

EVERYDAY LEGAL  
PROBLEMS AND THE COST  
OF JUSTICE IN CANADA:  
SURVEY

THE COST  
OF JUSTICE





Canadian Forum on Civil Justice  Forum canadien sur la justice civile

*“This research ... by the Canadian Forum on Civil Justice will be essential in helping us understand the true extent of the problem of cost and how it impacts on the justice system. I believe that it will prove to be of great assistance to ... identify concrete solutions to the problem of access to justice.”*

– The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, P.C., Chief Justice of Canada (2011)

**The Canadian Forum on Civil Justice** is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to civil justice reform and access to justice research and advocacy. Established by the Canadian Bar Association and affiliated with Osgoode Hall Law School, the CFCJ envisions an accessible, sustainable and effective justice system for all Canadians.

**Overview of the Cost of Justice project.** The Cost of Justice project (2011-2017) examines the social and economic costs of Canada’s justice system. It is guided by two questions: What is the cost of delivering access to justice? And what is the cost of not delivering access to justice? Comprised of leading researchers investigating various dimensions of access to justice and cost across the country, the Cost of Justice project is producing empirical data that will inform the future of access to justice in Canada and abroad. The lead research team includes: Trevor C.W. Farrow (Principal Investigator), Nicole Aylwin, Les Jacobs, Lisa Moore, and Diana Lowe.

The Cost of Justice project is funded by a \$1 million grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. For more details please visit Canadian Forum on Civil Justice, “Cost of Justice”, online: CFCJ <[www.cfcj-fcjc.org/cost-of-justice](http://www.cfcj-fcjc.org/cost-of-justice)>.



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada 

# EVERYDAY LEGAL PROBLEMS AND THE COST OF JUSTICE IN CANADA: SURVEY

## General Attitudes

**att\_1** *the question numbers are the same as the variable numbers in the data file and the key version of the question is the variable label*

The justice system in Canada is mostly fair.

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 strongly agree    | 2 somewhat agree    |
| 3 somewhat disagree | 4 strongly disagree |

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 7 R volunteers neither agree/disagree, depends |           |
| d don't know                                   | r refused |

*the response options (strongly agree, somewhat agree . . .) are the values and value labels (1,2 . . .) in the data file*

*every question allowed for a dk and refused option but they are not noted in subsequent questions*

### **att\_2**

The legal system works better for rich people than for poor people.

*Same agree/disagree scale as used in att\_1*

### **att\_3**

The legal rights guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms make a difference when people have legal problems.

*Same agree/disagree scale as used in att\_1*

### **att\_4**

Courts are an important way for ordinary people to protect their rights.

*Same agree/disagree scale as used in att\_1*

## Problem Identification

### **int\_prob**

Now we would like to ask you about problems and disputes that some people have. We are interested in SERIOUS problems that were not easy to fix that have happened in the last three years, that is since [month of interview] 2011.

## Consumer Problems

### **int\_prob1st**

First, we want to ask about problems you may have had as a consumer, for example when you bought something and did not get what you paid for, or paid for a service or repair that was not provided. Please remember we are interested in SERIOUS problems that were not easy to fix.

**cons\_1a** [#prob1] ← this is a count of the 84 problems asked about in the survey, see variable firstprob\_followup]

In the last three years have you spent money on a home, a car, a major appliance, or made other large purchases and not gotten what you paid for AND the seller did not fix the problem?

1 yes      5 no      d don't know      r refused

**cons\_1b** [if yes at cons\_1a]

In what year did this problem start?

1 before 2010      2 2010      3 2011      4 2012  
5 2013      6 2014      d DK      r refused

**cons\_1c** [if yes at cons\_1a]

Approximately how much money was involved with this purchase?

0 \$49 dollars or less      50-1,000,000 (enter \$)  
x more than one million      d DK      r refused

**cons\_2a** [#prob2]

In the last three years have you paid to have repairs, renovations or other work done to your home, your car, to an appliance and then you found you did not get what you paid for AND the repair person or contractor did not fix the problem?

**For each problem the year that the problem started and the amount of money that was involved where asked as shown in the cons\_1b and cons\_1c questions above.**

**cons\_3a** [#prob3]

In the last three years have you paid for a SERVICE such as a moving company, a health club membership, a major holiday, having your taxes prepared, and so on, AND then found out you did not get what you paid for or the service was poor and they would not fix the problem?

**cons\_4a** [#prob4]

In the last three years have you had a problem with the SAFETY of something you bought and the seller would not repair, replace it, or take it back?

**cons\_5a** [#prob5]

In the last three years have you had any insurance claim UNFAIRLY rejected?

**cons\_6a** [#prob6]

In the last three years have you had a serious problem with a bill or invoice that was incorrect?

## Employment Problems

**st\_emp**

In the last three years, that is since [the month the survey was completed was provided whenever "fill monthtxt" is indicated] 2011 have you worked FOR PAY?

