

Disclosure | AAPP Newsletter

Regulating Paralegals in Alberta • by Heidi Semkovich

This Story was originally published on July 25, 2022 in LawNow <https://www.lawnow.org/regulating-paralegals-in-alberta/>

OPINION | The views expressed in this article are those of the author.

In response to the growing access to justice issue in Alberta, legal stakeholders are trying to figure out what they can do to ease the mounting pressure on our court system. One of the biggest issues Albertans face when dealing with a legal matter is whether they can afford to retain a lawyer. The reality is that most Albertans cannot afford a lawyer, so they turn to another possible solution – paralegals.

Paralegals are members of the legal team that have additional education and training and perform substantive legal tasks. They typically have a billable rate, and, in most cases, work under the supervision of a lawyer.

Paralegals *can* perform a variety of substantive legal tasks, which include drafting pleadings, legal research, drafting memos and submissions, preparation of trial materials, and meeting with clients. Paralegals can also appear as agents in Provincial Court but cannot file documents on behalf of parties.

However, Alberta does not regulate paralegals. This presents two key issues:

1. Anyone can say they are a paralegal whether they have the proper education and training or not.
2. Independent practicing paralegals are providing legal services they are not authorized to provide, sometimes with incredibly negative results for their clients.

Simply stated, the lack of regulatory oversight is harming Albertans and our justice system.

Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals (AAPP)

The AAPP was originally formed in 1981 to provide recognition for legal assistants who were looking to be recognized for the independent work they performed. At that time, senior level legal assistants, with their vast knowledge and experience, filled a vital role of performing legal services as paralegals. This continues to ring true today, however, the term 'paralegal' is now far more common than it was then.

(continued on Page 2)

The New AAPP— How We've Changed

In 2022, the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals filed with the Registrar of Corporations Alberta, Amended Objects and By-Laws in order to expand its membership to include Legal Professionals that are fundamental to the practice of law.

The AAPP has expanded its membership categories to include the following: Legal Support Professionals: Legal Administrative Assistant; Legal Assistant; Court Agent; Court Clerk or Judicial Clerk; Paralegal; and Independent Paralegal.

Legal support staff in entry level legal administration positions for the day-to-day operations fundamental to the practice of law are encouraged to join the AAPP and share their particular and/or specialized skill set in various areas of law.

Membership with the AAPP means access to professional development courses, networking opportunities and becoming part of a growing community of Legal Support Professionals.

We look forward to welcoming these Legal Professionals to our Association as we continue to grow.



Alberta Association of
Professional Paralegals

LawNow
relating law to life in Canada

HOME SECTIONS ARCHIVES TEACHERS & STUDENTS SUBSCRIBE
YOU ARE HERE: HOME / SECTIONS / ACCESS TO JUSTICE / REGULATING PARALEGALS IN ALBERTA

Regulating Paralegals in Alberta

JULY 25, 2022 BY HEIDI SEMKOVICH

Reading Time: 3 minutes

The Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals is advocating for regulation of paralegals and is already working to develop quality education programs.



The Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals is advocating for regulation of paralegals and is already working to develop quality education programs.

Inside this issue

Regulating Paralegals in Alberta.	2
♦ Additional Interviews	2
Definitions Legal Support Professionals	3
♦ AAPP Objects	3
Presidents Message	4
What the AAPP Board has been doing	4
Red Deer Polytechnic in Partnership with the AAPP	5
♦ Paralegal Post-Diploma Certificate Overview	5
Education and Professional Development	5
Mentorship	6
Heart for Justice Bev Boyden Scholarship	6 & 7
Student Honor Society	7
Performance Excellence Awards.	7

OTHER ITEMS

- Membership
- Annual General Meeting
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- Five Tips for your mental health during your return to onsite work—Canada Mental Health
- Sponsorships

Regulation of Paralegals in Alberta— *continued*



HEIDI SEMKOWICH President of the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals Heidi graduated with her legal assistant diploma in 1997, and her Paralegal Studies Diploma in 2015. She works full-time as a paralegal at a law firm in Edmonton, and is the President of the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals. In 2020, Heidi obtained her legal coaching certification and has worked with self-represented litigants by providing legal information and assisting with document

Additional Interviews

Man hires paralegal to handle his divorce — discovers he's still married

CBC News · Posted: Jun 14, 2021
"Unscrupulous individuals" are taking advantage of people all the time, says Heidi Semkowich, president of the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals (AAPP), an organization that provides support — not oversight. Membership is voluntary.

[Go to article](#)

Only one Canadian jurisdiction regulates paralegals. Could the profession benefit from regulated practice standards?

The Registrar Magazine - Issue 4 - Winter 2022

Heidi Semkowich, president of the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals, notes that there is no minimum standard of qualifications before an individual can hold themselves out as a paralegal to the public.

by The Registrar
https://issuu.com/theregistrar/docs/04_issue_-the_registrar_magazine_-_winter_2022/s/14623541

Today our Association is comprised of students, legal support professionals, paralegals who work under the direct supervision of a lawyer or member of the judiciary, and paralegals who are independently practicing. The Association also welcomes other legal stakeholders as Affiliate members, and retirees to remain active as Alumni members.

