



Edmonton Community
Legal Centre

ANNUAL REPORT

2008

our volunteers

Deborah Alessandro
 Joanne Archibald
 Carl Argo
 Yoko Azumaya
 Terri Badiou
 Chelsey Bailey
 Jason Bodnar
 Lyle Brookes
 Stewart Brownlee
 Yessy Byl
 Dennis Callihoo
 Alec Campbell
 Arman Chak
 Alex Coombes
 Craig Corbett
 Donald Cranston
 Brenda Davis
 Catherine Duxbury
 Ted Feehan
 Jon Faulds
 Jeff Fitzgerald
 D.K. Fraser
 Penny Frederiksen
 Kismet Fung
 Christina Gauk
 Marie Gordon
 Ron Haggett
 Scott Hammond
 John Henderson
 Lyndsey Henderson
 Greg Heinrichs
 Chris Holmes
 Ron Hopp
 Andrea Jarman
 Allyson Jeffs
 Bill Katz
 Priscilla Kennedy
 Jeananne Kirwin
 Dale Knisely
 Brent Kornack
 Jeremiah Kowalchuk
 Anna Kuranicheva
 Bryan Kwan
 Marcel Labbe
 Julie Lee
 Brian Loewen

Doug Mah
 Anne Magusin
 James McGinnis
 Ross McLeod
 Kim Melnyk
 Dan Morrow
 Jim Neilson
 Angus Ng
 Holly Norwig
 Jennifer Ornstein
 Don Padget
 Rakhi Pancholi
 Lynn Parish
 Tim Patterson
 Joanne Pawluk
 Dawn Pentelechuk
 Michael Phair
 Nicole Pfeifer
 Catrinel Popescu
 Greg Pratch
 Christine Pratt
 Matt Pruski
 Michael Pucylo
 John Radosh
 Andrea Remington
 Baljinder Rattan
 Sharon Roberts
 Jackie Rohel
 Terry Rostad
 Alex Rozmus
 Howard Samoil
 Kari Sejr
 Greg Sim
 Andrea Simmonds
 Sean Smith
 Eric Spink
 Shayna Staniloff
 Vivian Stevenson
 Brian Summers
 Michael Teeling
 Dione Thomas
 Holly Turner
 Alex Varela
 Stephanie Wanke
 David Wedge
 David Woo

“The volunteer lawyer was helpful and understood my situation. Now I feel comfortable dealing with the situation myself.”

ECLC Client

Clinic Services		
	2008	2002 to 2008
Volunteer Hours	2115	5263
Clients Served	642	4854
Volunteers	92	399

I have volunteered at the Edmonton Community Legal Centre for almost seven years. I volunteer about once a month at the evening clinic, and from time to time I take a *pro bono* file. Volunteering at ECLC is personally rewarding because after every clinic I feel as if I have made an important, direct impact on people’s lives. In my experience, the people who seek ECLC’s help are often overwhelmed, sometimes confused, and generally in need of someone on their side who can help them see a solution, legal or otherwise, to a daunting problem. Sometimes I do nothing more than listen to the person’s story and offer some simple, reassuring guidance. Each clinic experience is different, but after each clinic I hope that I have made a positive difference.

Jeremiah Kowalchuk
 Volunteer Lawyer

The ECLC is proud of the work it has done over the past seven years, providing access to justice and free legal education, information, support, advice, and representation to the poorest and most vulnerable in our community.

a client's story

A single mother has a long term lease at a low rent that includes utilities. Subsequently the landlords sell the property to a large corporation.

That new landlord misplaces the lease, and purports to increase the rent. The woman repeatedly tells the landlord's staff that her rent is lower and her lease includes utilities, and the staff tell her they will look into it and get back to her. The woman pays the rent she truly owes, and no one gets back to her.

The woman and her children go on vacation. A few days after they return, a Sheriff forcibly removes them from their home, without their belongings, in front of their neighbours. She moves in with someone her son knows, and calls her landlord repeatedly to explain their error. No one listens.

When the woman comes to the Edmonton Community Legal Centre, we investigate. There was a hearing at the Residential Tenancies Dispute Resolution Service, while the woman was on vacation. In accordance with the regulation, the Notice of Hearing had been posted to the woman's door. When she did not attend the hearing, a tenancy dispute officer had made an order that the woman owed months of back rent and thousands of dollars in utility payments.

