

# Justice Sector Constellation Synopsis Update June 2021



## Background

The Justice Sector Constellation (the “**Constellation**”) seeks to intervene at the intersection of poverty and the legal system so that everyone facing a legal issue can access the justice sector resources and services they need. The Constellation has been working to this end since April 2013.

## Update

Since the last Synopsis Update, the Constellation has advanced work toward each of its outcomes and undertaken a strategic planning process. Some of that work is described below.

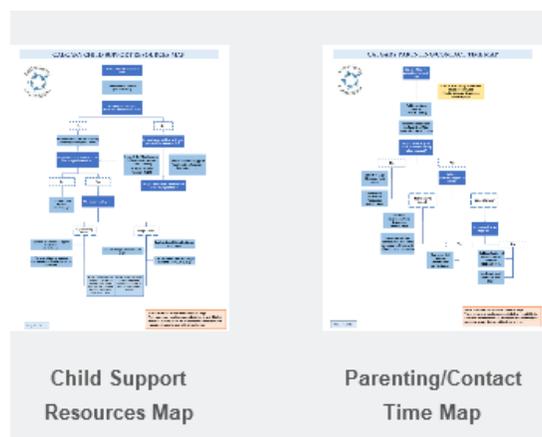
### Access to Justice Sector Services

Under the Form Literacy Project, the Constellation is seeking to make legal forms easier to find and understand, and to make support for filling out legal forms more accessible.

At the request of the Residential Tenancies Dispute Resolution Service (“**RTDRS**”), the Constellation provided input on barriers tenants have encountered in accessing the RTDRS and recommendations on how to adjust the language on RTDRS forms and webpages to make them easier to understand. The Constellation also encouraged the RTDRS to engage with people living in poverty to inform any changes made.

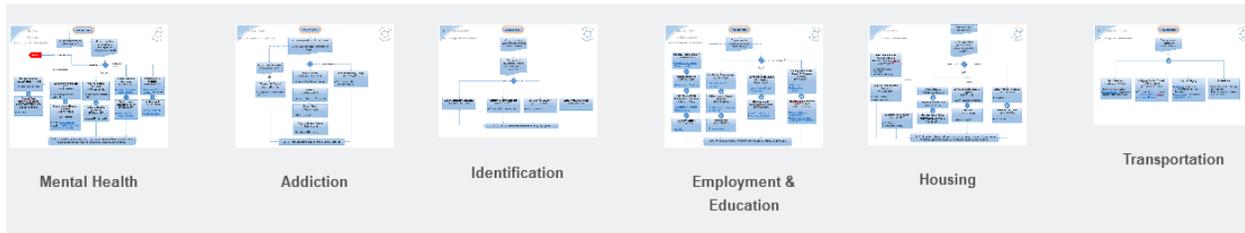
As a result of the Constellation’s input, the alberta.ca webpages with residential tenancy information were amended; an RTDRS information sheet was rewritten in plain language; and the online application process and other processes are being reviewed. The Constellation is gratified by the steps being taken by the RTDRS to implement the recommendations made.

Family law matters are also difficult to navigate, from both an emotional and legal perspective. University of Calgary Development Studies students worked with the Constellation to develop [Client Journey Maps](#) to assist with Child Support and Parenting/Contact Time matters. As can be seen below, the maps are visual representations of the process individuals can follow to find support and resources. The maps are available in pdf [portable document format] at the link above, and may be printed or shared.



## Coordination of Justice Sector Services

Individuals remanded in custody or serving time in custody must overcome many barriers to achieve reintegration into society after release. To help connect individuals with the appropriate agencies and resources to meet essential needs and foster successful community integration, [Client Journey Maps](#) were developed for specific areas of need: addiction, education and employment, housing, identification, mental health and transportation. Since their initial publication, these maps have been enhanced to include more services and more clearly outline available resources. The maps are available in pdf [portable document format] at the link above, and may be printed or shared.



## Sustainability

The Constellation has an audacious goal: *Legal issues do not contribute to poverty; poverty does not contribute to legal issues*. It believes that goal can be advanced by:

- improving access to and coordinating justice sector services;
- education regarding how to navigate the legal system and how to assist diverse populations with legal issues; and
- encouraging engagement regarding the need for support for those with legal issues and the intersection of poverty and the legal system.

How can progress toward such a goal and such outcomes be measured?

Thanks to funding from Innoveave, the Constellation benefitted from developmental evaluation coaching to assess the Constellation's contribution toward its outcomes. The evaluation results demonstrate that the Constellation is making early progress towards achieving its intended outcomes, although substantial work remains ahead. Findings show that most progress has been made in educating about the relationship between poverty and the legal system, followed by headway in improving service access and sector coordination.

The Constellation is considering the recommendations from the final report to inform its next steps.

## For More Information

For more information about the Constellation and its work, please visit the [Justice Sector Constellation website](#).