

Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2022

Overview

- The bill will reduce red-tape, increase access to the justice system, and allow legislature security to carry firearms.
- The *Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2022* will amend the *Legislative Assembly Act*, the *Provincial Court Act*, the *Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act*, the *Referendum Act*, the *Sale of Goods Act*, and the *Trustee Act*.

Legislative Assembly Act

- Changes to the *Legislative Assembly Act* would allow legislative assembly security personnel to be treated as peace officers under the *Criminal Code*.
- This would enable them to carry firearms so as to preserve and maintain public peace and safety within the legislative precinct including the legislature building.
- While the Alberta Sheriffs do provide security on the legislature grounds, and will continue to do so, security inside the building and on the legislature precinct – wherever legislature work is done – is provided by legislative assembly security.
- In response to a 2019 suicide at the Alberta legislature and the shooting on Parliament Hill in 2014, the sergeant-at-arms and Speaker have been requesting the authority for security personnel to carry firearms as a matter of public safety.
- Training legislative assembly security personnel means they would have the training and equipment necessary to secure the legislature building and grounds of the legislative precinct in the event of a threat or dangerous incident.
- This change would bring Alberta in line with many other jurisdictions, including Ontario, Manitoba and the Parliament of Canada.
- Legislature security will continue to be augmented by the members of the Sheriffs branch.

Provincial Court Act

- The proposed changes to the Provincial Court Act lay the groundwork to expand civil claims that can be filed through the provincial courts.
- Currently the limit for “small claims court” is \$50,000.
- Amending the *Provincial Court Act* sets the stage for a future increase to the small claims limit of the court.
- This change makes the justice system more accessible to Albertans.

- This would give more Albertans the option to resolve their civil legal disputes by filing a claim with the provincial court.
- The provincial court is easier for Albertans to navigate, which means more Albertans could represent themselves, saving legal costs.
- At the same time, this would free up time and resources in the Court of King’s Bench to focus on more complex matters.

Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act

- Proposed changes would allow the electronic transfer of family support documents between reciprocating Canadian jurisdictions.
- This will greatly reduce the time needed to collect, exchange and process information, and improve family support enforcement.
- Ultimately, it would make it easier for Albertans to collect child and spousal support payments.

Referendum Act

- Proposed changes would clarify the process for non-constitutional referendums.
- Specifically, it makes it clear that only constitutional questions require a resolution be made in the legislature.

Sale of Goods Act

- There are two changes to the *Sale of Goods Act*.
- The first change eliminates an unused and outdated record-keeping requirement.
- We are getting rid of the requirement that a buyer must keep a record of the kind of vehicle delivering the grain and its licence number to acquire good title to grain.
- The second change is a housekeeping change that will prevent confusion by bringing terminology in the *Sale of Goods Act* in line with the federal legislation.
- We will update terminology to align with the language in the federal *Canada Grain Act*, which refers to “grain dealer” as opposed to “track buyer”.

Trustee Act

- The proposed change will make it clear that a trust will not fail if there is temporarily no trustee.
- The proposed change would remove the transfer of trust property to the court allowing the trust property to move directly to the new trustee once appointed.