of its users, CPLEA will invite several justice navigators to review the draft module and provide feedback.

Planning and development and user testing activities will be ongoing from April 2025 to March 2026. We anticipate launching the basic legal education portion of the program in late spring 2026 with the community of practice portion to follow in the fall of 2026.

Contact Us

To learn more about or engage with CPLEA's Justice Navigator Training, please contact **Jessica Steingard**, Programming Manager at jsteingard@cplea.ca.