All paralegal members must meet specific criteria to be granted a paralegal membership, including graduation from a recognized paralegal studies program and proof of employment in a paralegal capacity. The same requirements apply to applicants for independent paralegal membership, though we also require proof of valid practice insurance as well as a proposed scope of practice.

The need for *qualified* paralegal services is growing in Alberta. This is evidenced by the growing number of people who are retaining the services of paralegals (qualified or not). However, in far too many instances, vulnerable individuals looking for legal assistance are being taken advantage of. The AAPP routinely receives complaints and concerns from members of the public about sub-par services. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer any resolution to individuals experiencing fraud and harm.

What will Regulation Achieve?

The AAPP is actively lobbying the government to regulate paralegals in Alberta. We intend for the profession to be recognized for the skills and knowledge it brings with it and to ensure individuals are practicing within set boundaries in an ethical, professional, and exemplary manner.

Through regulation, the AAPP will ensure all practicing paralegals have the required education, skills, and insurance. The AAPP will also have enforcement authority to hold paralegals accountable. In short, regulation protects the public and preserves the reputation of the profession.

The AAPP has been working closely with several post-secondary institutions on the development of paralegal studies programs, including the Paralegal Post-Diploma Certificate program at Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP). RDP's program boasts a flexible delivery method which allows students to remain working while completing the program. In addition to acquiring in-depth knowledge in several areas of law, students will gain hands-on experience which will prepare them to successfully perform advanced legal tasks. For more information on this program, [visit RDP's website](#).

Conclusion

Other jurisdictions regulate paralegals. For example, Ontario has regulated paralegals since 2007 with remarkable success. They can practice in several areas of law and play an important role in the administration of justice in Ontario. This is a fantastic example of how Alberta can successfully address the access to justice issue and protect both the public and the reputation of the paralegal profession.

The Honourable Justice Beverley McLachlin said it best: "There is no justice without access to justice." It is my firm belief that paralegals can and will play an integral role in helping address Alberta's access to justice issue.

"Through regulation, the AAPP will ensure that all practicing paralegals have the required education, skills, and insurance, while holding those paralegals accountable for their actions. Regulation ensures protection of the public, assists in addressing the access to justice crisis, and preserves the reputation of the profession." - Heidi Semkowich, President of AAPP



ALBERTA COUNSEL

Legal Professionals Defined



On January 6, 2022, the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals filed with the Registrar of Corporations, Bylaw and Object amendments. Part of the fundamental changes included the definitions and corresponding scope of responsibility for each respective Legal Support Professional.

Court Agent means any individual who is not a lawyer or student-at-law, but who is employed for the purpose of acting as an agent for a party or accused in the Provincial Court matters or a tribunal.

Court Clerk or Judicial Clerk means any individual who is not a lawyer or student-at-law, who is a civil servant employed by Alberta Justice and solicitor General for the purposes of performing tasks related to court and law matters.

Legal Administrative Assistant means a trained legal administrative professional, working in an entry-level position or in a position that requires a particular or specialized skill set in areas of law, including, but not limited to:

- a. Various legal routine practices and/or administrative for the day-to-day operations that are fundamental to the practice of law; or
- b. Project matters that are fundamental to the operations and requirements of law practices; and

that are preformed under the general supervision of a Member of the Law Society or a person that is designated, appointed or employed by a Member of the Law Society to supervise said duties.

Legal Assistant means a trained legal administrative professional who performs a variety of routine legal and/or administrative duties under the general supervision of a Member of the Law Society or a person that is designated, appointed or employed by a Member of the Law Society to supervise said duties, having completed either a Diploma or Certificate Program or has worked in the supervised position by a Member of the Law Society for no less than 2 years.

Legal Support Professional means Legal Administrative Assistant; Legal Assistant; Court Agent; Court Clerk or Judicial Clerk; Paralegal; and Independent Paralegal.

Independent Paralegal means a person with education, training and knowledge of the substantive and procedural aspects of law, and can provide proof of Liability Insurance valid in the Province of Alberta, who may or may not be employed or retained by or for the purposes of working with a member of the Law Society in a capacity or function which involves the performance of legal work, or duties of specifically delegated substantive legal work which requires sufficient knowledge of legal concepts that in the absence of the Paralegal the Member of the Law Society would perform.

Paralegal means a person with education, training and knowledge of the substantive and procedural aspects of law, who is employed or retained by or for the purposes of working with a Member of the Law Society in a capacity or function which involves the performance of legal work, under the ultimate direction and guidance of a Member of the Law Society, or duties of specifically delegated substantive legal work which requires sufficient knowledge of legal concepts that in the absence of the Paralegal the Member of the Law Society would perform.

Independent Paralegals MUST provide proof of Liability Insurance valid in the Province of Alberta in order to obtain a membership with the AAPP.