- 1 yes [goto emp\_1a]
- 5 no [goto debt\_1a]
- d don't know
- r refused [goto debt\_1a]

**emp\_1a** [#prob7]

We would like to know about serious problems or disputes at your job that were not easy to fix. In the last three years, did you have any problem obtaining Employment Insurance (EI) benefits?

- 1 yes
- 5 no (includes never needed/tried/eligible for EI)
- 7 R volunteers never work problems [goto debt\_1a]
- d don't know
- r refused

**emp\_2a** [#prob8]

In the last three years, have you experienced any serious problems with being paid your wages, being paid for working overtime, getting vacation pay, severance pay or other wages that you believe were owed to you?

**emp\_3a** [#prob9]

In the last three years, have you been UNFAIRLY fired or dismissed from a job?

**emp\_4a** [#prob10]

In the last three years, have you NOT been given maternity leave, sick leave or other rights that were part of agreed conditions of work?

**emp\_5a** [#prob11]

In the last three years, have you personally had health or safety issues at your job or in the workplace?

**emp\_6a** [#prob12]

In the last three years, have there been any unfair disciplinary procedures?

**emp\_7a** [#prob13]

In the last three years, have you experienced any serious and ongoing harassment at work?

**emp\_8**

Looking back over the last several years, how often have you been UNemployed: all of the time, most of the time, some of the time or have you never been unemployed over the past several years?

## Debt Problems

**debt\_1a** [#prob14]

In the last three years have you declared personal bankruptcy?

**debt\_2a** [#prob15]

Have you been harassed over and over again by a collection agency trying to get you to pay an outstanding bill?

**debt\_3a** [#prob16]

Have you been UNFAIRLY refused credit because of INACCURATE INFORMATION?

**debt\_4a** [#prob17]

Been asked over and over to pay INCORRECT charges by a bank, or by a credit union, or by a hydro, gas, or a cable company, or any other utility?

**debt\_5a** [#prob18]

Have you been threatened with legal action by someone or a company trying to collect money you owed them?

**debt\_6a** [#prob19]

Been given misleading or incorrect information that led you to buy insurance, pensions, mortgages or other financial products?

**debt\_7a** [#prob20]

Had problems collecting money owed to you?

**debt\_8a**

Over the last several years has debt been a serious problem for you frequently, some of the time, or not at all?

## Problems with Social Assistance

**screen\_soc**

In the last three years, that is since [fill monthtxt] 2011 have you had any serious problems or disputes getting government income assistance, social assistance, old age security, and so on that were not easy to fix?

1 Yes [goto soc\_1a]

5 No                                      d don't know                      r refused [goto screen\_dis1]

**soc\_1a** [#prob21]

In the last three years have you had problems obtaining social assistance or with the amount of social assistance you were receiving?

***Unless specified otherwise for the remaining problem questions the first follow up question (year problem started) was asked but the second (amount of money involved) was not.***

**soc\_2a** [#prob22]

In the last three years, have you had problems obtaining old age security, or the Guaranteed Income supplement?

**soc\_3a** [#prob23]

In the last three years, have you had any other problems with other types of government assistance, such as housing assistance, benefits for disabled children, and so on?

**soc\_oth** [only asked if screen\_soc was 1 and none of soc\_1a to soc\_3a answered 'yes']

Can you tell me what kind of problems you had getting government income assistance in the last three years?

1 text answers

5 had no problems

## Problems with Disability Assistance

### screen\_dis1

In the last three years, that is since [fill monthtxt] 2011, have you collected, or felt like you deserved to collect A DISABILITY PENSION

income from the government, your place of work, the Work place Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), or from a private insurance company?

- 1 yes [goto screen\_dis2]
- 5 no [goto screen\_house1]
- d don't know
- r refused [both goto screen\_house1]

### screen\_dis2 [#prob24]

In the last three years have you had any serious problems or disputes that were not easy to fix, when you were trying to obtain disability income?

- 1 yes [goto dis\_1a]
- 5 no
- d don't know
- r refused [all goto scrn\_house1]

### dis\_1a [#prob25]

Was your problem with the Canada Pension Plan disability pension?

### dis\_2a [#prob21]

Was your problem with a provincial disability pension?

### dis\_3a [#prob26]

Was your problem with a private insurance company?

### dis\_4a [#prob27]

Was your problem with workers compensation?

## Housing Problems

### scrn\_house1

Now we want to ask about housing problems, such as problems with your mortgage or lease, having problems with your landlord, and so on. NOT INCLUDING any problems we have already talked about, in the past three years, that is since [fill monthtxt] 2011, have you experienced any serious problems like this that were not easy to fix.

- 1 yes [goto scrn\_house2]
- 5 no
- d don't know
- r refused [all goto house\_11a]

### scrn\_house2

Were the problems you had with a house that you owned or rented?

- 1 owned (outright or with a mortgage)
- 3 rented
- 5 had problems with housing owned and rented
- 7 neither owned nor rented
- d don't know
- r refused

**house\_1a** [#prob28 only asked of renters, see scrn\_house2]  
In the last three years have there been arbitrary changes to your rent?

