



ALBERTA  
JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL

*Office of the Minister*

March 25, 2009

Dear Members of the Bar:

Re: 2009 Queen's Counsel Screening Process

Every two years it is tradition in the province of Alberta to have the Lieutenant Governor in Council appoint lawyers as Her Majesty's Counsel learned in the law – Queen's Counsel. The historical significance of the post of Queen's Counsel should not be understated. This tradition dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and in Canada predates Confederation. In Alberta we carry on this tradition to recognize the accomplishment and contribution lawyers have made to the legal professional, their community and those they serve.

Confidence in the justice system is fundamental to the strength of our communities and as members of the Bar we all have a responsibility to ensure that access to justice and justice itself are highly regarded by our communities. Community service and leadership in the profession and the community in which we live is a key component of what it means to be a member of the legal profession. Commitment to the well being of the wider community in which lawyers live and work is an important component in defining our responsibility as members of the Bar.

In Alberta the appointment of Queen's Counsel is governed by the *Queen's Counsel Act*. The process of reviewing nominations for appointment begun in 2001 and involves the assistance of the Law Society of Alberta. This process is outlined as follows:

- to be eligible for a Queen's Counsel appointment, individuals must meet the requirements of the *Queen's Counsel Act*;
- an individual may be nominated by a third party by letter directed to the address below. In this case the individual will be sent an application form for completion. The application form must be returned for the nominee to be considered;
- individuals can also apply to be considered for a Queen's Counsel appointment by completing the enclosed Queen's Counsel Candidate Data Sheet. **Please ensure that the Consent to Disclosure of Personal Information form is also provided with the application;**
- all nominations and applications should be sent to the Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General, 2 Floor, Bowker Building, 9833 – 109 Street, Edmonton, AB, T5K 2E8;
- all applications should be received no later than September 4, 2009;
- all applications will be reviewed by a Queen's Counsel Screening Committee consisting of the following members:

- President, Law Society of Alberta
  - President-Elect, Law Society of Alberta
  - President, Canadian Bar Association, Alberta Branch
  - Chief Justice of Alberta or Nominee
  - Chief Justice, Court of Queen's Bench or Nominee
  - Associate Chief Justice, Court of Queen's Bench or Nominee
  - Chief Judge, Provincial Court or Nominee
  - an Assistant Chief Judge
  - the Minister of Justice and Attorney General or Nominee
  - a Lay Bencher
  - a Representative from each of the North, Central and Southern Districts
  - Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General
- Letters of reference are of significant assistance to the Screening Committee. Three letters of reference, matching individuals identified as references on the Candidate Data Sheet, are to be submitted to the Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General, 2 Floor, Bowker Building, 9833 – 109 Street, Edmonton, AB, T5K 2E8. Only these three letters of reference will be considered (these reference letters will not be disclosed to the applicant). In order to comply with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, letters of reference must state that:
- This letter may be disclosed to Alberta Justice, the Law Society of Alberta, and the Queen's Counsel Screening Committee.**
- Once the Queen's Counsel Screening Committee has reviewed the applications, it will submit the names to the Minister of Justice indicating whether the applicant is highly recommended, recommended, or not recommended at this time;
- The awarding of the Queen's Counsel designation is solely within the discretion of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, however, in considering applications, the attached Criteria will be considered and;
- Queen's Counsel recipients will be announced on December 31, 2009.

Further information regarding the Queen's Counsel nomination process and additional application forms are available from the Office of the Deputy Minister of Justice by contacting (780) 427-5032 or by fax at (780) 422-9639, from the Law Society of Alberta at (403) 229-4700, 1-800-661-9003 or by fax at (403) 228-1728 or from the Department of Justice web site [www.gov.ab.ca/just](http://www.gov.ab.ca/just) (click on Initiatives & Events).

Yours truly,



Alison Redford, Q.C.  
Minister

Enclosures