

Annual Report 2008-2009



Presented on
June 2, 2009

www.servicesjuridiques.org

A great team

Board of Directors:

- 10 citizens
- 2 community organizations
- 1 staff representative
- 1 coordinator

Staff:

- 3 legal assistants
- 3 lawyers
- 1 receptionist
- 1 accountant
- 1 lawyer-coordinator
- 1 community organizer

Board of Directors

- Danielle Julien
- Odeh Misleh
- Louise Gosselin
- Zsuzsanna Jordan
- Monique Hyppolite
- Nicole Bouvier
- Micheline Crompt
- Sylvie Guyon
- Lydia Bertrand-Siebert
- (ODAS)
- Édith Roy (PasserElle)
- Raquel Sanchez
- Lise Ferland

Invaluable and serious work

- Monthly meetings
- A meeting with the staff at the beginning of the year
- Participation to various committees
- Follow-ups of all important files

Staff

- **Legal Assistants:** Nicole Bergeron, Raquel Sanchez and Danielle Whitford
- **Receptionist:** Andrée Besner (4days/week) and Marie-José Gustave (1day/week)
- **Lawyers:** Alain Ouellet, Stéphane Proulx
- **Contract Lawyers or Articling Lawyer:**
 - Katherine Ramsey (until beginning of July)
 - Josianne Lavoie (articling lawyer since September and contract lawyer since March 2009)
- **Accountant:** Danielle L'Écuyer-Labonté (4 days/week)
- **Community Organizer:** Claude-Catherine Lemoine (2 days/week)
- **Summer jobs:** Marjolaine Dagenais-Côté (summer of 2008)
- **Articled student as Legal Technician:** Ana Patricia Vega Rodriguez (Jan. To June 2009)
- **Lawyer-coordinator:** Lise Ferland

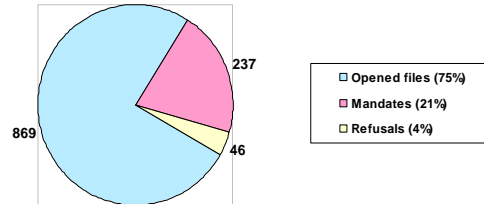
The 3 major fields of intervention

1. Our mandate as local Legal Aid center
2. Improve access to justice
3. Participation in collective and community activities

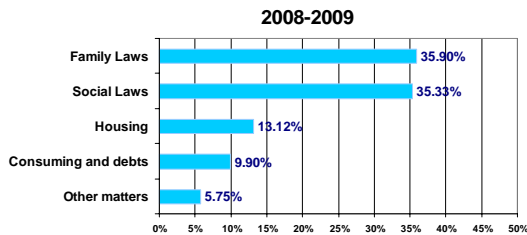
Individual files

Files that were processed	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Citizens of Pointe-Saint-Charles	540	581	627	549	649
Citizens of Little Burgundy	329	360	361	348	293
Total of files of our lawyers	869	941	988	897	942
Legal Aid mandates	237	216	185	238	316
Refusals	46	47	35	26	50
Processed applications TOTAL	1152	1204	1208	1161	1308

The 1152 legal aid applications



Breakdown of the files according to different files of law



Good working methods

- Monthly staff meetings
- Lawyers and Assistants meetings
- Training activities for staff
- Update of working tools (models, forms, computer tools, etc.)
- Training guides for different positions (receptionist, articling lawyer)

June 2008 The citizens write to the Minister of Justice

- We discussed the matter of access to justice during our general meeting.
- Our concerns were brought up and we identified solutions.
- These ideas were mentioned in a letter sent on June 25, 2008, to the Minister of Justice of that period, Mr. Dupuis.
- Our collective letter requested that the Minister takes action to improve the access to justice.
- What was the Minister's thought? No reply was forwarded...

Improve the access to justice



- ✓ Continuation of the Thursdays for Justice
- ✓ Made to measure workshops in organizations
- ✓ Coalition for Access to Legal Aid



Thursdays for Justice

- 9 Thursdays for Justice throughout the year.
- Wonderful collaborations for the presentation of certain workshops.
- Workshops getting more and more popular:
 - A total of 144 participants
 - In groups of 4 to 40 people
- Utilization of different communication means to advertise our activities.

In short...

An activity that is well implemented and meets a real need for information.

Thursdays for Justice Fall 2008

- *Relationships at a glance*
- *An informed consumer is worth ten*
with Option consommateurs
- *Discrimination? No thanks!*
with the Human Rights Commission

Thursdays for Justice Winter 2009

- *Together against bedbugs: taking action efficiently*

With the Municipal City Housing Office of Montreal (OMHM) and a professional exterminator. Location: Auberge communautaire

- *Responsibilities of members of Board of Directors*

We held 2 workshops in attempt to meet with the demand!