**house\_2a** [#prob29] [only asked of renters]  
in the last three were you evicted or threatened with eviction?

**house\_3a** [#prob30] [only asked of renters]  
In the last three years did you have problems getting a rent deposit back?

**house\_4a** [#prob31] [only asked of renters]  
In the last three years did you have a problem getting a landlord to carry out building repairs or maintenance?

**house\_5a** [#prob32] [only asked of renters]  
Any problems with a landlord providing hydro, water or heating for your home in the last three years?

**house\_6a** [#prob33] [only asked of renters]  
Problems with a lease or the absence of a lease in the last three years?

**house\_7a** [#prob34] [only asked of renters]  
Harassment of any type from a landlord in the last three years?

**house\_8a** [#prob35] [only asked if mortgage see scrn\_house2]  
In the last three years, have you had any problems with a foreclosure or mortgage?

**house\_9a** [#prob36] [only asked if mortgage]  
In the last three years, have you had any problems with municipal property regulations?

**house\_10a** [#prob37] [only asked if mortgage]  
In the last three years, have you had any problems involving boundaries, access or right of way to property?

**house\_11a** [ask all]  
Looking back over the last several years, would you say that having good, affordable housing has been a serious problem for you: frequently, sometimes, not at all?

**house\_oth** [only asked if scrn\_house1 was 1 & none of house\_1a to house\_11a answered 'yes']  
Can you tell me what kind of housing problem you had in the last three years?

- 1 please enter text answers
- 5 had no problems

## Immigration Problems

**imm\_1a**  
We have some questions about immigration. Were you born in Canada?

**imm\_1b**  
Have you sponsored a family member's application to immigrate to Canada?



1 yes [goto imm\_1c]  
5 no                      d don't know              r refused [all goto screen\_imm]

**imm\_1c** [#prob38]

In the past three years, have you experienced any serious problems sponsoring a family member's application to immigrate to Canada?

All those answering imm\_1c goto screen\_disc

**screen\_imm** [only asked if mortgage]

In the past three years, have you experienced any serious problem or dispute involving immigration or refugee status that was hard to fix?

1 yes [goto imm\_2a]  
5 no                      d don't know              r refused [all goto screen\_dis]

**imm\_2a** [#prob39]

Did you have a problem claiming refugee protection from within Canada?

**imm\_3a** [#prob40]

Did you have a problem applying for permanent residence status?

**imm\_4a** [#prob41]

Did you have a problem applying for a Canadian work or student visa?

**imm\_5a** [#prob42]

Did you have a problem obtaining Canadian citizenship?

**imm\_6a** [#prob43]

Did you have a problem filing a Pre-removal Risk Assessment or a humanitarian and Compassionate application?

**imm\_7a** [#prob44]

Did you have a problem appealing an immigration or refugee decision through judicial review?

**imm\_8a** [#prob45]

Did you have a problem obtaining assistance (e.g. health or social) while awaiting a refugee hearing or other immigration matter?

**imm\_oth** [asked if screen\_imm = 1 and none of imm\_2a to imm\_8a answered yes]

Can you tell me what kind of immigration problem you had in the last three years?

1 enter text answers  
5 had no problems

## Discrimination Problems

### screen\_disc

Not including any problems we have already talked about, during the past three years, since [fill monthtxt] 2011, have you had any serious problems resulting from discrimination based on your age, gender, race, or for any other reason?

1 yes [goto disc\_1a]  
5 no                      d don't know      r refused [all goto screen\_pol1]

### disc\_1a [#prob46]

In the last three years were you discriminated against because of your gender?

### disc\_2a [#prob47]

because of your race?

### disc\_3a [#prob48]

because of your sexual orientation?

### disc\_4a [#prob49]

because of a disability?

### disc\_5a [#prob50]

because of your age?

### disc\_6a [#prob51]

because of your religion?

### disc\_oth [asked if screen\_disc = 1 and none of disc\_1a to disc\_6a answered yes]

Can you tell me about any discrimination you have suffered in the last three years?

1 please enter text answers  
5 had no problems

## Treatment by Police

### screen\_pol1

In the last three years have you been stopped and questioned by the police, detained or arrested, or had any contact with the police where you felt they were being aggressive or threatening?

1 yes [goto screen\_pol2]  
5 no                      d don't know      r refused [all goto screen\_fl1]

### screen\_pol2

Not including any problems we have already talked about, during the past three years, have you experienced any serious problems with the way you have been treated by the police?

1 yes [goto pol\_1a]  
5 no                      d don't know      r refused [all goto scr\_crm]

### pol\_1a [#prob52]

Were you unreasonably stopped and questioned by police?

**pol\_2a** [#prob53]

Did you feel threatened by VERBALLY aggressive police officers?

**pol\_3a** [#prob54]

Did you feel PHYSICALLY threatened by police officers?

**pol\_4a** [#prob55]

Were you physically assaulted by a police officer?

