



THE CANADIAN  
BAR ASSOCIATION  
British Columbia Branch



## MEDIA RELEASE

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# BC Legal Orgs Use Wikipedia-Style Website to Serve Free Legal Information: Dial-A-Law Joins Clicklaw Wikibooks

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**VANCOUVER, BC** – Canadian Bar Association BC Branch’s (“CBABC”) long-running Dial-A-Law has joined Clicklaw Wikibooks in time for Law Week. Visitors to <http://wiki.clicklaw.bc.ca> can now export the scripts – covering over 130 legal topics – in a variety of e-reader, mobile and tablet-friendly formats (PDF and EPUB) or read them online. They can also order the collection as a print-on-demand book, or call to listen to audio scripts. The entire Dial-A-Law collection will be printed as a 500+ page book and offered for free to over 240 BC public libraries later this year.

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“For many, the internet means easier access to information – and Clicklaw Wikibooks’ friendly range of formats is a great example of digital done right,” says Johanne Blenkin, CEO of Courthouse Libraries BC (“CLBC”), which operates Clicklaw Wikibooks. “But many continue to rely on community libraries and printed materials, so keeping quality legal information in print is also important. Clicklaw Wikibooks is about helping content partners offer their up-to-date legal information in a range of digital and physical formats.”

The CBABC is a professional organization of lawyers, judges and law students who initiated Dial-A-Law with support

from the Law Foundation of British Columbia in 1983. Volunteer BC lawyers have written, updated and added to the topics for more than 30 years, and many scripts have been translated into Punjabi and Simplified Chinese.

CLBC is funded by the Law Foundation of BC, the Law Society of BC, and the BC Ministry of Justice. It offers diverse programs for lawyers and the public through a network of libraries in courthouses throughout BC. CLBC launched Clicklaw Wikibooks in 2012 to help lawyers and other legal organizations publish in many formats and only edit a single source. Clicklaw Wikibooks runs on open-source software that powers Wikipedia. Wikipedia's founder, Jimmy Wales, was keynote at the Canadian Bar Association's Canadian Legal Conference in 2012. "Our staff spoke with Mr. Wales in 2012 and he offered insight into how wikis can serve areas like law, which require deep expertise. We restrict editing privileges to a trusted few. This removes the risk that anonymous or uninformed wiki editors will lead the public astray," says Blenkin. "The key has been to seed Clicklaw Wikibooks with care and align with trusted partners like CBABC."

Clicklaw Wikibooks hosts 20 titles and relies on more than 50 legal organizations and individual volunteers, most of whom are BC lawyers dedicated to justice causes.

The Canadian Bar Association is the professional organization representing more than 38,000 lawyers, judges and law students in Canada, including 6,700 members in British Columbia.

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