AAPP OBJECTS January 6 2022

The aim and object of the Society is:

(a) To provide and maintain an organization for legal support professionals, including but not limited to, Legal Administrative Assistants, Legal Assistants, Court Agents, Court Clerks or Judicial Clerks, Paralegals and Independent Paralegals, employed by or working under the supervision of a Member of the Law Society of Alberta in good standing as defined by the Law Society Rules in private practice or in any office, department, corporation or undertaking whatsoever whether governmental, public, municipal, commercial or otherwise and to advance and protect the status and interests of all such personnel, or in the instance of an Independent Paralegal, which employment is contingent on proof of Liability Insurance valid in the Province of Alberta, (referred to herein as "Legal Support Professionals");

(b) To promote professional unity amongst persons employed as Legal Support Professionals, and to promote cooperation and mutual assistance between them;

(c) Generally to promote the education, whether general or legal, and the professional advancement of Legal Support Professionals with a view to assisting them to become proficient in the law and to qualify in the respective areas of law provided by Legal Support Professionals and in particular either alone or jointly with the Law Society of Alberta or any other body" whether public, governmental, municipal or private and to arrange, establish and conduct educational schemes, conferences, lectures and examinations;

(d) To give and award diplomas, prizes and other rewards to persons showing proficiency in the law and establish trust funds and scholarships and assist financially with the educational or professional advancement of Legal Support Professionals in their respective areas of law.

(e) To publish literature, maintain libraries and disseminate such literature or other information by the delivery of lectures.

President's Message | Heidi Semkowich



Although I have served on the AAPP Board of Directors for several years now, a steep learning curve continues to present itself to me. When I stepped up as President I knew there were lots of things I knew. I also was very aware that there were many, many things I didn't know, and very likely many, many things I didn't realize I didn't know. Suffice it to say, I continue to learn about things I don't know and I continue to become aware of things I didn't realize I didn't know. It has been an amazing and humbling journey, but as they say, "you learn something new every day".

The AAPP is here to guide and assist!

Whether you are a student just starting their studies or an

experienced legal professional, the AAPP is here to help. We encourage all students to join the association, and all members to use the AAPP as a resource for mentorship, networking, acknowledgment, continuing education, etc. The AAPP has many exciting perks to offer our members so please feel free to look into them at your leisure!

Board of Directors

I have had the privilege of serving with the current Board of Directors for the last two years. As I concentrate on the Association as a whole, I want to acknowledge that I do not do this alone. The Directors on the Board of Directors are simply amazing, and I am honoured to work alongside them. Sadly, Tanya Dechaine has decided to step down at the end of her term in October. I ask you all to join me in thanking Tanya for her dedication and hard work. You will be sorely missed!

The AAPP has numerous exciting projects in progress and we will share more information about them in the coming months. The Board of Directors remains available to you for your questions and concerns.

Be well everyone,

Heidi Semkowich

What the AAPP Board has been doing | Heidi Semkowich

It has been a busy year for the Board of Directors! Following the 2021 AGM the Board has been working on:

Regulation: The Board of Directors retained the lobbying services of Alberta Counsel to assist with government relations with respect to regulation of the profession in Alberta. The lobbying team has secured meetings with government officials for the AAPP to engage in discussions about regulation of paralegals. The AAPP meets with the lobbying team bi-weekly to discuss the progress of regulation.

The AAPP met with Justice Minister Tyler Shandro in April 2022 to discuss the possibility of regulating paralegals in Alberta. Following that meeting, the AAPP was put in contact with an ADM who is dedicated to working on regulation. The AAPP has met with the ADM and is currently authoring a white paper, which we are project-

ing to be complete in the coming weeks.

The AAPP has also conducted consultation with the public to gauge support for regulation of the profession. We are thrilled to report that 80% of Albertans are in support of regulation of the profession! We are currently conducting consultation with members of the Bar and independent paralegals to gauge their support for this initiative. All of the consultation findings will be discussed in our white paper.

Credentialling Exam: The Board struck a committee of instructors from post-secondary institutions in Alberta to tackle the development of a credentialling exam for paralegals. This exam will be a requirement in the regulation process. The committee continues to work on the development of this exam, with a projected completion date of June 2023.

Complaints Committee: as we get more down the path towards regulation of the profession, the AAPP formed a committee to address a formal complaints process. This committee continues to work on the formal process for how complaints will be received and handled. We will release more information on this as it becomes available.

Student Honour Society: We are thrilled to be launching the Student Honour Society in the Fall of 2022. Students in their second year of studies are encouraged to apply to become a member! Please check out our website for more information.



Red Deer Polytechnic In Partnership with the APP Introducing the first of its kind in Alberta Paralegal Studies Post Diploma Certificate



Paralegal Post-Diploma Certificate Overview:

If you have attended a recognized Legal Assistant program and have worked in the legal field in some capacity for at least 3 years, you may be interested in exploring this new, exciting program at Red Deer Polytechnic.

This program is offered online, in the evenings to accommodate work schedules and acknowledge that we are hard working professionals that often can't leave work to attend training/school. There are eight core courses that cover topics like professional ethics, evidence, legal research, legal analysis, and legal drafting. Sharpen and advance your skills; set yourself up for success and advancement in your career.

