

# SUMMARY OF THE 2019-2020 ACTIVITY REPORT INCLUDING AN UPDATE AS AT OCTOBER 31, 2020

2019-2020 was finally the year of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary! It didn't go as planned. Here is a brief summary of our activity report. To find out more, we invite you to read the full version of the document. For any questions or comments, do not hesitate to contact us ([servjur@bellnet.ca](mailto:servjur@bellnet.ca) or 514-933-8432)!



**Priorities for 2019-2020:** We believe we have achieved our goals for the year!

## A unique organization



## Staff

|   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Accounting  | Danielle L'Écuyer-Labonté |
| Community Organizer   | Pascale Brunet            |
| Legal Assistants  | Danielle Whitford         |
|   | Raquel Sanchez            |
|   | Martine Tessier           |
|   | Anik Benoit               |
| Receptionist  | Stéphane Proulx           |
| Lawyers   | Annik Lafrenière          |
|   | Jeanne Ollivier-Gobeil    |
| Contractual Lawyer  | Claude-Catherine Lemoine  |
| Lawyer-Coordinator  | Sara Arsenault            |
| Articling Law Student   |                           |
| Thanks to <b>Louis-Simon Besner, Lumière Vistange, Erika Hernandez</b> and <b>Elisabeth Beauchamp</b> for their contribution. |                           |

## Board of Directors for 2019-2020

| Position             |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Citizen              | Daniel Baum  |
| Citizen              | Johanne Béland (secretary)   |
| Citizen              | Vacant position  |
| Citizen              | Louis-Marc Chiasson  |
| Citizen              | Micheline Crompt   |
| Citizen              | Vanessa Djangang   |
| Citizen              | Adèle D'Silva  |
| Citizen              | Zsuzsanna Jordan (vice-president)                                      |
| Citizen              | Maryan Kikhouna-Ngot (president)                                       |
| Citizen              | Vacant position  |
| Community Group      | Centre des aîné(e)s de Pointe-Saint-Charles (Pierre Riley) (treasurer) |
| Community Group      | ODAS (Éric Belzile)  |
| Staff representative | Danielle L'Écuyer-Labonté  |
| Coordinator          | Claude-Catherine Lemoine   |

**New visual identity:** A great success in 2019-2020 is the design of a brand new visual identity for the Community Legal Services and a new flyer!



### WHO WE ARE

**OUR ORGANIZATION IS UNIQUE**  
It is the only Local Legal Aid Centre in Quebec. More importantly, it remains independent and autonomous from the government. Our services and activities are divided into two categories that are interrelated: our Legal Aid services and our community action. Since justice does not only happen in front of the courts, it is our duty to create connections between the legal system and social justice. We are dedicated to defend economically disadvantaged people. We work in a perspective of access to justice, collective rights advocacy and popular education.

Our organization was founded in the late 1960s from the need of low-income individuals and families to have access to legal services to counter illegal seizures, fuel Hydro and Gas disconnections and evictions, get informed and trained. At that time, neighborhoods were vibrant with their citizens' committees and struggles for social justice. Organizations like ours sparked the inspiration for the creation of Quebec's Legal Aid network in 1972.

Our Board of Directors is composed of members of the community as well as representatives from community organizations of Pointe-Saint-Charles, Little Burgundy and Outremont. Anyone living in these neighborhoods who is over 18 years old and who supports our mission, can become a member of the organization.

**IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO BE A MEMBER TO HAVE ACCESS TO OUR SERVICES.**

### CONTACT US

**COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES**  
2553 du Centre Street, office 101  
Montreal (Québec) H3K 1J9  
(Charlevoix Métro)

Tel.: 514-933-8432  
Fax: 514-933-4384

[servjur.juridiques.org](http://servjur.juridiques.org)

**REGULAR HOURS**  
Monday to Friday  
8:30 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm

*Community*  
**LEGAL SERVICES**  
OF POINTE-SAINT-CHARLES  
AND LITTLE BURGUNDY

**DEFEND YOUR RIGHTS!**

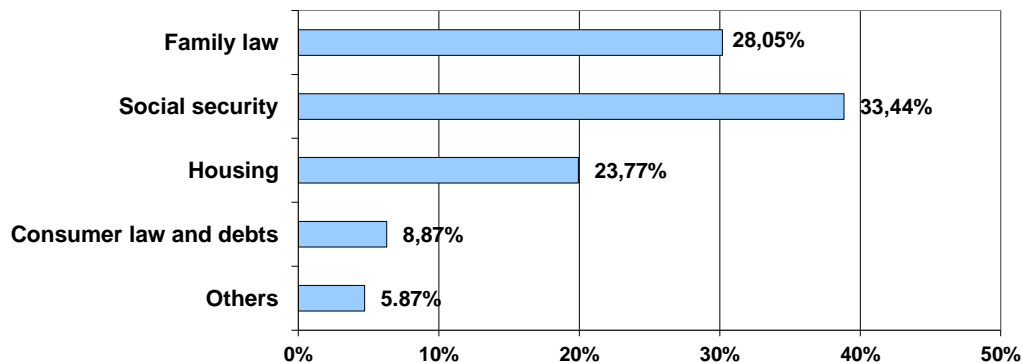
*humains accueillants  
Présents  
à la défense  
engagés!  
solidaires Justice*

