



Community Legal
Assistance Society

CLAS ACTION Vol. III

Thank you for subscribing to CLAS Action - the CLAS newsletter where we tell you about how we work to increase access to justice. This volume introduces our Stand Informed program which provides free legal advice on sexual assault in B.C. We have also included updates on CLAS's efforts advocating for rent control policies, a case where CLAS's Human Rights Clinic helps address racial stereotypes, and a glimpse into how we support people in poverty in B.C.



CLAS has launched a new program, [Stand Informed](#), which offers free legal advice services to people who have experienced sexual assault in B.C. . Services are available regardless of gender, age, income, and whether a report has been filed with the police. Stand Informed staff can also connect you with other resources, such as counselling, assistance with employment, and healthcare. All staff with Stand Informed take a holistic and trauma-informed approach, and will listen to you without judgement. [If you have experienced sexual assault, or if you're not sure whether what you have experienced is sexual assault, you can receive up to 3 hours of confidential and free legal advice.](#) Jennifer Khor, CLAS lawyer, said, ["Our goal with this service is to inform people of their legal options and empower them to do what they feel is best in their situation."](#)



The BC General Employees Union (BCGEU) has urged the BC Government to adopt vacancy control policies that would limit rent increases not just during a tenancy, but between tenancies as well. In September, the BC Government announced that landlords can raise a tenant's rent 3.5% annually. But if a tenant moves out, or is evicted, there are currently no restrictions on how high the landlord can raise the rent for the next tenant. CLAS lawyer Danielle Sabelli spoke at a BCGEU press release about how BC's current rent control laws are failing to protect tenants: "Our current rent control laws reward landlords who continuously kick their tenants out just so they can jack up the rent. This harsh reality will continue until the government limits the rent increases that landlords can impose, not just during a tenancy but also when new tenants are brought in."



A recent Human Rights Tribunal decision awarded \$27,000 to a client represented by the B.C. Human Rights Clinic. Our client, a young Black girl, was singled out for suspicion at work. She was 13 years old when her employer confronted her about a

shortage in the cash register, moved her to cleaning and food prep duties, and denied her a reference letter when she resigned due to the discrimination. The Human Rights Tribunal found that anti-Black bias and stereotypes informed the employer's conduct, stating: "In the absence of an explanation, [the employer's] heightened suspicion, scrutiny, and monitoring of AB is consistent with persistent and harmful stereotypes that Black people are prone to theft and that Black children are more adult and less innocent than other children." This case highlights the intersecting forms of discrimination experienced by Black women and girls, and the ways in which bias – whether conscious or unconscious - may result in a violation of an individual's human rights.



Community
Advocate
Support Line

CLAS's Community Advocate Support Line (CASL) provides poverty law advocates who help low-income people in BC, with a variety of supports including legal advice about complex cases, advocacy training and, most recently, online workshops. CASL's **warm referral workshops** aim to connect advocates across B.C. and grow their understanding of available resources for their clients. The workshops allow advocates to meet staff from specific legal service providers and programs, learn about their work, ask questions, and understand how best to make referrals to them. If you are an advocate practicing poverty law and seeking support from peers, more professional resources, or have questions, you can [contact CASL for specific advice about files, or more information about their warm referral workshops.](#)

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Help us to provide more free legal services to low-income people in BC.



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