

CBABC Sections Policy

Background

CBABC Sections are the most popular benefit of CBA membership. Section meetings provide a forum for members to connect with colleagues with similar interests, and learn about and discuss recent changes to substantive law, practice and procedure. Sections also contribute to CBABC advocacy by developing recommendations to government, courts, Law Society of BC, and others to improve law and practice.

CBABC Sections are governed by the CBA Sections Regulations, [Part A](#) and [Part B](#), which outline the relationship between national and branch Sections and establish the purpose of Sections (Part 1, section 2).

- Respond to the needs of Section members, encouraging and facilitating wide participation and involvement by Section members
- Organize timely, cost-effective programming and activities specific to the relevant area of law or common member interest
- Ensure Section members are kept up-to-date on current developments in the law and Section activities
- Develop and deliver tools, events and services in the way best suited to meet member needs
- Participate in advocacy and public policy initiatives and consultations on issues of law and law reform within the mandate of the Association
- Promote equality in the legal profession and the Section
- Operate in a transparent and inclusive manner, facilitating meaningful opportunities for members to engage and participate in the Section's committees and events
- Encourage and support the establishment of corresponding local Sections of a Branch Section and local activities in a Branch, in accordance with Branch policies and procedures

CBABC Sections are also governed by the CBABC Bylaws and related policies.

1. Interpretation

In this policy, the definitions in the CBA Section Regulations and CBABC Branch Bylaws (the “Bylaws”) shall apply to the extent applicable, and in addition:

- **“Annual Planning Meeting” (APM)** means an annual meeting of the incoming Section Executive and the Sections Advisor, held between June 15 and July 31 each year, to discuss proposed meeting topics and networking activities for the upcoming Section term.
- **“Annual Section Activity Plan” (ASAP)** means a plan of the Section’s activities for the upcoming September – June period to be prepared at the APM and submitted to the Manager, PD & Sections by August 1;
- **“Annual Report”** means a report of the Section’s activities of the fiscal year, generated by the Section Advisors, with comments from the Section Chair submitted to the Sections Advisor by June 30 of each year;
- **“Approval”** means an approval via email or documented meeting minutes;
- **“Manager, Conferences & Events”** means the employee of CBABC responsible for providing operational support for Section-led conferences and events;
- **“Manager, PD & Sections”** means the employee of CBABC responsible for providing operational support for PD and Sections;
- **“Manager, Policy & Advocacy”** means the employee of CBABC responsible for providing operational support for policy and advocacy;
- **“Member Services & Engagement Committee”** means the committee appointed by the Board of Directors to, among other things:
 - Monitor and provide input to member services and engagement programs including Sections;
 - Monitor and make recommendations to the Board regarding Sections Policy
 - Monitor and make recommendations to the Board regarding programs and services that may no longer meet member needs and values;
- **“Section Advisor”** means an assigned CBABC employee who assists with the coordination and planning of a Section’s activity;
- **“Section Executive”** means, for each CBABC section, the collective of members elected or

acclaimed to the positions outlined in section 3 of the Sections Policy;

- **“Section Meeting”** means a virtual or hybrid gathering of Section members of 60-90 minutes in length that serves the Section’s mandate, delivers continuing professional development and offers connection and networking opportunities; and
- **“Section Networking”** means a gathering of Section members that serves the Section’s mandate and the primary purpose is to offer networking and connection.

2. Creation, Changes, and Retirement of Sections

- 2.1 A member wishing to propose a new Section must provide the Manager, PD & Sections with a New Section Proposal consisting of:
- a) a proposed Section name and mandate;
 - b) the names of 25 interested CBABC members;
 - c) the names of the proposed Section Executive;
 - d) an ASAP; and
 - e) an explanation of why the proposed Section mandate does not fall within existing or an adapted Section mandates.
- 2.2 The Member Services and Engagement Committee will:
- a) review the New Section Proposal and seek clarification from the proponents;
 - b) conduct a review and consultation with other Sections to ensure that there will not be overlapping mandates;
 - c) explore adapting an existing Section mandate to incorporate that sought in the New Section Proposal; and
 - d) decide whether or not to recommend the creation of a new section to the Board of Directors.
- 2.3 A Section wishing to change its name or mandate must provide the Manager, PD & Sections with a New Name/Mandate Proposal that includes:
- a) the proposed new name and/or mandate;
 - b) if applicable, the corresponding National Section name and mandate ; and
 - c) the rationale for the change.
- 2.4 The Member Services and Engagement Committee will review the proposed changes and decide whether or not to recommend the change to the Board of Directors.
- 2.5 The Member Services and Engagement Committee may recommend to the Board of Directors the dissolution or merger of a Section because:
- a) a Section’s membership has dropped below 25 members, or in the case of geographic region-based Section, below 15 members from the geographic region;
 - b) a Section has not held the required number of activities;