## Mandate as Local Legal Aid Center

### Legal Aid applications processed in 2019-2020 (and comparative):

| Files opened                            | 2019-2020  | 2018-2019    | 2017-2018    | 2016-2017    | 2015-2016  | 2014-2015    | 2013-2014  |
|---|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| POINTE-SAINT-CHARLES                    | 385        | 464          | 464          | 485          | 452        | 485          | 446        |
| LITTLE BURGUNDY                         | 246        | 356          | 298          | 299          | 272        | 294          | 297        |
| <b>Total of files opened:</b>           | <b>631</b> | <b>820</b>   | <b>762</b>   | <b>784</b>   | <b>724</b> | <b>779</b>   | <b>743</b> |
| <b>MANDATES</b>                         | <b>215</b> | <b>201</b>   | <b>207</b>   | <b>255</b>   | <b>187</b> | <b>201</b>   | <b>156</b> |
| <b>REFUSALS</b>                         | <b>89</b>  | <b>111</b>   | <b>74</b>    | <b>98</b>    | <b>63</b>  | <b>63</b>    | <b>62</b>  |
| <b>Total of processed applications:</b> | <b>935</b> | <b>1 132</b> | <b>1 043</b> | <b>1 137</b> | <b>974</b> | <b>1 043</b> | <b>961</b> |

### Breakdown of 631 files opened according the different fields of law:



## Hear ye, hear ye!

As every year, Legal Aid eligibility thresholds were increased on May 31, 2020. Contact us!

**Good legal moves:** the full version of the activity report tells you more about a few files where we feel our work made a difference.

## The Covid-19 pandemic and our individual legal services

During the spring lockdown, our organization remained open with reduced staff on site. Indeed, legal services were among the so-called “essential” services. We first handled urgent cases only. We experienced our share of challenges, obstacles, worry, absences and overload. Like everyone else, we have been in constant reorganization. Since June 2020, our regular legal services have gradually resumed. Currently, we make remote appointments (by phone) as much as possible. An appointment is required to come to our offices. We are also beginning the huge technological shift imposed by the fact that the courts are increasingly turning to virtual hearings.

## The Community Legal Services’ 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

In January 2020, we unveiled with great fanfare our anniversary program! 50 years to the day after the incorporation of the Community Legal Services, our festivities were to culminate on June 12, 2020, with a big “Golden Wedding” party to celebrate our 50 years of struggles, solidarity and commitment to our communities. Our invitations were ready, a renowned artist had accepted the invitation and we were looking forward to this colorful moment where music, dancing, reunion and good food would warm our hearts. We worked very hard throughout the year and the postponement of this celebration is one of the many disappointments that the pandemic will have caused.

## Anniversary Forum

The Community Legal Services of Pointe-Saint-Charles and Little Burgundy and the Mouvement Action-Chômage de Montréal are both celebrating their 50 years of existence in 2020. Our two organizations have the particularity of having for mission the fight against poverty and collective rights advocacy, while defending people individually before the courts. To shine through that specificity, we had the idea of organizing a forum under the theme of Fights against Poverty: Justice and Law. This forum, which was to take place in November 2020, is postponed and its formula will most likely be different from what we had imagined. To be continued!

## Education on rights

### Summary

- 3 Thursdays for Justice, including one (1) Open House afternoon;
- 8 workshops in community organizations or with institutions on different topics;
- Groups from 3 to 100 persons;
- Approximately 274 persons participated in these activities!

