

Access to Justice in the NWT Report, 2018

The NWT Access to Justice Committee met twice in 2018. The Committee membership changed during the year with Judge Schmaltz's retirement and Caroline Wawzonek stepping down as CBA representative. The current membership includes:

Supreme Court Judicial representative:	Justice Karan Shaner
Territorial Court Judicial representative:	Judge Christine Gagnon (interim)
Department of Justice, GNWT:	Mark Aitken
Legal Aid Commission:	Karen Wilford
CBA-NT:	Don Large
Department of Justice, Canada:	Scott Duke
LSNT Support:	Bob Wilson
LSNT Committee Chair:	Margo Nightingale

The most valuable aspect of this committee has been in our ability to discuss matters in an open and frank manner. The representatives have found that their professional perspectives, interactions, and practices are more informed as a result of these discussions. The process has also inspired and informed projects within the Supreme Court (announcements that new Family Court Rules will be created starting in early 2019), the Department of Justice (draft of regulations to create a child support recalculation service) the CBA Family Law Section (outreach to the Supreme Court bench and bar committee) and Legal Aid's Outreach Clinic (creation of a plain language Divorce Guide with easy to use court forms).

The Committee has continued to follow the progress of the Legal Aid Commission's Outreach Program in 2018, including the establishment of the family law duty counsel service, and several of the Committee members participated in an information session provided by the manager of the Department of Justice's Intensive Case Management (pathfinder) program. We also note the establishment of the M.M. deWeerd Resource Centre in May 2018. The "**NWT Justice Services, Programs and Resources Inventory**", created in 2016 at the request and direction of the Committee was updated October 2017 by staff of the Outreach program of the Legal Aid Commission. The revised version is posted on the LSNT website under "Resources" for the public, and under "Access to Justice" for lawyers.

In March, Karen Wilford attended meetings organized by the National Action Committee on Access to Justice. She attended a one-day session on access to justice and the child welfare system and a second day of workshops among provincial and territorial access to justice representatives. A report of that event was prepared and can be shared on request.

The Committee intends to meet again in December or January.