- c) a Section's activities routinely overlap with another Section's activities indicating similar mandates; or
 - d) a Section no longer meets member needs.
- 2.6 In considering a recommendation for a dissolution or merger of a Section, the Member Services and Engagement Committee will:
 - a) offer an opportunity for Section Executives and members to discuss options;
 - b) review up to 3 years of registration and attendance records,
 - c) consider changes in the relevant legal profession demographics, practice changes, and mandates of other Sections.
- 2.7 In the event of a dissolution or merger, CBABC will advise the dissolved or merged sections of related sections in which to enroll, and other member services to meet member needs.
- 3. Section Executive**
- 3.1 A Section Executive consists of a minimum of three, and no more than seven, members who have been elected or acclaimed to lead the Section's activities as follows:
 - a) Chair (or two Co-Chairs);
 - b) Law and Policy Liaison (who may also be the Chair);
 - c) Vice-Chair (if sole Chair);
 - d) up to 4 members at large; and
 - e) additional named positions approved by the Member Services and Engagement Committee to assist with the administration of the Section.
- 3.2 The Section Executive is responsible for:
 - a) preparing, delivering and executing an ASAP of Section Meetings or Networking approved in advance by the Manager, PD & Sections;
 - b) in consultation with the Manager, Policy & Advocacy, preparing submissions to government or others regarding legislation, law and policy reform applicable to the Section;
 - c) submitting meeting notices, minutes for non-recorded meetings, attendance reports, and requests for reimbursement by established deadlines;
 - d) advising Section members of CBABC programs, advocacy, and opportunities;
 - e) bringing the views of members to the Section Representative to Provincial Council and the Member Services & Engagement Committee; and
 - f) recruiting and developing the future Section Executive.

- 3.2A Section Executives are encouraged to ensure all regions of the Section are represented, through regional representation on the Executive and Section Meetings that are accessible to Section members.
- 3.3 In addition to the duties outlined in the CBA Sections Regulations, the Section Chair or Co-chairs or Vice Chair will:
- a) lead the Section Executive and ensure it performs its duties;
 - b) work in co-operation with the Manager, PD & Sections;
 - c) liaise with the corresponding national Section Executive and attend meetings as requested; and
 - d) liaise with the Section Representative to Provincial Council.
- 3.4 The Law and Policy Liaison will:
- a) work in co-operation with the Manager, Policy & Advocacy or their designate;
 - b) bring to the attention of the Manager, Policy & Advocacy areas in which the Section wishes to recommend legislative, policy or practice changes;
 - c) respond to calls for participation in consultations;
 - d) consult with Section members to develop recommendations initiated by the Section or in response to calls for consultation;
 - e) keep Section members informed about changes to the law, policy and practice within the Section's mandate; and
 - f) liaise with the Manager, Policy & Advocacy and other CBABC entities to prepare submissions;
- 3.5 The Vice-Chair and Members at Large or other approved Section Executive members will be assigned responsibilities by the Chair or Co-Chairs.

4. Section Activities

- 4.1 Each Section Executive will prepare an ASAP to identify proposed dates, topics, speakers, and anticipated costs for its meetings, socials and other activities. The Section Advisor will alert the Manager, PD & Sections of any activity not included in the ASAP to enable adjustment of resources.
- 4.2 Section Meetings may occur virtually or use a hybrid form of delivery to support virtual attendance by members working away from an in-person location. Section Meetings are anticipated to be 60-90 minutes in length.
- 4.3 Section members working away from an in-person Section meeting location but who wish to meet in person with people in their geographic region, may organize an in-person "hub" to virtually connect to the meeting.

A person wishing to organize a hub will advise sections@cbabc.org so that the Section Advisor can promote registration for the hub, and provide additional administrative support.

- 4.4 Sections are encouraged to co-ordinate joint meetings with other Sections which may share interests, and are encouraged to issue meeting notices to members of other Sections which may share a meeting topic interest.
- 4.5 Each Section, unless exempted by the Manager, PD & Sections, will provide at least three activities (a combination of Section Meetings, Section Networking or a Section-led Conference) for its members in a year.
- 4.6 Notices of each meeting or social must be submitted through the CBABC website to the Section Advisor at least 25 days in advance of a meeting to provide members with sufficient notice. Notices must include all relevant details before they are distributed to members. The Section Advisor will issue the meeting notice within 48 hours of receipt unless follow-up with the Section Executive is required.
- 4.7 Section Meetings will include
 - a) an acknowledgment of the traditional Indigenous territory;
 - b) an update of relevant CBABC programs and initiatives;
 - c) an update of recent law and policy developments delivered by the Law and Policy Liaison or their designate;
 - d) expressions of thanks to the meeting organizers and presenters; and
 - e) announcement of the next date of Section activity.
- 4.8 Minutes of Section meetings will be the meeting recording if the meeting is recorded and presenters have provided consent for recording and distribution to CBA members. In the event a meeting is not recorded or does not have the requisite authorization, a member of the Section Executive will prepare minutes of the meeting and submit them through the CBABC website to the Section Advisor within 10 days of the meeting. The Section Advisor will then upload minutes, recorded or written, within 14 days of the Section Meeting.
- 4.9 Each in-person meeting will have an Attendance Record for member sign-in. A member of the Section Executive will submit the Attendance Record to the Section Advisor within 24 hours of the Section activity.
- 4.10 Annual Reports will be available to members to learn more about the Section and to decide on Section enrollment.