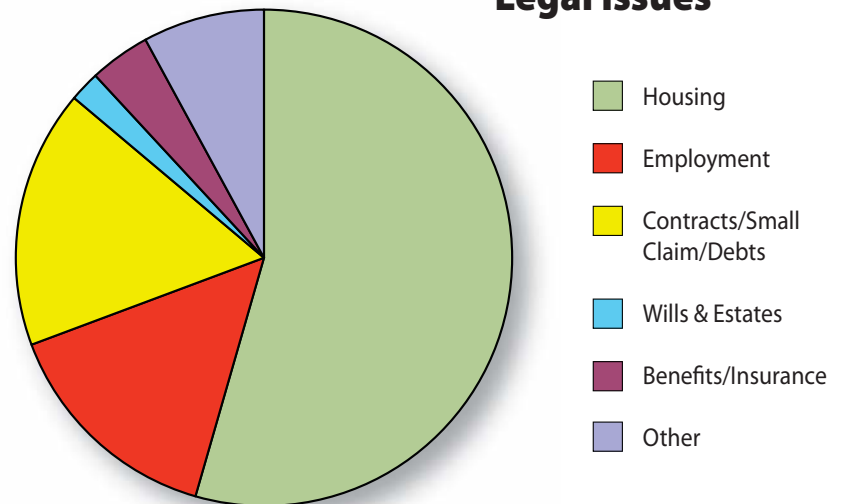
Talking to the landlord accomplishes nothing. Under the current regulatory scheme, there is no ability to adduce new evidence on appeal from

the RTDRS, and no right of re-hearing. We draft, file and serve a Notice of Motion and lengthy Affidavit returnable in the Court of Queen's Bench, relying on the Judicature Act. Finally, the landlord consents to staying the RTDRS order and the Writ of Possession.

Over a month after they were initially locked out of their home, the woman and her children are allowed to return home (where their possessions, thankfully, await them). The ECLC continues to advocate for changes to the RTDRS regulation.

The Edmonton Community Legal Centre provides free legal services, advice, representation and education in the areas of civil and administrative law to persons living with low income in the Edmonton area.

Legal Issues



message from the executive director - debbie klein

Our seventh year of operation was marked by growth and transition. We said farewell to John Henderson, ECLC Board Chair since 2002, and Lori Shortreed, ECLC Executive Director since 2004. Both of them exemplified the passion and dedication that has been true of our board, volunteers, and staff over the years. We welcomed four new Board members, nineteen new volunteers, and six new staff members. We expanded our client services, opening our first “satellite” legal clinic, and adding a Temporary Foreign Worker Project. As the year ends, we are looking ahead to continued growth, with plans for a second satellite clinic, and preparing for a move to new and larger office space.

For several months in 2008, the ECLC was without a full-time staff lawyer, a crucial position to our service-delivery model. Sincere and heartfelt thanks to Don Cranston, Brian Summers, John Henderson, Lyle Brookes, and Ron Hopp, who devoted many additional hours beyond their board and volunteer commitment to provide ongoing legal support to ECLC clients, as well as professional support to the new ECLC staff lawyer. Thanks to Dianne Henderson, who led the ECLC staff team during the transition to a new executive director. Thanks to all the ECLC volunteers, board, and staff for their commitment to the ECLC this past year, and as we continue to evolve.

Although funding is never completely secure in the not-for-profit sector, the ECLC is very fortunate that its revenues and funding base have increased each year, which enabled us to take a bold step in 2008. That bold step was the addition of a second full-time staff lawyer toward the end of the year, effectively doubling our capacity for legal advice and representation beyond the legal clinics. As we look ahead to 2009, with seven years of experience and credibility behind us, we are better positioned than ever before to fulfill our mission of providing access to justice to low income Edmontonians.

pro bono file lawyers

Joanne Archibald
Andrew Bachelder
Jason Bodnar
Lyle Brookes
Yessy Byl
Arman Chak
Don Cranston
Zachary Elias
Fiona Fjeldheim
Penny Frederiksen
John Henderson
Ron Hopp
Allyson Jeffs
Bill Katz
Priscilla Kennedy
Jeremiah Kowalchuk
Douglas Mah
Dan Morrow
Jim Neilson
Lynn Parish
Tim Patterson
Dawn Pentelechuk
Nicole Pfeifer
Greg Pratch
Christine Pratt
Matt Pruski
Michael Pucylo
Baljie Rattan
Sharon Roberts
Howard Samoil
Kari Sejr
Greg Sim
Sean Smith
Eric Spinc
Shayna Staniloff
Vivian Stevenson
Brian Summers
Stephanie Wanke
Matthew Woodley

**10 staff,
12 board members,
and 92 volunteers
provided service to
4356 low-income
Edmontonians.**

our process

The ECLC is unique in its holistic approach to legal problems, situating the individual and family within the broader picture of their financial, personal, and social circumstances.