## Criminal Charges

**scr\_crim**

At any time in the past three years, were you detained or arrested by the police?

1 yes [goto crim\_1a]

5 no                      d don't know              r refused [all goto screen\_fl1]

**crim\_1a**

When you were detained or arrested, did the police charge you?

1 yes [goto crim\_1b]

5 no                      d don't know              r refused [all goto screen\_fl1]

**crim\_1b**

What were you charged with?

- @1 Impaired driving/driving under the influence of alcohol/DUI
- @2 Other highway traffic offence(NOT IMPAIRED DRIVING)
- @3 Drug-related offence/possession of drugs/ trafficking/marijuana
- @4 Assault
- @5 Breaking and entering
- @6 Theft
- @7 Breach of probation or a court order/failure to appear
- @8 Uttering threats
- @0 Other (SPECIFY)

## Family Law Problems (Relationship Breakdown)

**screen\_fl1**

In the past three years, have you experienced any serious family problems that were difficult to resolve, for example a break up, divorce, child custody issues, and problems getting support payments and so on?

1 yes [goto famlaw\_1a]

5 no                      d don't know              r refused [all goto screen\_fam11]

**famlaw\_1a** [#prob56]

In the last three years have you been . . .  
Divorced (and had problems)?

**famlaw\_2a** [#prob57]

separated (and had problems)?

**famlaw\_3a** [#prob58]

HAD problems applying for, OR making changes to, or enforcing child support?

**famlaw\_4a** [#prob59]

problems over the division of money or property following a family break-up?

**famlaw\_5a** [#prob60]

problems with child custody or access arrangements involving children?

**famlaw\_6a** [#prob61]

problems collecting spousal support that you were awarded by the court?

**famlaw\_7a** [#prob62]

problems obtaining or enforcing a restraining order?

## Family Problems (Other)

**screen\_fam1**

Are you the parent or guardian of a PERSON UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE?

1 yes [goto screen\_fam12]

5 no

d don't know

r refused [all goto screen\_will]

**screen\_fam12**

In the last three years, that is since [fill monthtxt] 2011 have you had any SERIOUS PROBLEMS that were hard to fix involving a child such as becoming a guardian, problems with child services, school expulsions and so on that we have not already talked about?

1 yes [goto famlaw\_8a]

5 no

d don't know

r refused [goto screen\_will]

**famlaw\_8a** [#prob63]

In the last three years, have you had any serious problems becoming the guardian of a child?

**famlaw\_9a** [#prob64]

In the last three years have any of your children, or a child under your guardianship, been taken away by a family services agency?

**famlaw\_10a** [#prob65]

In the last three years have you had problems getting legal representation for a child involved in a dispute?

**famlaw\_11a** [#prob66]

In the last three years, have you had a child abduction or potential abduction?

**famlaw\_12a** [#prob67]

In the last three years, have you had a child who was unfairly expelled from school?





a neighbour or business in the area?

**neigh\_2a** [#prob83]

had threats or harassment by neighbours or people passing through your Neighbourhood?

**neigh\_3a** [#prob84]

vandalism or damage to your home, vehicle, property or garden?

**neigh\_oth** [#if yes at screen\_neigh and no at all of neigh\_1a – neigh\_ 3]

Can you tell me what kind of problems you had in your Neighbourhood in the last three years?

## Assistance with Problems

*Respondents who reported no problems or more than seven problems skipped all of the follow-up questions and were next asked demo\_int, see page 37.*

### **QUESTIONS ABOUT PROBLEM ONE - SEE VARIABLE "firstprob\_followup" IN THE DATA FILE FOR IDENTIFICATION OF THIS PROBLEM**

**For respondents who had more than one problem the assignment of which problem was designated as one (first) and two (second) was random and does not relate to seriousness, cost, timing or any other factor.**

#### **assist1**

People do a number of things to try to resolve problems. Please tell me if you did any of the following to resolve the [problem 1 identified] you had. Did you ...

- @1 Search the internet for help or for a place to go for assistance?
- @2 Talk the problem over with the other party involved in the dispute?
- @3 Talk with friends or relatives who might be able to help?
- @4 Contact a lawyer, at any time, to help with the problem?
- @5 Contact an organization?
- @6 Did you do anything else? What was this?

*There is no question assist2*

#### **assist3** [asked if no actions taken at assist1]

Please tell me if any of the following are reasons why you did not try to solve the problem?

- @1 Problem was not that serious
- @2 Did not think anything could be done about it
- @3 Didn't know what to do or where to go to get help
- @4 Was uncertain of my rights
- @5 Would take too much time
- @6 Thought it would cost too much
- @7 Was too scared to do anything
- @8 Worried that it would just cause more trouble
- @9 Thought the other person was right
- @10 Would have been too stressful
- @11 Help was too far away or hard to reach

- @12 Had a previous problem and knew there was no use in getting help  
@13 Other, specify

**assist4** *[asked if no actions taken at assist1 and more than one response at assist3]*  
What was the MOST important reason you did not try to resolve the problem?

