



## 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 Section Activity Plan” (ASAP)** means a plan of the Section’s activities for the upcoming September – June period to be submitted by the Section Executive to the Director of Professional Development beginning July 1 and no later than September 15;
- **“Annual Report”** means a report of the Section’s activities of the fiscal year, generated by the Section Liaison Officers, with comments the Section Chair and re-submitted to the CBABC no later than June 30 of the each year;
- **“Approval”** means an approval via email or documented meeting minutes;
- **“Director of Advocacy”** means the employee of CBABC responsible for providing operational support for policy and advocacy;
- **“Director of Professional Development”** means the employee of CBABC responsible for providing operational support for member services, including Sections;
- **“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 Executive”** means, with respect to each CBABC section, the collective of members elected or acclaimed to the positions outlined in section 3 of the Sections Policy;
- **“Section Liaison Officer”** means an assigned CBABC employee who assists with the coordination of a Section’s activity;
- **“Section Meeting”** means a gathering of Section members of 60-90 minutes in length for the purpose of delivering continuing professional development or conducting elections; and
- **“Section Social”** means a gathering of Section members for the purpose of networking and connection only and without continuing professional development content.



## 2. Creation, Changes, and Retirement of Sections

- 2.1 A member wishing to propose a new Section must provide the Director of Professional Development with a New Section Proposal consisting of:
- a proposed Section name and mandate;
  - the names of 25 interested CBABC members;
  - the names of the proposed Section Executive;
  - an Annual Section Activity Plan; and
  - 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:
- review the New Section Proposal and seek clarification from the proponents;
  - conduct a review and consultation with other Sections to ensure that there will not be overlapping mandates;
  - explore adapting an existing Section mandate to incorporate that sought in the New Section Proposal; and
  - 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 Director of Professional Development with:
- the proposed new name and/or mandate;
  - if applicable, the corresponding National Section name and mandate ; and
  - 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 Section's membership has dropped below 25 members, or in the case of geographic region-based Section, below 15 members from the geographic region;
  - a Section has not held the required number of activities;
  - a Section's activities routinely overlap with another Section's activities indicating similar mandates; or
  - 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:
- offer an opportunity for Section Executives and members to discuss options;
  - review up to 3 years of registration and attendance records,
  - 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 Annual Section Activity Plan of Section meetings, social events or other activities approved in advance by the Director of Professional Development;
- b) in consultation with the Director of 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.

- 3.3 In addition to the duties outlined in the CBA Sections Regulations, the Section Chair or Co-chairs will:

- a) lead the Section Executive and ensure it performs its duties;
- b) work in co-operation with the Section Liaison Officer and Director of Professional Development;
- 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 Director of Advocacy or their designate;
- b) bring to the attention of the Director of 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 Director of 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 Annual Section Activity Plan to identify proposed dates, topics, speakers, and anticipated costs for its meetings, socials and other activities. The Section Liaison Officer will alert the Director of Professional Development of any activity not included in the Annual Section Activity Plan to enable adjustment of resources.

**4.2** Section meetings may occur virtually or in-person and are anticipated to be 60-90 minutes in length. In-person meetings should support virtual attendance by members working away from an in-person location.

**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](mailto:sections@cbabc.org) so that the Section Liaison Officer 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 Director of Professional Development, will provide a minimum of three activities for its members in a year.

**4.6** Notices of each meeting or social must be submitted through the CBABC website to the Section Liaison Officer at least 25 days in advance of a meeting in order to provide members with sufficient notice. The Section Liaison Officer will issue the meeting notice within 48 hours of receipt.

**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 from the Law and Policy Liaison;
- 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 Liaison Officer within 10 days of the meeting. The Section Liaison Officer will upload minutes, recording or written, within 7 days of a 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 Liaison Officer 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 Annual Section Activity Plan is used to allocate funds from the CBABC Operating Budget for section activities as follows:

- a) \$160 towards the cost of a Section Executive planning meeting held between June and August;
- b) up to two speaker meals per meeting at a rate of up to \$35 per meal; and
- c) up to two speaker gifts per meeting at a rate of \$25 per gift.