## Facebook

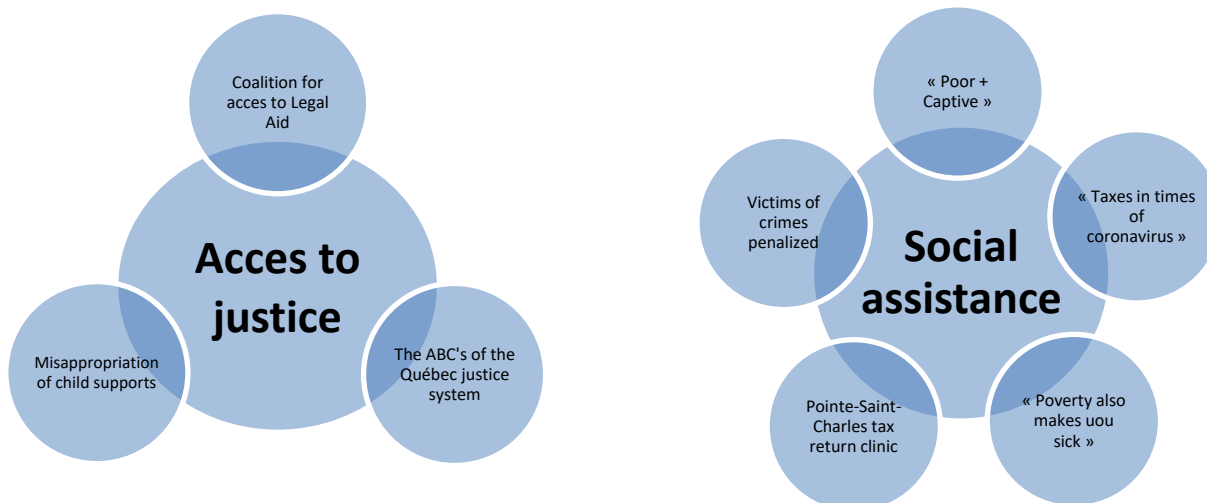
We had not planned on embarking on the social media adventure this year. However, since we had to cancel our Open House on March 19, 2020 where we were going to launch our new visual identity, we rolled up our sleeves and we created and launched our new Facebook page on March 19, 2020, with our brand new visual identity! [Follow us on Facebook!](#)

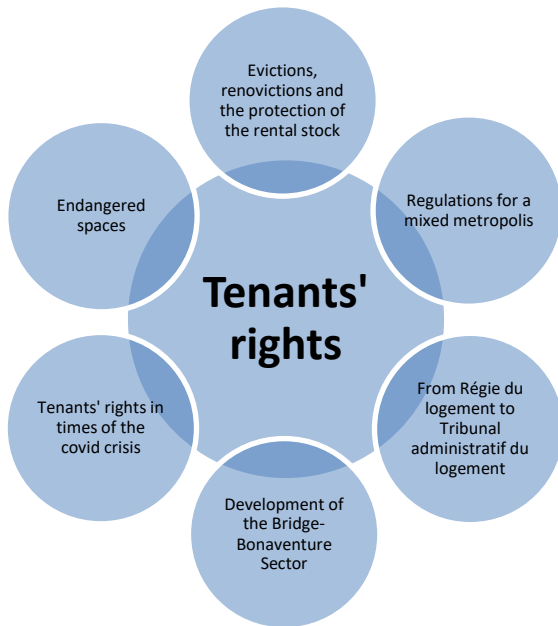
## The Covid-19 pandemic and our community activities

Despite the spring 2020 lockdown, we continued to be involved with the coalitions of Pointe-Saint-Charles and Little Burgundy to participate in the collective efforts to respond to the crisis for both our neighborhoods. We also participated in several collective rights advocacy initiatives, for example on housing and eviction issues and on the issue of income tax returns. In May 2020, we informed by mail our members of the postponement of activities including the annual general meeting and also that we are always open and here to help them.

## Collective rights advocacy

We have been very active this year on various rights advocacy issues. To find out more and see our photos, simply flip through the relevant pages in the full version of the activity report!





## Priorities for 2020-2021

The following priorities will be submitted to the Annual General Meeting on November 25, 2020:

### DEALING WITH THE PANDEMIC AS AN ORGANIZATION

- To continuously adjust our methods and modifications to the premises, meet our logistical and technological challenges, coordinate the work of the various teams and projects (at the office and remotely);
- To modernize our technological equipment to meet the needs of the judicial system, of teleworking and of our associative life;
- To hold an annual general meeting in the fall of 2020 or find an alternative way to meet our transparency obligations and our need to consult our members, while respecting health measures in force and in a spirit of inclusiveness and accessibility for our members;
- To work on administrative aspects that are crucial for our organizational health: negotiating the new lease; negotiating collective agreements; changing our accounting practices.

### CELEBRATION OF OUR 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

- To take the pandemic into account while determining what to keep from our original anniversary program (big party, 50<sup>th</sup> Forum, court tour, joint Board-Staff activity) and what dreams and projects must be let go.

### ADVOCACY FOR RIGHTS

- Depending on the health measures in force, to resume community activities; to reactivate our community life, our rights education activities and participation in both coalitions;
- To evaluate how to continue the fight against attacks on the rights of low-income people, particularly in the area of social assistance, as well as the fight against gentrification and for tenants' rights.

### ACCESS TO JUSTICE

- To adjust to changes in the justice system: remote hearings, new rules of practice and guidelines from the courthouse, RdL -> TAL reform.
- To identify issues of access to justice in connection with these changes.