*The respondent selected one of the responses answered affirmatively in the previous question*

*There is no question assist5*

**assist6b** *[only if 2 or actions at assist1]*  
You mentioned that you: (interviewer lists actions reported in assist1)  
Which one did you do first?  
And which one did you do next?

**assist6c** *[only if 3 or more actions at assist1]*

Which one did you do first?  
And what did you do second?  
And which one did you do next?

**assist7** *[if searched the internet at assist1]*

Which of the following BEST describes what you found on the internet: 1, nothing that was very useful, 2, information about the problem, 3, organizations that might be able to help, or 4, problem-solving aids that would actually help you to resolve the problem?

**assist8** *[if answers 2-4 in previous question]*  
Overall, how helpful did you find the internet in helping you resolve the problem: would you say not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist9** *[if talked with the other party at assist1]*  
How helpful was talking with the other person in helping you resolve the problem: would you say not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist10** *[if talked to friends/relatives assist1]*  
How helpful was talking with friends or relatives in helping you resolve the problem: would you say not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist11a** *[#if contacted a lawyer at assist1]*  
Did you get legal advice from a private lawyer, from legal aid, from a legal advice service, from a lawyer via a web site or from a free legal clinic?

**assist11b**  
How helpful was talking with the lawyer or legal services in helping you resolve the problem: would you say not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist12a** *[if contacted organization at assist1]*  
Can you tell me what [first] organization you contacted?



**assist12b**

And how helpful was the assistance you received from the first organization: not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist13a** *[if 2 or more organizations mentioned]*

Can you tell me what [second] organization you contacted?

**assist13b**

And how helpful was the assistance you received from them: not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist14a** *[if 3 or more organizations mentioned]*

Can you tell me what [third] organization you contacted?

**assist14b**

And how helpful was the assistance you received from them: not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist15** *[if other actions at assist\_1]*

How useful was the other help you told us about: would you say not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**QUESTIONS ABOUT PROBLEMS TWO - SEE VARIABLE "secondprob\_followup" IN THE DATA FILE FOR IDENTIFICATION OF THIS PROBLEM**

**assist1\_2**

People do a number of things to try to resolve problems. Please tell me if you did any of the following to resolve the [problem 1 identified] you had. Did you ...

- @1 Search the internet for help or for a place to go for assistance?
- @2 Talk the problem over with the other party involved in the dispute?
- @3 Talk with friends or relatives who might be able to help?
- @4 Contact a lawyer, at any time, to help with the problem?
- @5 Contact an organization?
- @6 Did you do anything else? What was this?

*There is no question assist2*

**assist3\_2** *[asked if no actions taken at assist1\_2]*

Please tell me if any of the following are reasons why you did not try to solve the problem?

- @1 Problem was not that serious
- @2 Did not think anything could be done about it
- @3 Didn't know what to do or where to go to get help
- @4 Was uncertain of my rights
- @5 Would take too much time
- @6 Thought it would cost too much
- @7 Was too scared to do anything
- @8 Worried that it would just cause more trouble
- @9 Thought the other person was right

- @10 Would have been too stressful
- @11 Help was too far away or hard to reach
- @12 Had a previous problem and knew there was no use in getting help
- @13 Other, specify

**assist4\_2** *[asked if no actions taken at assist1\_2 and more than one response at assist3\_2]*  
What was the MOST important reason you did not try to resolve the problem?

*The respondent selected one of the responses answered affirmatively in the previous question*

There is no question assist5\_2

**assist6b2** *[only if 2 or actions at assist1\_2]*  
You mentioned that you: (interviewer lists actions reported in assist1\_2)

Which one did you do first?  
And which one did you do next?

**assist6c2** *[only if 3 or more actions at assist1\_2]*

Which one did you do first?  
And what did you do second?  
And which one did you do next?

**assist7\_2** *[if searched the internet at assist1\_2]*  
Which of the following BEST describes what you found on the internet: 1, nothing that was very useful, 2, information about the problem, 3, organizations that might be able to help, or 4, problem-solving aids that would actually help you to resolve the problem?

**assist8\_2** *[if answers 2-4 in previous question]*  
Overall, how helpful did you find the internet in helping you resolve the problem: would you say not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist9\_2** *[if talked with other party at assist1\_2]*  
How helpful was talking with the other person in helping you resolve the problem: would you say not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist10\_2** *[if talked friends/relatives assist1\_2]*  
How helpful was talking with friends or relatives in helping you resolve the problem: would you say not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist11a2** *[#if contacted a lawyer at assist1\_2]*  
Did you get legal advice from a private lawyer, from legal aid, from a legal advice service, from a lawyer via a web site or from a free legal clinic?

**assist11b2**  
How helpful was talking with the lawyer or legal services in helping you resolve the problem: would you say not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist12a2** *[if contacted organization at assist1\_2]*  
Can you tell me what [first] organization you contacted?