<https://rdpolytech.ca/programs/extended-education/programs-and-courses/paralegal-post-diploma-certificate>

Education and Professional Development| Katherine Quantz

THANK YOU!!! For a fabulous lunch-n-learn webinar series to date!! We are pleased to have had so many wonderful presenters and facilitators over the past year and are grateful for the opportunity to have some excellent discussions and learn about so many diverse topics. Thank you to all the organizations and individuals who have participated in the webinars in some capacity over the last several months. We truly appreciate the ongoing support!

Some highlights of the past few months' webinars include:

- Our March 2022 webinar, Drafting Commencement Documents with Jim Doyle, had the most registrants in our webinar series to date! A huge thank you to Jim for his continued support!
- Our June webinar presenter, Melanie Henriques, is a Registered Paralegal and Partner at Toronto based law firm Samfiru Tumarkin LLP. Thank you, Melanie!
- Our Intellectual Property Institute of Canada (IPIC) webinar included a registration code for 50% off the Patent Administrator Certification course for AAPP members!!

Looking ahead, we have many exciting professional development opportunities to look forward to in the coming months. Check the events page on the AAPP website frequently – this is where you can find all the information on upcoming webinars and the links to register.

As always, we welcome your questions, feedback, suggestions, comments, and ideas with respect to the webinar series and our professional development programming. Please feel free to contact us by reaching out directly to Katherine Quantz, Director of Education and Professional Development via e-mail: education@alberta-paralegal.com.

Have a wonderful October – see you at the AGM!

The Paralegal Post-Diploma Certificate program is a part-time program for those who are already working in the legal field as Legal Assistants. This is the only paralegal program endorsed by the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals. This one-year certificate includes eight theory-based courses and one consolidated practicum course. This program will prepare graduates to focus on contracts law, professional ethics, legal research, legal drafting, torts, rules of evidence and legal interviewing. The Paralegal Post-Diploma Certificate will allow graduates to take on more responsibility within the legal field under the supervision of a lawyer.

Funding an issue?

This program qualifies for the Canada Job Grant program wherein up to 2/3 of the cost is covered by a grant. All you have to do is have your employer apply online. <https://www.alberta.ca/canada-alberta-job-grant.aspx>

Live to Learn, and you will really learn to live. —John C. Maxwell

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!!!

We are looking for volunteers to help with various education related initiatives and projects, including presenters for webinars! If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering or presenting, please contact

Katherine at education@alberta-paralegal.com

Mentorship— A Cornerstone where two ends meet | Anastasia Lussier



When we seek to define Men-tor-ship, it can be simply described as “the guidance provided by a mentor, especially an experienced person in a company or educational institution”.

But is that all Mentorship *really is*? I believe it to be so much more than that. Afterall, who wouldn't want a Career Guardian Angel? Someone who has carved out time for YOU, someone who can listen, someone who wants you to become the best you, truly.

It is interesting to understand and note the **history and antiquity** behind the idea of mentorship. According to Greek Mythology there once existed a man named “Mentor”, who was friends with the legendary Odysseus. When Odysseus went to war against Troy, he entrusted his house under the care of Mentor. Mentor ended up becoming a guide to Odysseus's son Telemachus, giving him advice. As a result, in modern times we still refer to trusted advisers as “mentors.”

In exploring Erikson's theory of mentoring...this theory postulates that mentoring is a mutually beneficial relationship. The mentee gains fundamental knowledge, and the mentor gains a sense of well-being from passing on their knowledge to the next generation. This sense of well-being is also confirmed in the theory created by Erikson.

Now that we appreciate what a Mentorship is by its very nature, I would like to give you an idea of how to create structure through the cycle of a Mentorship relationship:

Finding purpose in why you want a Mentor or Mentee as

well as being able to determine what you want to gain from the experience. Using things like targeted questions, practical future planning and short-term goals. Why not share abstract ideas and weigh in on perspectives you may have never considered otherwise?

Engagement: This includes picking a Mentor and actively pursuing them for Mentorship. Traditionally, the Mentee would take the responsibility of initiation of such relationship to display leadership and eagerness to a leader they seek advice from. This is certainly the most crucial part, without actively seeking out a Mentor and participating in the Mentorship program with AAPP, you cannot properly realize the benefits of the program. Book sessions, engage and be consistent with your efforts.

Planning: How will you work together, what visions are you working to achieve?

Emergence: What progress have you made? What have you learned? How can you refine it? Time to reflect on your self discovery.

Completion/Integration: What is next for you? Who else in the Mentorship pool can you bounce ideas off of? What other areas can you explore? The possibilities are endless...

In conclusion, AAPP welcomes you with open arms to participate in and take advantage of our Mentorship program in whichever capacity you desire. You might be surprised what you will gain on your journey of Mentorship. Always remember when it comes to self development and investing in yourself, it's not that you didn't have the time, it's that you didn't make the time!

Email mentorship@alberta-paralegal.com to sign up today.

