

CLIENT UPDATE!



New Client Identification + Verification Rules for BC Law Firms

As of December 31, 2008 new Law Society of British Columbia rules require that lawyers obtain certain information about their clients before providing legal services.

These rules have been adopted by Law Societies throughout Canada and are intended to reduce the risk of lawyers' trust accounts being used for illicit purposes.

Identification - Lawyers are now required to collect basic identification information about all of our clients (including our existing clients) for new matters opened after December 31, 2008.

If you are an individual, the information which we will need to record includes your full name, home address and telephone number, your occupation and your business address and business telephone number

If you are an organization the information which we will need to record includes the full name of the organization, your business address and phone number, your Incorporation number or business identification number and place of issuance, and the full name, position and contact information for any individual authorized to instruct us.

If you are acting as an agent for a third party, we will also need to collect this information for the third party as well.

Verification - In certain cases where we receive instructions from you regarding the receipt, payment or transfer of funds as part of our representation of you, we must obtain documentation verifying your identity.

For individuals, we will be required to obtain and retain copies of government-issued identification (e.g. passport, driver's license, birth certificate or care card).

For organizations - we will be required to obtain and retain copies of government issued information verifying the identity of the organization, which may include certificates of corporate status or annual government filings, and must also verify the identity of the person authorized to provide us with instructions. We may also be required to obtain names, addresses and occupations of the organization's directors and of any shareholder or owner of 25% or more of the organization.

If you are acting as an agent for a third party, we will also need to collect this information for the third party as well.

Generally speaking, once our firm has complied with the identification and verification requirements with respect to a client, it should not be necessary to do so again unless there are changes to your information. Our firm's privacy policy applies to all personal information collected in accordance with the new rules.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding these new rules, please do not hesitate to contact:

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