**assist12b2**  
And how helpful was the assistance you received from them: not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist13a2** *[if 2 or more organizations mentioned]*  
Can you tell me what [second] organization you contacted?

**assist13b2**  
And how helpful was the assistance you received from them: not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist14a2** *[if 3 or more organizations mentioned]*  
Can you tell me what [third] organization you contacted?

**assist14b2**  
And how helpful was the assistance you received from them: not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

**assist15\_2** *[if other actions at assist\_1\_2]*  
How useful was the other help you told us about: would you say not helpful at all, not very helpful, somewhat helpful or very helpful?

## Understanding the Scope of the Problems

### FIRST PROBLEM

[skip to status questions if respondent did not get help because problem not that serious at assist3@1]

#### scope\_1a

Now some questions about the seriousness of [identify problem 1] you had. Thinking about when this problem first happened did you understand how serious this problem was or could become?

1 Yes *[goto scope\_1b]*  
5 No                                      d don't know                      r refused *[goto scope\_2a]*

#### scope\_1b

Would you say you understood the seriousness of the problem completely, very well, or not very well?

#### scope\_2a

Were you aware of any legal implications related to the problem?

1 Yes *[goto scope\_2b]*  
5 No                                      d don't know                      r refused *[goto scope\_3a]*

#### scope\_2b

Would you say you understood the legal implications completely, very well or not very well?

#### scope\_3a

Did you know where to go to obtain good information and advice about resolving the problem?

1 Yes [goto scope\_3b]  
5 No                                    d don't know                    r refused [goto scope\_4a]

**scope\_3b**

Would you say you know a lot, some, or very little about where to go to get good information and advice about resolving the problem?

**scope\_4a**

Did you know what sort of assistance you needed to deal with the problem?

1 Yes [goto scope\_4b]  
5 No                                    d don't know                    r refused [goto scope\_5a]

**scope\_4b**

Were you very certain, somewhat certain, or not very certain about the assistance you needed to deal with the problem?

**scope\_5a**

Did you have the knowledge to deal with the problem?

1 Yes [goto scope\_5b]  
5 No                                    d don't know                    r refused [goto scope\_6a]

**scope\_5b**

Would you say you had all, most, or some of the knowledge you needed to deal with the problem?

**scope\_6a**

Are you still trying to obtain help in fixing this problem?

## Legal Assistance

### PROBLEM 1

**legass\_1**

Did you have to appear at a court or other tribunal because of this problem?

Yes [goto legass\_2]  
5 No                                    d don't know                    r refused [goto status\_1]

**legass\_2**

Did you appear at small claims court, another type of court, or a tribunal?

**legass\_3a**

Did you have anyone represent or assist you when attending this court, hearing or tribunal?

Yes [goto legass\_2]  
5 No                                    d don't know                    r refused [goto status\_1]

**legass\_3b**

Who was it: a lawyer, a trained advocate but not a lawyer, a friend or relative, or did you represent yourself?

#### **legass\_4**

Did you attend any mediation or conciliation sessions in an attempt resolve this problem?

### **Current Status of Problem**

#### **FIRST PROBLEM**

##### **status\_1**

Has this problem or dispute now been resolved, or is it still ongoing?

- 1 resolved *[goto status\_3]*
- 3 ongoing *[goto status\_2]*
- 5 R volunteers too early to say *[goto status\_2]*
- 6 R volunteers dropped it/gave up *[goto status\_3]*
- d don't know
- r refused *[goto cost\_1]*

##### **>status\_2<** *[ask if ongoing/too early to say]*

Overall, would you say this problem is now better, worse, or about the same as when it first happened?  
*All answers goto self\_rep*

##### **status\_3** *[ask if resolved/dropped]*

Do you feel the outcome of this problem was BASICALLY fair or unfair?

##### **status\_4** *[ask if resolved]*

Did you achieve all, most, some, very little, or none of what you hoped to gain by getting the problem resolved?

##### **self\_rep**

*[different definitions of self-helpers were used before and after Oct 8,2012. Those who did not get help asked status\_5 to status\_9]*

##### **status\_5** *[ask if problem resolved and self helper]*

Looking back on this problem and how things turned out, do you feel the situation might have worked out better if you had some assistance?

- 1 Yes goto status\_6
- 5 No
- d don't know
- r refused *[goto status\_9]*

##### **status\_6** *[ask if felt help would improve outcome]*

Do you think any of the following would have helped you get a better outcome with the problem?

- @1 Better information
- @2 Someone to explain the legal aspects or to help with forms, letters or documents
- @3 Someone to deal with or intervene with the other party
- @4 A lawyer to deal with the problem using the legal system or courts
- @5 R volunteers other answer (specify)

##### **status\_7** *[ask if felt help would improve outcome]*

if you had received better information or help now would you still have preferred to deal with this problem on your own as much as possible?

1 yes      7 R volunteers probably [goto status\_8]  
5 No      d don't know      r refused [goto status\_9]

**status\_8**

Why is that?

