

New Justices of the Peace Education Plan

The Alberta Court of Justice (the Court) embraces a culture of excellence and is committed to ensuring that new Justices of the Peace feel welcome, integrate into the Court, and become proficient in their role as early as possible in their career. The Court has established the New Justices of the Peace Education Plan to facilitate the transition of new Justices of the Peace to the bench.

It is the duty of every Justice of the Peace to address their professional development needs throughout their career. The Deputy Chief Justice of the Court of Justice and the Administrative Justice of the Peace for each area will ensure that new Justices of the Peace receive the initial help, information, and training that they require according to the elements of this plan and in view of the individual background and needs of each particular Justice of the Peace.

Plan Overview

The plan incorporates the following components:

- A shadowing program;
- A mentoring program;
- New Justices of the Peace programs;
- Recommended materials;
- Court internal resources sessions;
- Individual education plan for the first five years;
- Ongoing relationship with the Judicial Education Manager; and
- Professional Development Allowance and Education Leave.

1.0. Shadowing program

- 1.1. Upon appointment, new Justices of the Peace are scheduled to observe senior, more experienced Justices of the Peace performing their various functions. This helps new Justices of the Peace become familiar with the Court and its practices and establish closer relationships with their colleagues. The Administrative Justice of the Peace will take into account the new Justice of the Peace's background and experience when establishing shadowing schedules and length of participation. The initial schedule for full time and part time Justices of the Peace should allow for one or two chambers days a week for reading purposes.
- 1.2. Justices of the Peace will shadow the following proceedings:
 - 1.2.1. Hearing Office;
 - 1.2.2. Traffic Court;
 - 1.2.3. Bail Court in the Court of Justice; and
 - 1.2.4. Criminal Courts with Alberta Court of Justices presiding.
- 1.3. All Justices of the Peace will spend time with a Non-Presiding Justice of the Peace to observe some of the functions and duties prescribed by s. 4(1) of the *Justice of the Peace Regulation* (Alta. Reg. 6/99) including:
 - (b) qualifying sureties on judicial interim release orders;
 - (c) receiving informations, except under section 810 of the Criminal Code (Canada)

2.0. Mentoring program

- 2.1. The Chief Justice's Office supports a mentoring program for new Justices of the Peace. Access to a mentor facilitates the transition to the position, increases the confidence of the new Justice of the peace, establishes positive relations amongst colleagues and provides individualized educational and social support to new Justices of the Peace.

- 2.2. Some of the objectives of the mentoring program are to:
 - 2.2.1. Clarify and convey a vision of the role of a Justice of the Peace;
 - 2.2.2. Provide encouragement and constructive feedback;
 - 2.2.3. Assist Justices of the Peace in achieving high standards;
 - 2.2.4. Support the sharing of knowledge and experience;
 - 2.2.5. Facilitate integration into the role;
 - 2.2.6. Identify learning needs and develop a learning plan accordingly;
 - 2.2.7. Involve experienced Justices of the Peace in the development of their profession;
and
 - 2.2.8. Create a network of Justices of the Peace.

- 2.3. The Administrative Justices of the Peace will facilitate the mentoring program by:
 - 2.3.1. Facilitating a mentoring relationship between the new Justice of the Peace and a willing senior Justice of the Peace. Mentors are selected by their willingness and availability to serve as a mentor, their experience and knowledge, and their good listening and constructive feedback skills;
 - 2.3.2. Taking into account the needs or preferences expressed by the mentor and the new Justice of the Peace, the skills to be developed by the new Justice of the Peace and the corresponding expertise of the mentor, and the personal characteristics of the Justices of the Peace when suggesting a pairing;
 - 2.3.3. Explaining the mentoring process to the new Justice of the Peace, including benefits of the program and expectations of participation; and
 - 2.3.4. In conjunction with the new Justice of the Peace's mentor, ensuring that new Justices of the Peace receive information on the following topics as soon as possible after appointment:

- 2.3.4.1. Judicial conduct and ethics in and out of the courtroom, including use of social media, professional and community activities and confidentiality;
 - 2.3.4.2. Courtroom and Hearing Office demeanor;
 - 2.3.4.3. Administrative procedures, including an orientation to the work of the clerks; and
 - 2.3.4.4. Traffic Court procedures
- 2.4. The mentors will facilitate the mentoring program by:
- 2.4.1. Being involved in determining the suitability of the match;
 - 2.4.2. Committing to the objectives of the mentoring program;
 - 2.4.3. Liaising with the Administrative Justice of the Peace to ensure that the goals and objectives of the program are met;
 - 2.4.4. Initially show leadership in the relationship and then share the responsibility for the relationship with new Justice of the Peace;
 - 2.4.5. Introducing the new Justice of the Peace to key personnel in the Courts;
 - 2.4.6. Encourage and challenge new Justice of the Peace;
 - 2.4.7. Helping new Justices of the Peace identify their learning needs for the development of the Education Plan;
 - 2.4.8. Providing constructive feedback;
 - 2.4.9. Share knowledge and experience; and
 - 2.4.10. Maintain confidentiality of mentoring conversations.
- 2.5. The new Justices of the Peace will facilitate the mentoring program by:

- 2.5.1. Assuming responsibility for their own learning and development;
 - 2.5.2. Sharing the responsibility for the relationship with mentor;
 - 2.5.3. Being involved in selecting a mentor;
 - 2.5.4. Helping identify what they want to learn/know/be able to do;
 - 2.5.5. Requesting and acting on feedback;
 - 2.5.6. Developing and revise their learning plan;
 - 2.5.7. Committing to objectives of the mentoring model and to the mentoring protocol;
and
 - 2.5.8. Maintaining confidentiality of mentoring conversations.
- 2.6. Mentors and new Justices of the Peace should have an orientation session to define mutual expectations. They can use the “Checklist for Mentors and New Judges of the Peace” as a guideline. It is a good idea at this time to schedule the meetings for the next few months. The number of meetings between mentors and new Justices of the Peace is at the discretion of the pair. They should, however, aim to meet at least once a week during the first month, once every two weeks during the next five months and about once a month after the first six months.
- 2.7. The length of the mentoring program is expected to be up to 12 months. During this period, mentors and new Justices of the Peace will gather information and suggestions on how to improve the mentoring program.
- 2.8. The Judicial Education Manager will provide mentors the following materials to facilitate their role:
- 2.8.1. Checklist for Mentors and New Judges of the Peace; and
 - 2.8.2. Mentoring in the Judiciary, a Guide for Judges (Ontario Court of Justice).
- 2.9. Feedback on program:

- 2.9.1. In order to assist with the continuation and success of this plan, as well as maintain a record of participation, the Administrative Justices of the Peace will, six months after the commencement of a mentorship, provide feedback to the Chair of the Education Committee on the success of the mentorship and shadowing activities, including suggestions brought forward by the participants for the improvement of the program.

3.0. New Justices of the Peace Programs

- 3.1. New Justices of the Peace attend the annual in-house New Justices and Justices of the Peace Programs:
 - 3.1.1. A Judging in Your First Three Years (JYFTY) one-day virtual program on the Friday of the second full week of January.
 - 3.1.2. The half-day Boot Camp programs organized in conjunction with the APJA Educational Conferences.
- 3.2. The New Justices of the Peace programs are presented by members of the Court, provide tips and ideas on important topics, focus on the Alberta environment and are a forum for questions and discussion within the Court.

4.0. Materials for New Justices of the Peace

- 4.1. Orientation Guide provided by the Office of the Chief Judge which explains practices and procedures of the Court and includes information such as:
 - 4.1.1. Professional Development Allowance rules; and
 - 4.1.2. Security handbook
- 4.2. Access to the Judicial Education SharePoint page, which includes:
 - 4.2.1. Inventory of Learning Opportunities;
 - 4.2.2. Bench Books, Training Manual and presentations;
 - 4.2.3. Judicial Ethics/Conduct materials;

- 4.2.4. Bail Materials;
- 4.2.5. Warrant Materials; and
- 4.2.6. Justice Hill’s article “Duty to manage a criminal trial”; and
- 4.3. Database passwords and information distributed by the library.
- 4.4. Court of Justice Bench Books (available from the Judicial Education Page):
 - 4.4.1. Justice of the Peace Bench Book;
 - 4.4.2. Criminal Bench Book;
 - 4.4.3. Child Protection Bench Book;
 - 4.4.4. OPCA/Freeman Materials; and
 - 4.4.5. Search Warrant Manual
- 4.5. Videos
 - 4.5.1. Access to the collection of in-house videos, including recordings from past New Judges’ programs.
- 4.6. Suggested Titles List prepared yearly by the Alberta Law Libraries.
- 4.7. Full time Justices of the Peace also receive:
 - 4.7.1. Choice of a Criminal Code or Carswell’s Alberta Provincial Offences, provided by the library
- 4.8. Materials recommended for new Justices of the Peace:
 - 4.8.1. Managing high conflict people in court/Bill Eddy (High Conflict Institute Press, 2008).
 - 4.8.2. Understanding Bail in Canada/Gary T. Trotter (Irwin Law, 2015 – Available online through the Alberta Law Libraries)

5.0. Court Internal Resources Sessions

- 5.1. The following sessions are coordinated by the Judicial Education Manager during the first few months after appointment:
 - 5.1.1. Library Orientation;
 - 5.1.2. GroupWise, Lync and email management; and
 - 5.1.3. Privacy and Access

6.0. Education Plans – First Five Years on the Bench

- 6.1. New Justices of the Peace are expected to create an education plan during each of the first five years on the bench.
- 6.2. With assistance from the Judicial Education Manager, new Justices of the Peace evaluate the previous year's educational accomplishments, revise their educational needs and select appropriate educational materials and courses for the following year.
- 6.3. The plans shall include :
 - 6.3.1. Attendance to the semi-annual SJPA conferences when possible.
 - 6.3.2. A selection of course covering the four main areas of judicial education: substantive law, judicial skills, social context and judicial development. The Judicial Education manager will help new Justices of the Peace find seminars and courses, live or online, to address their needs on any areas of education.

7.0. Ongoing Relationship with the Judicial Education Manager

- 7.1. The Judicial Education Manager is the Court's specialist in judicial education and can help the Justices of the Peace plan educational activities, as well as find and select educational resources.

8.0. Professional Development Allowance and Education Leave

- 8.1. The education leave provided for Justices of the Peace is up to 10 days per calendar year, plus necessary travel time.

- 8.2. Justices of the Peace can use their annual Professional Development Allowance (PDA) to cover the cost of conferences and books, as prescribed by s.8.2 of the Justice of the Peace Regulation (Alta. Reg. 6/99). PDA Guidelines are included in the Orientation Guide provided by the Office of the Chief Justice.