Bev Boyden Heart For Justice Scholarship| Penny Doyle

Bev and I got to know each other and formed a friendship while working at Walsh LLP. Bev was somebody you were happy to know. A friend of Bev's wrote a touching dedication entitled “Her Heart Prints Live on Forever”, that genuinely captures Bev - it's an inspiring read.

When I heard of Bev's passing, I was “rattled” - I had just recently been in contact with her. She was excited about the new direction her long, LONG legal career was heading - then suddenly, she's no longer here.

That was a lot to process ... and then I wondered - how was Tamara?

As mentioned, I worked with Bev, she was a litigation specialist, and I was in business law. Bev was an exceptional mentor. Bev always, and this is not an exaggeration, always found or made time to help you.

There wasn't a day that she wasn't helping someone in the firm with something. Even outside of her practice area, she would promote and exercise professionalism and respect,

seeing whatever it was to a solution. Nothing was ever too menial, and I never once heard Bev say, “that's not my job”.

Bev, the “*exceptional mentor*” - yes, she absolutely was. This was very evident among her colleagues at work. This continued to remain true, outside of business hours. I got to see Bev, the single mom, working late to stay on top of her files. I remember she would make every effort to ensure that her sweet cherub faced daughter, 11-year-old Tamara, was there too when she could be. It was during these evenings, that I got to observe the instilling of philanthropy, hard work, and respect. Bev was teaching her daughter the same way she shared her knowledge and time with her peers - leading by example.

(continued on page 7)

A very special thank you to Tamara, and volunteers, Audrey Bennett and Director, Thomas Kannanayakal . We have honored our friend by “inspiring others to shine their light” xo Penny

Bev Boyden Heart For Justice Scholarship| (continued)

Bev thoughtfully combined her passions with her career and family. Bev and Tamara embarked on a pay it forward school project, that is still around today. I saw mother and daughter share and build in the kindness of giving back and the importance of community.

Bev was driven by the need for access to justice. She had provided presentations and writings regarding this issue, actively advocating for paralegals to be recognized as a fundamental part of a solution to this problem. She never stopped, even the day before she passed.

The opportunity to create a Scholarship in Bev's name with Tamara brought back those memories and experiences of years back. I feel honored and fortunate to take these lessons I learned from Bev and Tamara and share them with members of our profession.

The Bev Boyden Heart for Justice Scholarship was created to acknowledge the importance of one's time and the value it has in a community. It recognizes volunteer efforts to support access to justice, poverty reduction, and family supports in one's community.

We are pleased to announce that the AAPP is now accepting applications for the Scholarship, which is opened to December 30, 2022. The AAPP is happy that Tamara will be a part of the Recipient Committee that will **award this scholarship on March 10, 2023.**

<https://www.alberta-paralegal.com/bevboydenscholarship>

If you wish to donate to this scholarship or would like more information, please contact Penny Doyle @ membership@alberta-paralegal.com

Bev Boyden Heart For Justice Scholarship



"That's who you were Bev. Determined. Committed. Always there to help out. Always willing to do what ever was needed to make a difference. To do one thing every day to make the world a better place." - [https://](https://dareboldly.com/2021/05/10/heartprints-live-on-forever/)

dareboldly.com/2021/05/10/heartprints-live-on-forever/

Student Honor Society| Thomas Kannanayakal

To recognize students' achievements, the AAPP is thrilled to announce the upcoming launch of our student honour society. The name of the honour society is Nu Kappa Upsilon AAPP Student Honour Society. The letters Nu Kappa Upsilon (NKY) represent the first letters of the Greek words *Νόμος και Υπηρεσία*, which mean 'Law and Service.' The Honour Society's motto is 'accessus ad justitiam per servitium,' which means 'access to justice through service.'

<https://www.alberta-paralegal.com/studenthonoursociety>

The Honour Society operates as a committee of the AAPP, under the supervision of the Board of Directors, and will be open to students in Paralegal or Legal Assistant programs across Alberta. To qualify, students must have completed at least 15 credits in their program, with a GPA of 3.7/4.0. For more information on the honour society, please contact Thomas J. Kannanayakal at director1@alberta-paralegal.com



Performance Excellence Awards| Ryan McDougall



The Planning Has Began!

AAPP is excited to share that the planning has begun for our **2023 Performance Excellence Awards** has begun. The Awards ceremony will take place as part of a first of its kind conference for legal support professionals.

The conference will be held over a Thursday/Friday, intended to provide breakout sessions catering to legal support professionals at all levels and in all fields. So, keep this exciting event in mind when thinking about how you want to spend your professional development funds!

WANT TO HELP? We are asking for session/topic ideas. Please forward any ideas to aap-pawards@gmail.com. We are always looking to accommodate our members and non-members in their learning journey.



Membership | Penny Doyle

The membership numbers continue to grow! Last year, (September 30, 2021) our membership was at 196 members, by the end of 2021 we had 230 members. As of the date of this Newsletter, we are at 227—with a few months to go!

The AAPP has seen increased memberships in all categories, except for the Alumni category.