All clients have an initial interview with a social worker who assists them to identify if they have a legal concern and provides appropriate referrals and information.

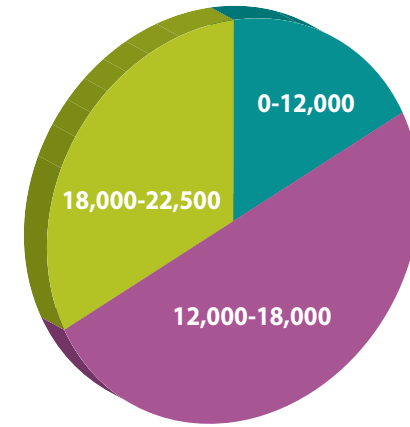
Clients receive legal information and advice at no cost at a volunteer legal clinic. Volunteers may refer clients with complex legal issues for free legal representation by an ECLC Staff Lawyer.

The Volunteer Lawyers and Staff Lawyers work in partnership with the Outreach Worker to identify and address social and personal factors that may have contributed to the legal problem. This multi-disciplinary approach facilitates client access to community resources and service providers, expands opportunities for the negotiation of non-legal remedies, and ensures skilled guidance in the handling of disputes.

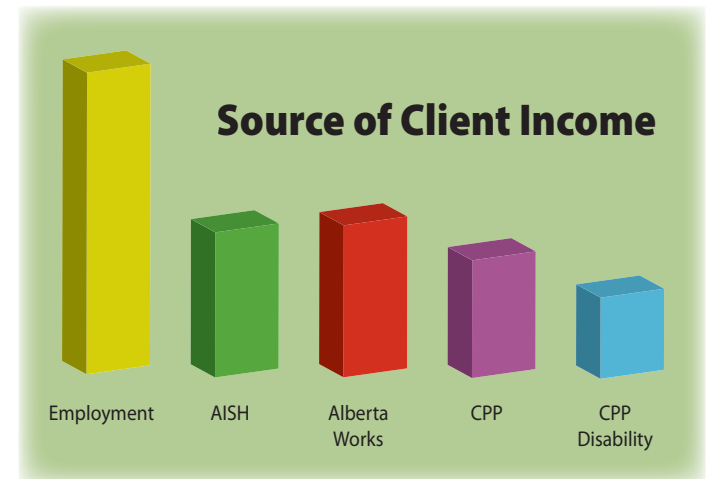
support to temporary foreign workers

In September 2008, the ECLC hired a Temporary Foreign Worker Project Coordinator, who works in partnership with the ECLC staff and volunteer team to assist low income foreign workers to better understand their legal rights and with legal problems regarding work permits and their legal status in Canada. The Coordinator works closely with Catholic Social Services, the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, and the Temporary Foreign Workers Advisory Office to coordinate service provision to foreign workers. Catholic Social Services and Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers provide settlement services. The Temporary Foreign Workers Advisory Office provides information and referral services and help resolving employment standards or occupational health and safety issues.

Client Income



Source of Client Income



message from the board chair - don cranston

The Edmonton Community Legal Centre began as a project of the Edmonton Social Planning Council in 2002, and in 2004, was incorporated as an independent society with charitable status. 2008 saw the departure of the Honourable Judge John Henderson (formerly John Henderson, Q.C.) as Chair of ECLC, and Lori Shortreed as the longstanding Executive Director of ECLC. Both contributed immeasurably to the creation and growth of the Centre.

As 2008 drew to a close, we found ourselves with a new Executive Director, two new full-time staff lawyers, a strong staff complement and many supportive volunteer lawyers.

As I write this brief message, ECLC has just moved into new premises, a significant step forward for our Centre. The new premises are far more visible, provide better access to our clientele and a better working environment for our staff and volunteer lawyers. The location is in the heart of downtown, and a short walk from the Courthouse.

Built upon the strong foundation laid by those who preceded us, our Board of Directors and senior management have recently undertaken a strategic planning exercise, and as a result have further embedded a strong governance model, which will incorporate some important advocacy functions as we move forward.

A message such as this would not be complete without a heartfelt thanks to our funders. The Alberta Law Foundation has shown significant commitment to the Centre, which is greatly appreciated.

