Access to Justice

The Department of Justice Canada considers access to justice to be a fundamental value of the Canadian justice system, flowing from our country’s respect for the rule of law. However, various factors can be barriers to access to justice, including:

- Lack of information and availability of services
- Financial cost and limited availability of legal aid
- Time and complexity
- Additional barriers faced by diverse populations

To overcome these barriers, Justice Canada is working to place people at the heart of justice responses by providing access to information, funding programs, and policies that aim to help resolve these legal issues.

Justice Canada is guided in its efforts to promote access to justice by the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), whose overarching principle is to “leave no one behind.” Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) commits the global community to work together to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

Justice Canada is the lead department within the Government of Canada for achieving SDG 16.