The AAPP continues to receive and review Independent Paralegal applications, which are issued in accordance with the Bylaws. Applications are approved provided that all requirements are met and proof of said conditions are submitted for our records. Applications have been rejected for not meeting the AAPP criteria.

By extending our memberships to include legal support, the AAPP can reach an entire community of legal support professionals essential to the practice of law. The AAPP will keep its members, engaged, connected and involved in the legal industry in accordance with its Objects.

Thanks to all who have joined and continue to participate in the development and promotion the Association.

Membership Blitz

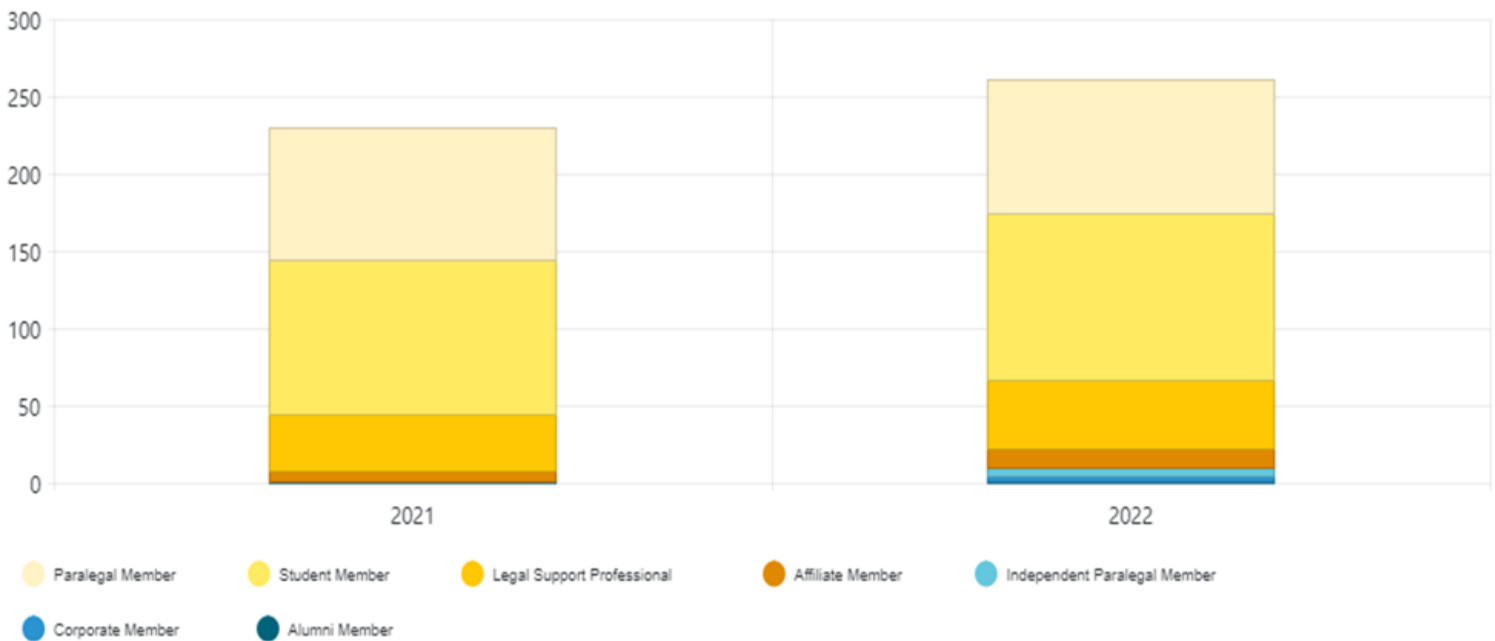
Watch for it—the AAPP is organizing a mass email distribution in order to promote our Association.

We are reaching out to law firms, legal professionals and various stakeholders throughout Alberta.

Through this correspondence, the AAPP anticipates a positive expansion to our community

Membership Report

Information obtained from wild apricot charts



Paralegal Member 81	Student Member 78	Legal Support Professional 46
Affiliate Member 12	Independent Paralegal 7	Corporate member 3
Alumni Member 0		

Membership Benefits

Continuing Education/Professional Development - monthly webinars on soft skills and technical topics

Mentorship Program

AAPP designation

Performance Excellence Awards

Job Postings

Salary survey

Member Newsletter

Networking Events

And more to come as we grow!



Membership with the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals offers a number of perks, including:

- Discounted insurance through Johnson Insurance
- Highlander Wine Club
- Perkopolis Membership
- Discounts at Sherwin Williams
- Private Shopping events at Ricki's



Voting Paralegal Members of the Association shall be entitled to describe themselves as "Alberta Registered Paralegal" and to use this designation as long as they maintain their membership in good standing.

All memberships have been pro-rated to the end of December, as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| • Affiliate and Alumni Member | \$33.33 |
| • Corporate Member | \$100.00 |
| • Independent Paralegal Member | \$33.33 |
| • Legal Support Professional | \$33.33 |
| • Paralegal Member | \$33.33 |
| • Student Member | \$6.67 |

Visit our site for more information: <https://www.alberta-paralegal.com/join-us>

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

♦OCTOBER 19 2022 ♦12:00 PM MDT♦Online (Zoom)

The AAPP is holding its 2022 Annual General Meeting to review 2022 business and discuss what is coming up in 2023.