I would like to end this message with a further thanks to two Board members who retired in 2008, Lyle Brookes and Dennis Callihoo. Their contributions were significant, and they will be missed.

financial supporters

Alberta Federation of Labour
Alberta Law Foundation
Alberta Solicitor General
Bennett Jones LLP
Brownlee LLP
Canadian Bar Association
Christine Pratt
City of Edmonton
Donald and Nancy Cranston
Douglas Mah
Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association
Edmonton Community Foundation
Edmonton Housing Trust Fund
Field LLP
Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP
John Henderson
Kim Wakefield
Lyle Brookes
Marie Gordon
McLennan Ross LLP
Miller Thompson LLP
Minerva Foundation
Parlee McLaws LLP
Pro Bono Law Alberta
Service Canada
Schizophrenia Society of Alberta
Union 52 Benevolent Society
Victoria Laidlaw
Wild Rose Foundation

54% of ECLC clients are female and 69% are single. 40% are between the ages of 26 and 45. 17% are 56 or older. All clients are living with a limited income, 68% with a gross income of less than \$1500 per month.

statement of financial position

Assets	2008	2007
Current	311,348	319,895
Equipment	10,863	9,190
	322,211	329,085
Liabilities		
Current	193,570	223,352
Deferred contributions (equipment)	4,614	1,185
	198,184	224,537
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	117,778	96,543
Invested in equipment	6,249	8,005
	124,027	104,548
	322,211	329,085

year ended December 31, 2008

statement of operations

Revenue	2008	2007
Grants, fundraising, donations	755,996	546,659
Interest	1,965	1,868
	757,961	548,527
Expenses		
Consulting fees	48,274	26,790
Facility costs	71,820	56,558
Office supplies and equipment	44,966	49,302
Program costs	44,632	28,644
Salaries and benefits	528,790	330,357
	738,482	491,651
Revenue over expenses	19,479	56,876

year ended December 31, 2008

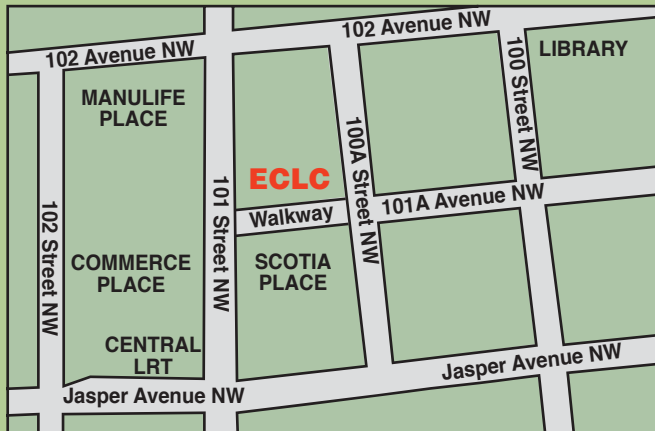
1707 referrals were made to outside agencies.

40% of ECLC intake calls received in 2008 have been concerning landlord and tenant matters, as compared to 26% in 2007.

Staff lawyers provided support to 507 people, including direct service on 279 files.

our board

Donald Cranston, QC, *Chair* Bennett Jones LLP
Michael Phair, *Vice Chair* University of Alberta
Marcel Labbe, *Treasurer* Servus Credit Union
Christine Pratt, *Secretary* Field LLP
Yessy Byl, Private Practice Lawyer
Jon Faulds, QC, Field LLP
Penny Frederiksen, Ackroyd LLP
Marie Gordon, QC, Gordon Zwaenepoel
Allyson Jeffs, Ackroyd LLP
James McGinnis, Parlee McLaws LLP
Joanne Pawluk, University of Alberta
Brian Summers, Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP



our staff

Administrative Coordinator
IK Ero/Catherine Tan

Intake Coordinator
Jacquie L'Hirondelle

Legal Assistant
Solmaz Taheri

Legal Researcher
Deborah Alessandro
Tess VanWeelden
Lindsey Hanoski

Outreach Worker
Shelley McGowan

Satellite Clinic Coordinator
Sonia Melgar

Staff Lawyer
Cindy Want/Sarah Eadie
Tim Patterson

Temporary Foreign Worker Project Coordinator
Susan Wood

Volunteer/Program Coordinator
Dianne Henshaw

Executive Director
Lori Shortreed/Debbie Klein

our office

Phone 780.702.1725
Fax 780.702.1726
www.eclc.ca
10056 - 101A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0C8

our mission

The Edmonton Community Legal Centre provides effective advocacy and access to justice in a supportive environment to persons living with low income.