- 1      responsibility issues (take care of my own problems, etc.)
- 2      privacy issues (my business, don't want to give out personal info, etc.)
- 3      cost of getting assistance
- 4      low probability of getting good assistance
- 0      other or multiple response (specify)

**status\_9** [ask if problem resolved/ongoing]

Looking back on this problem, how difficult did it make it for you to carry on with your normal life? Would you say: extremely difficult, very difficult, somewhat difficult, not very difficult, or not at all difficult?

**status\_10** [ask if resolved/ongoing]

And how important was / is it for you to resolve this problem? Extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?

**cost\_1** [ask if resolved/ongoing]

Now we would like to ask about any costs you may have had to pay as a result of experiencing this problem. Did it cost you any money to deal with this problem?

1 Yes [goto cost\_2]  
5 No      d don't know      r refused [goto scope 2nd problem]

**cost\_2**

What kinds of things did you have to pay for?

- @1      Lawyer fees
- @2      Fees for other advisors or mediators
- @3      Court filing fees or other court fees
- @4      Purchasing materials/photocopies
- @5      Long distance/fax
- @6      Bus/cab/other transportation costs
- @7      Babysitter/house cleaner/other domestic costs
- @8      Other (Specify)

**cost\_3**

Approximately how much in total did it cost to deal with this problem?

**SECOND PROBLEM**

If only 1 problems skip to HEALTH PROBLEMS, if two or more problems and the problem "not that serious" at assist3\_2@1]

**scope2\_1a**

Now some questions about the seriousness of [identify problem 2] you had. Thinking about when this problem first happened did you understand how serious this problem was or could become?







**self\_rep2**

[different definitions of self helpers were used before and after Oct 8,2012. Those who did not get help asked ststus2\_5 to status2\_9]

**status2\_5** [ask if problem resolved and self helper]

Looking back on this problem and how things turned out, do you feel the situation might have worked out better if you had some assistance?

1 Yes [goto status2\_6]

5 No

d don't know

r refused [goto status2\_9]

**status2\_6** [ask if felt help would improve outcome]

Do you think any of the following would have helped you get a better outcome with the problem?

@1 Better information

@2 Someone to explain the legal aspects or to help with forms, letters or documents

@3 Someone to deal with or intervene with the other party

@4 A lawyer to deal with the problem using the legal system or courts

@5 R volunteers other answer (specify)

**status2\_7** [ask if felt help would improve outcome]

if you had received better information or help now would you still preferred to deal with this

problem on your own as much as possible?

1 yes 7 R volunteers probably [goto status2\_8]

5 No d don't know

r refused [goto status2\_9]

**status2\_8**

Why is that?

1 responsibility issues (take care of my own problems, etc.)

2 privacy issues (my business, don't want to give out personal info, etc.)

3 cost of getting assistance

4 low probability of getting good assistance

0 other or multiple response (specify)

**status2\_9** [ask if problem resolved/ongoing]

Looking back on this problem, how difficult did it make it for you to carry on with your normal life?

Would you say: extremely difficult, very difficult, somewhat difficult, not very difficult, or not at all difficult?

**status2\_10** [ask if resolved/ongoing]

And how important was / is it for you to resolve this problem? Extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?

**cost2\_1** [ask if resolved/ongoing]

Now we would like to ask about any costs you may have had to pay as a result of experiencing this problem. Did it cost you any money to deal with this problem?

1 Yes [goto cost2\_2]

5 No

d don't know

r refused [goto health\_intro]

### **cost2\_2**

What kinds of things did you have to pay for?

@1 Lawyer fees

@2 Fees for other advisors or mediators

@3 Court filing fees or other court fees

@4 Purchasing materials/photocopies

@5 Long distance/fax

@6 Bus/cab/other transportation costs

@7 Babysitter/house cleaner/other domestic costs

@8 Other (Specify)

### **cost2\_3**

Approximately how much in total did it cost to deal with this problem?

## **Health Problems**

### **health\_int**

Now some questions about how the problem/problems affected the rest of your life. These questions will help in the development of programs and services for Canadians dealing with legal problems like yours.

### **health1**

Thinking about the **first** problem did it cause or make other health, social or family problems in your life worse?

### **health2**

Did the problem affect your physical health?

### **health3** [if yes at health2]

Did these issues with your physical health require you to visit doctors or use the health care system more than before?

### **health1\_2**

Thinking about the **second** problem did it cause or make other health, social or family problems in your life worse?

### **health2\_2**

Did this problem affect your physical health?

### **health3\_2** [if yes at health2\_2]

Did these issues with your physical health require you to visit doctors or use the health care system more than before?

There is no question health4

**health5** [if two or more problems]

Of the two problems which one do you think contributed most to the physical health issues you just mentioned?

**health6**

Did the first problem affect your MENTAL health or cause extreme STRESS?

**health7**

Did you visit doctors or use counselling services more than before because of this problem?

**health6\_2**

Did the second problem affect your MENTAL health or cause extreme STRESS?