Updates will be provided on:

- financial position of the Association;
- membership;
- events & webinars;
- education;
- regulation, and more.

All members are invited to attend. Non-Voting Members (students & advisory) and non-members are also welcome to attend the meeting, however, they are not permitted to vote on business matters of the Association.

[Notice to Members 2022 AGM.pdf](#)



National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

“Let us find a way to belong to this time and place together. Our future, and the well-being of all our children, rests with the kind of relationships we build today”

Chief Robert Joseph

<https://reconciliationcanada.ca/walk-for-reconciliation-2017/shareable-resources/>

Each year, September 30 marks the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

The day honours the children who never returned home and Survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities. Public commemoration of the tragic and painful history and ongoing impacts of residential schools is a vital component of the reconciliation process. Explore the rich and diverse cultures, voices, experiences and stories of the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Whether you want to read, listen, watch, or try, [start your learning journey](#) today.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/national-day-truth-reconciliation.html>

A few of our AAPP Board members have attended courses on Indigenous Cultural Competency through their employers. The AAPP supports continuing education and encourage our members to participate in programs that promote reconciliation.

The Path—Your journey through Indigenous Canada—as promoted by the Law Society of Alberta <https://www.lawsociety.ab.ca/>

“We have described for you a mountain. We have shown you the path to the top. We call on you to do the climbing.” Senator Murray Sinclair (former Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission –TRC)

<https://nvisiongroup.ca/the-path-indigenous-cultural-awareness/>

NATIVE COUNSELLING SERVICES OF ALBERTA

<https://www.ncsa.ca/programs/bearpaw-media-and-education>

Some firms have incorporated the Indigenous Canada course as required training for all new staff.

INDIGENOUS CANADA

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada/home/info>



Five tips for your mental health during your return to onsite work

<https://alberta.cmha.ca/news/five-tips-for-your-mental-health-during-your-return-to-onsite-work/>

Under ‘normal’ circumstances, employees may not be surprised when asked to adapt to changes in their company’s protocols, policies and procedures. However, COVID-19 resulted in employees and employers adapting to work scenarios far outside those normal scenarios. “According to Statistics Canada, 40 per cent of Canada’s workers found themselves working from home as pandemic lockdowns were enforced. That compares to less than 10 per cent in 2018 who had the option to work a day or two a week from home.” (MacLeod, 2020) You may be one of the thousands of employees across Alberta who moved their workspace into their home, necessitating Zoom video meetings and remote work.

Alberta begun to reopen and relaunch into a new normal in May, with each relaunch stage seeing activities resuming and employees returning to the office. Whether you work in an office setting, in customer service or something in-between, you will find you must once again need to adapt. *Harvard Business Review* says of workplace transitions, “Manage your expectations with patience and flexibility so that each time something changes, you don’t become irritated or nervous.” (Carucci, 2020)

Staggered breaks, isolated lunches, physically distanced meetings and even wearing a mask at your desk may be part of the ‘new normal’ within your workplace. The Government of Canada explains, “In the workplace, this is not business as usual, so don’t get down on yourself if you’re having trouble working as effectively as you once did. There is no one right way to manage your mental health through a pandemic. Remember, you are not alone.” (Government of Canada, 2020)

Below are five tips to help you stay mentally healthy as you transition back to work onsite.

1. Cut yourself some slack

Don’t feel bad about experiencing stress symptoms. If you find yourself having trouble concentrating or feeling unmotivated, nervous or irritated, you may be experiencing stress compounded by the pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends recognizing stress-related symptoms. Acknowledge stressful workplace situations and how you can better address them. Work-related factors which add to stress during a pandemic:

- Concern about the risk of being exposed to the virus at work
- Taking care of personal and family needs while working
- Feelings that you are not contributing enough to work or guilt about not being on the frontline

- Uncertainty about the future of your workplace and/or employment

- Adapting to a different workspace and/or work schedule (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020)

Mental health resources are available to help you manage workplace stress.

2. Keep your routine

As a remote worker, you had to establish your daily schedule, and it probably deviates from the standard 9 to 5 workday. You’ve used trial-and-error to learn how the day can be most productive for you. Use your discretion to determine which elements from your remote daily schedule can be transferred into your onsite workplace. “Naturally, some elements may be difficult to implement—say, if your routine includes folding laundry during morning conference calls—but if you typically designate your first hour to review industry news or tackle mundane tasks, stick with that. If you prefer to set aside time in the afternoon to tackle major projects, don’t hesitate to communicate this preference to your co-workers.” (Buell, n.d.)

Advice for work management is [available here](#).