5.2 Additional costs outlined in the Annual Section Activity Plan may be approved by the Director of Professional Development. Anticipated costs not included in the Annual Section Activity Plan (eg. increased amounts for speaker meals, travel, etc.) may be submitted to the Director of Professional Development s in advance of the cost being incurred for consideration and approval.

5.3 When considering additional costs submitted for approval, the Director of Professional Development will give greater consideration for costs that enhance member engagement and support inclusiveness and accessibility.

5.4 Members incurring costs for Section activities that are outlined in the Annual Section Activity Plan or approved by the Director of Professional Development 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 such 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, members should access a cash bar. Where a Meeting Fee anticipates including an alcoholic beverage, corresponding drink tickets should be distributed to attendees to use or give away.
- 5.7 Sections whose Annual Section Activity Plans include a professional development conference or retreat, a gala dinner, or other unique event will meet with the Director of Professional Development to arrange the necessary financial and staffing resources and discuss sponsorship arrangements.
- 5.8 The past practice of accruing and maintaining individual Section Accrued Funds accounts ends on August 31, 2021. Any funds collected through Section activities will be spent for members' benefits within the same fiscal year.
- 5.9 Those Sections (other than those listed in section 5.10 below) with existing Accrued Funds over \$200 on August 31, 2021 have the opportunity to allocate and exhaust those funds for Section activities for the benefit of members by August 31, 2022. Any remaining balances on August 31, 2022 will be moved to the CBABC Operating Budget to use for the benefit of members.
- 5.10** The Aboriginal Lawyers Forum, Women Lawyers Forum-BC, Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Community, and Immigration Law Section have the opportunity to allocate and exhaust existing Accrued Funds by August 31, 2023. Any remaining balances on August 31, 2023 will be moved to the CBABC Operating Budget to use for the benefit of members.

## **6. Section Communication**

- 6.1 CBABC member communications must comply with privacy and anti-spam regulations. Accordingly, all communications to members are 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.
- 6.2 Any Section wishing to conduct business on another platform may make a proposal to the Director of Professional Development 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 may be submitted to the Director of Professional Development for consideration for approval.



## **7. Section Nominations and Elections**

- 7.1 Each Section shall elect a Section Executive no later than June 30 of each year.
- 7.2 This process can occur by:
- a) issuing a formal Call for Nominations to be distributed to the Section's members at least 14 days in advance of an election;
  - b) hosting an in-person election during the Annual General Meeting and/or final Section meeting of the fiscal year;
  - c) hosting an online election to be coordinated by the Section Liaison Officer;
  - d) a written communication via email to the Section Liaison Officer describing the intention of Section members to either maintain their current Executive role or to move to another Executive role; and
  - e) identifying (where applicable) whether the Section requires a Call for Nominations.
- 7.3 All written intentions to remain in any role of a Section's Executive is subject to review and approval by the Director of Professional Development.
- 7.4 A Section Executive Officer may not remain in the same role for longer than 2 fiscal years, at which time a new Section member can apply through the Call for Nominations. A Section member may not remain within a Section's Executive for longer than six years unless extenuating circumstances dictate as such and/or special permission has been granted by the Director of Professional Development.
- 7.5 If one Co-Chair becomes unavailable or unable to complete their term, the remaining Co-Chair may become the Chair or Vice-Chair. If a Section Chair, or both Co-Chairs, become unavailable or unable to complete their term, the Vice-Chair will fill the role of Chair. Where there is no Vice-Chair on the Executive or the Vice-Chair is unable to fill the Chair position, the members of the Executive will appoint another member to fill the vacant position. If the Executive is unable to appoint another member to fill the vacancy, the Section Liaison Officer will notify the members of the Section and will issue a Call for Nominations.
- 7.6 If any other position on the Executive becomes vacant, the remaining Executive Officers may determine by majority vote to adopt (or incorporate) the additional role subject to approval by the Director. If there is no one on the Executive who can adopt/incorporate the additional role, the Section Liaison Officer will notify members of the Section and will issue a Call for Nominations.
- 7.7 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.





- 7.8 Where a Section Executive member is not abiding by the CBA Principles of Conduct or any Branch policy, they will be removed from the Executive.