**health7\_2**

Did you visit doctors or use counselling services more than before because of this problem?

**health9**

Which problem was most responsible for the emotional health or stress issues you have been experiencing?

**health10**

Aside from any physical, emotional or mental health issues, did this problem cause or make other social, family or personal issues you had worse?

**health11**

What kinds of social, family or personal problems have you had?

- @1 Marital problems/problems with partner
- @2 Relationship problems between parent or grandparent and a child
- @3 Relationship problems between other family members
- @4 Child behavior problems
- @5 Problems with alcohol (self or someone else in family)
- @6 Problems with drugs (self or someone else in family)
- @7 Other (specify)

There is no question health12

**health13** [if two or more problems in health11]

And what would you say was the most serious among the family or personal problems you mentioned?

## Employment

**employ\_screen**

I would now like to ask about possible impacts that the problem may have had on you personally.

**employ1**

Did the problem you have cause or contribute to your losing employment?

**employ2**

Did you go on Employment Insurance?

**employ3**

How many weeks were you on EI?

**employ4**

How much money did you receive in EI payments each week?

**Loss of Housing**

**losshou1**

Did the problem cause or contribute to your losing your housing?

**losshou2**

Where did you live after that happened?

- 1 Friends or Relatives
- 3 Emergency housing such as a shelter
- s Other (specify)
- d don't know
- r refused

**losshou3**

How many weeks were you without a permanent home?

**losshou4**

Did you receive any form of housing subsidy while you were without a permanent home?

**losshou5**

How much subsidy did you receive each week?

**Receiving Social Assistance**

**social1**

Did the problem/problems result in your receiving social assistance other than EI or housing support?

**social2** [if yes at social1]

How many weeks did you receive social assistance?

**social3** [if yes at social1] xxx

How much did you receive every week?

**Insurance Claims**

**insclaim1**

Did the problem/problems result in your making a claim for insurance?

**insclaim2** [if yes at insclaim1]

Did you receive money from insurance to cover your loss?

**insclaim3** [if yes at insclaim2]

How much did you receive?

## Respondent Characteristics

### **demo\_int**

These last questions will help us make sure we have a good representation of all adults in Canada and help us analyze the results of the survey.

### **age**

In what year were you born?

### **birth\_co**

In what country were you born?

### **eth1**

To what ethnic or cultural group do you belong?

### **eth2** [if answer Canadian in previous question]

In addition to being Canadian to what ethnic or cultural group did you, or your ancestors belong on first coming to this continent?

### **eth3**

Interviewer: enter SECOND mentioned ethnic group here.

### **edu**

What is the highest level of education you have completed to date?

### **m\_status5**

At present are you married, living with a partner, widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never been married?

### **hh\_1**

COUNTING YOURSELF, how many people LIVE IN your household?

*Skip to employment if respondent lives alone*

### **hh\_2**

COUNTING YOURSELF, how many people are 18 and older?

*Skip to employment if all counted*

### **hh\_3**

How many children UNDER the age of 18 LIVE in your household?

### **employ**

What is your present employment status: are you self-employed, working for pay full-time, and working part-time, unemployed, a student, retired, or taking care of a family?

### **socass**

Have you or others in your household received social assistance, disability or pension benefits, housing supplements, or child or income support in the past three years?

**health\_1**

Do you have a physical condition or health problem that reduces the amount or the kind of activity you can do?

**health\_2** *[only if yes in health\_1]*

Does it affect the amount or the kind of activity you can do most of the time, often, sometimes, or almost never?

**health\_3** *["most" or "often" in health\_1]*

Was this physical condition diagnosed by a doctor or other health care professional?

**health\_4** *["most" or "often" in health\_1]*

Did you have this physical condition prior to [fill monthtxt] 2011?

**health\_5**

Do you have an emotional condition or mental health problem that reduces the amount or the kind of activity you can do?

**health\_6** *[if yes at health\_5]*

Does it affect the amount or the kind of activity you can do most of the time, often, sometimes, or almost never?

**health\_7** *["most" or "often" in health\_1]*

Was this emotional condition or mental health problem diagnosed by a doctor or other health care professional?

**health\_8** *["most" or "often" in health\_1]*

Did you have this condition prior to [fill monthtxt] 2011?

**income1**

Could you please tell me your total household income before taxes for the year ending 2013? Be sure to include income FROM ALL SOURCES TO THE NEAREST THOUSAND DOLLARS. What was your TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME?

**income2** *[if dk or refused in income\_1]*

We don't need the exact amount; does it fall into one of these broad categories?

Interviewer reads categories

**POSTAL**

Can you tell me your postal code please?

**fol\_1**

We hope to talk to some people about the topics covered in this interview a second time. Would you be willing to be contacted again to help the researchers by providing some more information?

**fol\_2**

So we know who to ask for if we call back, can you please give me your first name?

**fol\_4**

Would you prefer to be contacted by telephone or by e-mail or does it not matter?

**mail**

Can you please give me your email address?