- *A relative has a serious mental health condition. What should I do?*

With the Quebec Association of family and friends of people who have mental illnesses (AQPAMM)

- *Estates and wills: be prepared!*

12 activities with the organizations

- **Responsibilities and operation of a Board of Directors**
- **Debt**
- **Legal Aid system**
- **Housing coops**
- **Meeting with a lawyer: answers to various questions**

12 activities with organizations

- **Estates and wills**
- **How to prepare in view of a hearing before the court**
- **Governmental support to families**
- **Retirement in Quebec**
- **Pardon applications**

Other activities

- **« Rendez vous des aînés » (gathering of the elderly): information booth**
- **Visit and information on services available at our office: group from the Douglas Hospital**
- **Participation at a symposium regarding the elderly and abuses**

Means of communication

- Improvement of our website
- Postal mailing to our members and citizens
- Thursdays for Justice board
- 2 prospectus on the program schedule of the Thursdays for Justice (fall and winter)
- Advertising our activities in both neighbourhoods via the coalitions, community organizations and public places
- By using the local newspaper « Voix populaire »



Coalition for access to Legal Aid

- Active participation to the Coordination Committee

Important support:

- 47 organizations are members, among these are groupings
- More than 244 other organizations supporting the demands



The Coalition requests

- An INCREASE of the legal aid **eligibility scales** in order that a **single person**, working on **minimum wage** be entitled to **free** services
- and that an increase of the eligibility scales will consequently follow for **other categories** of applicants
- and that the eligibility be calculated from **monthly income**
- that an **annual indexation** of the scales be maintained

New Minister of Justice: Mrs. Kathleen Weil



She stated that her priority is access to justice and that she wishes to be the « champion with respect to this matter ».

The Coalition has a meeting scheduled with the Minister for June 25.

The reform ends in 2010. What is the Minister's plan to improve access to justice?

Actions of the Coalition

- 10 meetings of the Coordination Committee;
- Demonstration on September 4th in front of the Montreal Courthouse;
- October 6th 2008: Meeting with the Minister of Justice, Jacques Dupuis;
- Production and circulation of a special information newsletter during the provincial electoral campaign in 2008;
- Participation with other coalitions and national groups to various actions during the electoral campaign;
- Updating the website and communication with the members of the coalition;



Actions of the Coalition (cont.)

- Communication with the Cabinet of the new Minister of Justice, Mrs. Kathleen Weil;
- Meeting and communication with the spokesperson for Justice matters of the Parti quebecois, Ms. Véronique Hivon;
- Press releases;
- Maintaining links with the Barreau of Quebec and participation from a few members of the committee to a Barreau working group regarding Legal Aid;
- Attendance in Quebec City to the consideration of the estimates of the Ministry of Justice (May 2009);



Coalition for access to Legal Aid

New Website of the Coalition

(entirely taken care of by the Community Legal Services)



www.coalitionaidejuridique.org

Participation in collective and community activities

- Supports to community organizations (legal advice, acting as presenters for meetings, etc.)
- Participation to neighbourhood activities: « soirée de solidarité du Carrefour », Little Burgundy Festival, Solidarity Maze
- Participation in organizing an evening on women's rights during the International Women's Day (March 8)
- Participation of staff and board members in other organizations (board of directors):
 - Formétal : Stéphane Proulx
 - Cité des bâtisseurs : Lise Ferland
- Participation in both neighbourhood coalitions and their committees
 - Watchdog (Pointe-Saint-Charles) and development committee
 - Little Burgundy Coalition: Security, housing and development committee

2009-2010 priorities

- Mandate as Local Legal Aid Centre
- Campaign to increase the legal aid eligibility scales
- Our education activities to rights (*Thursdays for Justice* and other workshops)
- Have a better use of the website

2009-2010 priorities (continuation)

- Implication in both neighbourhood coalitions
- Reflection and efforts to implement concrete means of access to justice
- Reflection and planning concerning organizational changes in our organization (retirements, staff relief...)
- Celebrate our 40th Anniversary

Financial Situation 2008-2009



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In 2008-2009 : our income

• Legal aid	\$ 722,000
<small>(Centre communautaire juridique de Montréal)</small>	
• SACA	\$ 25,000
• Others	\$ 6,539
<small>(summer projects, interests, donations, etc.)</small>	
TOTAL	\$ 753,539

In 2008-2009 : our expenses

- Salary for permanent staff \$ 588,605
 - Operation..... \$ 103,587
 - Judicial fees \$ 34,127
 - Summer projects, contract
 - positions and other activities.....\$ 35,936
- TOTAL \$ 762,255**
Difference : (**\$ 8,716**)

Reserved funds and their utilization

- At the beginning of the fiscal period
(April 1, 2008) \$ 162,007
 - Utilization \$ 8,716
- Balance** at the end of
the fiscal period **\$ 153,291**
(March 31, 2009)

For 2009-2010 : our projected incomes

- CCJM (legal aid section)\$ 702,804
 - SACAIS \$ 30 000
 - Others \$ 5,000
- TOTAL \$ 737,824**

For 2009-2010 : Our projected expenses

- Salaries of permanent staff \$ 572,251
 - Operation \$ 104,000
 - Judicial fees \$ 35 000
 - Employees under contract, activities fees,
Articling lawyer, summer
jobs.....\$ 45,000
- TOTAL \$ 755,251**
Anticipated deficit : (\$ 18,427)