3. Embrace camaraderie and joy with your co-workers

With the return to the office, you and your co-workers can encourage and support each other. This is a chance to bond, commiserate and find humour, when possible. It’s also important to be helpful and empathetic with your colleagues during this time. *Harvard Business Review* recommends “When people innocently forget to follow a PPE protocol or fail to catch themselves when their ‘autopilot’ shows up, find goodhearted ways to laugh about it instead of getting frustrated. Doing these things won’t eliminate the stress of fighting a pandemic, but it will make the fight less intimidating as you bring joy to others, and in the process, to yourself.” (Carucci, 2020)

4. Practice self-care

Filling your own cup allows you to move through your days mindfully and healthily. “While it feels like there is a lot we can’t control amidst concerns over the coronavirus,” advises *Psychology Today*, “every one of us can make choices to stay emotionally healthy. In the midst of a stressful season or situation, many self-care practices are the same ones that prove helpful in everyday living.” (Starbuck, 2020).

Self-care isn't just bubble baths and naps. Although those activities might be helpful, you should also think about connecting with loved ones, eating nutritious foods, staying active, resting, engaging in enjoyable hobbies and employing healthy coping strategies such as prayer or meditation.

Follow these breathing exercises to help you relax and relieve stress. **Download this guide**, designed to help you build self-care into your daily and weekly routine.

5. Ask for help

Your workplace may have employee support services for workers to utilize throughout the pandemic, such as an Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), peer support groups or open-door policies. If you have it, use workplace health care options to cover counselling and prescription services. Speak to your managers or Human resources (HR) department and request a full description of employee mental health options available.

Talk to your family, friends or trusted co-workers about the way you're feeling. Discuss different ways they can help support you in your return to onsite work. The people you live with may be able to help you transition to a new routine and your friends might be able to encourage you to participate in self-care after a long day at the office. Be open about the stress you're facing and ask your support system to have a listening ear.

If you need crisis counselling, **these resources are available 24/7**.

Do you have strategies for returning to work among COVID-19? Share them with us on Twitter @cmha_AB.

Find additional mental health resources **here**.

If you or a loved one is experiencing mental health distress during this time, please call 211 (Alberta only) or the Mental Health Help Line at 1-877-303-2642.

Resources

Carucci, Ron. (2020, July 6). How to prepare yourself for a return to the office. *Harvard Business Review*. [Article]. Retrieved July, 2020, from: <https://hbr.org/2020/07/how-to-prepare-yourself-for-a-return-to-the-office>

Government of Canada. (2020, June 2). Mental health and COVID-19 for public servants. [Webpage]. Retrieved July, 2020, from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/covid-19/protect-mental-health.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, May 5) Employees: How to Cope with Job Stress and Build Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic. [Webpage]. Retrieved July,



2020, from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/mental-health-non-healthcare.html>

Starbuck, Margot. (2020, March 3). How to stay emotionally health during the coronavirus outbreak. *Psychology Today*. [Article]. Retrieved July, 2020, from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/hope-resilience/202003/how-stay-emotionally-healthy-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

Buell, Rachell. (n.d.). Back to the office. *The Muse*. [Article]. Retrieved July, 2020, from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/hope-resilience/202003/how-stay-emotionally-healthy-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

MacLeod, Meredith. (2020, June 15). Is the great shift to working from home here to stay?. *CTV News*. [Article]. Retrieved July, 2020, from: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/is-the-great-shift-to-working-from-home-here-to-stay-1.4981456?cache=yes>

Sponsorship | Natesha Francis

Exciting news! Our sponsorship program is now live! We will be forwarding the brochure on how to sponsor and the available options by the end of November to potential corporations, law firms, service providers & more! There are various affordable options!

Do you think your firm or place of employment may be interested in getting more info? If so please contact Natesha via sponsorship@Alberta-paralegal.com.

We would love your support in growing our sponsorship interest! This growth is reliant on the generous contributions of our sponsors to fund educational seminars, events, and even our awards ceremony! With our memberships continued support we can offer so much more!

We would like to take a moment and thank our current much appreciated sponsors: Urban Legal Recruitment, Johnson Insurance, and the Alberta Counsel.

Chat soon!

Our Corporate Sponsors



URBAN LEGAL
RECRUITMENT



ALBERTA COUNSEL
LAWYERS • LOBBYISTS

Our Business Partners

HIGHLANDER
WINE & SPIRITS
EST. 1961



ALBERTA COUNSEL
LAWYERS • LOBBYISTS



Lets Connect

Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals

PO Box 21126

Lloydminster, AB T9V 2S1

General Inquiries: president@gmail.com or vp@alberta-paralegal.com

Membership Inquiries: membership@alberta-paralegal.com

Financial Inquiries: treasurer@alberta-paralegal.com

Corporate Sponsorship Inquiries: sponsorship@alberta-paralegal.com

Communications Inquiries: communications@alberta-paralegal.com

Continuing Education

Professional Development Inquiries: education@alberta-paralegal.com

Scholarship Inquiries: membership@alberta-paralegal.com

Mentorship Inquiries: mentorship@alberta-paralegal.com



Alberta Association of Professional
Paralegals



Alberta APParalegals



aapp.aralegal.assn