



December 12, 2025

The Hon. Shafqat Ali, P.C., M.P.
President of the Treasury Board
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Via email (shafqat.ali@parl.gc.ca)

Dear Minister Ali:

The Association of Justice Counsel (AJC) is the union representing Canada's legal team. Our more than 3,500 members are Federal Crown Counsel and articling students employed by the Government of Canada in the Department of Justice, the Public Prosecution Service of Canada, and in numerous federal agencies, tribunals, and courts across Canada.

As noted in our recent correspondence seeking clarity and raising serious concerns from our members regarding the federal budget, we are writing again to address related and ongoing concerns arising from recent comments made by Prime Minister Carney and rumors and proposals circulating in the media to increase public servants' in-office presence. Such changes carry significant equity and workforce implications.

On behalf of our members, we write to formally request confirmation as to whether a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) has been conducted in relation to the potential expansion of in-office presence and a copy of such analysis.

This issue is of profound importance to our members and decisions of this magnitude shape not only how work is performed, but who is able to remain and thrive within the public service. For many employees, particularly those from equity-seeking groups, the design of workplace policies is not abstract. It directly affects accessibility, inclusion and livelihoods.

The Association of Justice Counsel recognizes that while an expanded in-office mandate will affect all members, its impacts will not be experienced equally. Persons with disabilities, individuals managing chronic illness or mental health conditions, neurodivergent employees, members with caregiving responsibilities, women, and racialized employees are likely to face disproportionate barriers under rigid in-office requirements. These are foreseeable impacts, and they underscore why GBA Plus exists as a

mandatory analytical tool to design sound policies, not a documentation exercise or post-hoc consideration.

There are additional professional considerations for AJC members. Lawyers are bound by confidentiality and solicitor-client privilege, yet a recent survey and extensive member feedback shows many federal lawyers lack private spaces necessary to preserve confidentiality. This creates legal, strategic, ethical and reputational risks for the Government of Canada – including the potential for breaches, professional impacts on AJC members, and damages to public trust in justice. What is more, AJC members continue to report health and safety concerns in employer workspaces, including rodent and insect infestations, unmet accommodation needs, and working in isolated spaces. Requiring federal lawyers to increase their in-office presence under such circumstances is wrong.

Accordingly, the AJC formally requests:

1. Written confirmation as to whether a GBA Plus analysis has been completed in relation to increasing federal public servants' in-office presence;
2. If such an analysis has been completed, a copy of the analysis;
3. If no analysis has been completed, a clear commitment that a comprehensive GBA Plus analysis will be conducted prior to any decision being finalized or implemented, and that the results will be shared with the union during meaningful consultation and dialogue with bargaining agents.

Our 3,500 members are paying close attention to how this issue is handled. Hearing about potential changes to in-office presence through leaks, indirect responses to direct questions, or comments made during municipal political events is not acceptable. AJC members are already grappling with the realities of the current in-office presence, as well as the stress and uncertainty created by significant cuts that threaten jobs and the delivery of services Canadians rely on.

We request a written response at your earliest opportunity confirming the status of the GBA Plus analysis, the analysis itself, and the steps being taken to ensure that any decisions to increase the in-office presence of public servants is informed by a complete and meaningful equity assessment and meaningful consultation with federal public service unions.

Yours sincerely,

Nancy LeClair
Vice-President, Administration
Chair – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (EDIAC)