5. Section Funding and Financial Policy

- 5.1 The ASAP is used to allocate funds from the CBABC Operating Budget for Section Meetings as follows:
- a) \$160 towards the cost of a Section Executive planning meeting held between June and August;
 - b) up to three speaker meals per Section Meeting at a rate of up to \$25 per meal; and
 - c) up to three speaker gifts per Section Meeting at a rate of up to \$15 per gift.
- 5.2 Additional costs outlined in the ASAP may be approved by the Manager, PD & Sections. Anticipated costs not included in the ASAP (eg. increased amounts for speaker meals, travel, etc.) must be submitted to the Manager, PD & Sections for review and approval, and before the expense is incurred.
- 5.3 When reviewing additional costs submitted for approval, the Manager, PD & Sections will prioritize costs that enhance member engagement and support inclusiveness and accessibility.
- 5.4 Members incurring costs for Section activities that are outlined in the ASAP or approved by the Manager, PD & Sections are to, electronically or by mail, submit an Expense Reimbursement Form and receipts within 30 days of the expense being incurred. No reimbursement will be made after the year end of August 31.
- 5.5 Section meetings and socials are not to require additional fees paid by members unless there is a food and beverage or venue charge being charged to CBABC (a "Meeting Fee"). Members attending virtually will not be charged a Meeting Fee, and members attending in-person may request to have the Meeting Fee waived if they only wish to attend the presentation portion of a meeting.
- 5.6 In planning activities and setting Meeting Fees, Section Executives are to be mindful that not all members will wish to consume alcohol. Where logistically possible, the Sections Advisor will coordinate a cash bar. Where a Meeting Fee anticipates including an alcoholic beverage, corresponding drink tickets will be distributed to attendees to use or give away.
- 5.7 Sections whose ASAPs include a proposed Section-led dinner or professional development conference will meet with the Manager, Conferences & Events for review and approval of the proposal, including discussion of potential associated costs, staffing resources and sponsorship arrangements.
- 5.8 The past practice of accruing and maintaining individual Section Accrued Funds accounts ended for most Sections on August 31, 2021, and for all Sections on August 31, 2023. Any funds collected through Section activities will be spent for members' benefits within the same fiscal year.

6. Section Communication

- 6.1 CBABC member communications must comply with privacy and anti-spam regulations. Accordingly, all communications to members must be issued by CBABC staff. This includes notices of section activity, calls for consultation, professional notices, social media, and member engagement. Section Executive members may communicate directly among themselves via email to plan Section activities, with relevant updates communicated to the Section Advisor.
- 6.2 Any Section wishing to conduct business on another platform (e.g. Slack) must submit a proposal to the Manager, PD & Sections for approval by the Executive Director.
- 6.3 Notices to Section Members are primarily for the purpose of Section Activity, Calls for Consultation, Legislative Updates and Professional Notices. CBABC does not send notices to members of job postings (these can go to CBABC's Job Board) or, other organization's professional development, fundraising or networking opportunities. Requests for distribution of notices of other information must be submitted to the Manager, PD & Sections for consideration for approval.

7. Section Succession and Elections

- 7.1 Each Section shall elect a Section Executive no later than June 30 of each year.
- 7.2 This process to confirm new or returning Section Executives into a role occurs by:
 - a) issuing a Call for Volunteers to the Section's members providing at least 14 days for response;
 - b) completing the Annual Section Executive Succession Survey by the deadline set for each Section term; and;
 - c) an online election scheduled by the Sections Advisor, if necessary.
- 7.3 Unless permission is granted by the Manager, PD & Sections, the maximum term that a Section Executive Officer can remain in the same role is 2 fiscal years, and up to six years on the Section Executive.
- 7.4 If a Co-Chair cannot complete their term, the remaining Co-Chair will become the Chair or Vice-Chair. If a Chair, or both Co-Chairs, cannot complete their term, the Vice-Chair will become the Chair. Where there is no Vice-Chair or if the Vice-Chair cannot fill the Chair position, the Section Executive will appoint another Section Executive Officer to fill the vacancy. If the Section Executive cannot appoint another Section Executive Officer to fill the vacancy, the Sections Advisor will issue a Call for Volunteers and schedule an election.
- 7.5 If any other position on the Section Executive becomes vacant, the remaining Section Executive Officers may determine by majority vote to adopt (or incorporate) the additional role subject to approval by the Manager, PD & Sections. If there is no one on the Section Executive who can adopt/incorporate the additional role, the Sections Advisor will notify members of the Section and will issue a Call for Volunteers.

- 7.6 Where a Section Executive member membership lapses, they will cease to be a Section Executive member, will be unable to attend any Section activity as a member, and will not be eligible to run in Section elections until their membership is renewed.
- 7.7 Where a Section Executive member is not abiding by the [CBABC Principles of Conduct](#) or any Branch policy, they will be removed from the Executive.