



Name of Policy: Community-Based Social Justice

Revised Policy Adoption Date: *SLSC Annual General Meeting, Belleville, ON, June 2, 2018.*

Historical Policy Adoption Date: *SLSC Annual General Meeting, Brampton, ON, May 31, 1997.*

Mission and Mandate: St. Leonard's Society of Canada is a membership-based, charitable organization dedicated to community safety. The mission of SLSC is to promote a humane and informed justice policy and responsible leadership to foster safe communities. It:

- a. Endorses evidence-based approaches to criminal and social justice;
- b. Conducts research and develops policy;
- c. Supports its member affiliates; and
- d. Advances collaborative relationships and communication among individuals and organizations dedicated to social justice.

Purpose of SLSC Policies: Policies of SLSC are developed in collaboration with affiliate agencies, SLSC's Board of Directors and members, and are ratified at the Annual General Meeting with the express purposes of:

- Identifying criminal justice and related issues relevant to its membership;
- Reflecting SLSC organizational values and social justice goals;
- Articulating SLSC approaches, practices and standards to achieve these goals; and
- Ensuring the good governance of SLSC on matters of legal, administrative and organizational relevance.

Background:

The original 1998 policy was prompted by the desire of SLSC's membership to establish a position on social justice with respect to corrections. The intent of such a policy was to help inform the means by which SLSC could be supported to achieve its mission. In order to strive for the highest standards of equity and fairness for clients of SLSC's affiliates and the Canadian public, SLSC has promoted crime prevention, responsible community living, and safer communities.

As part of the commitments undertaken by SLSC's Policy Review sub-committee (2017-18) to review and update existing policies, a review of the current context on community-based social justice issues was completed.

Issues/Scope:

Social justice issues in Canada cover a broad range of themes that are often inextricably linked. Involvement with the criminal justice system is arguably one of the most stigmatizing factors that, when overlapped with one of these themes (e.g. mental health problems and illness, problematic substance use, homelessness, aging, etc.) produces some of the most marginalized sub-populations in the country. Addressing facets of social justice which pertain to corrections recognizes the impact that it can have on clients of SLSC's affiliates and the community, and creates the context for understanding how they can fit into broader social justice policies in Canada.

The interconnected nature of broader social issues with the criminal justice system has become increasingly well understood. In turn, Canada's criminal justice system must adapt its practices to be responsive to matters of social justice for relevant populations. Given SLSC's mission, vision, and values, it is imperative that active participation to support reform in areas of social justice which pertain to its members and the clients they serve.

Resolutions:

Be it resolved that St. Leonard's Society of Canada will:

- Strive to raise awareness about how those who are/have been involved with the criminal justice system can be included in broader discussions about social justice.
- Promote inclusion of sentenced persons into legislation, policy, and practice for key social justice matters which affect Canadians through education, consultation, and collaboration with stakeholders.
- Conduct activities which pertain to social justice in an atmosphere of mutual respect for all who are impacted by the marginalizing effects of injustice.

Additional Information

SLSC Reports/Publications:

SLSC has prepared the following background papers, reports, and publications, as well as engaged in various press releases, letters to relevant government stakeholders, collaborative projects and initiatives, and engagement sessions in order to contribute to national dialogue about community-based social justice. For further information, please contact SLSC.

- Desai, A. (2010). [Community Connections: The Key to Community Corrections for Individuals with Mental Health Disorders, 2010](#). Ottawa, ON: St. Leonard's Society of Canada.
- Desai, A. (2012). [Homes for the Hard to House: A Model for Effective Second Stage Housing](#). Ottawa, ON: St. Leonard's Society of Canada.
- Desai, A. (2012). [Research Report on Developing The 'Hard to House' \(H2H\) Model](#). Ottawa, ON: St. Leonard's Society of Canada.
- Desai, A. (2013). [Towards an Integrated Network: Working Together to Avoid Criminalization of People with Mental Health Problems, Second Edition](#). Ottawa, ON: St. Leonard's Society of Canada.
- Desai, A. (2014). [Testing the 'Hard to House' \(H2H\) Model](#). Ottawa, ON: St. Leonard's Society of Canada.
- Desai, A. (2015). [Social Enterprise and Labour Market Integration for Individuals Exiting the Criminal Justice System: A Synthesis of Pilot Project Evaluations](#). Ottawa, ON: St. Leonard's Society of Canada.
- St. Leonard's Society of Canada. (2014). [Literature Summary: Promising Practices for Train the Trainer Peer Mentoring Workshop](#). Ottawa, ON: St. Leonard's Society of Canada.
- Tremblay, J. (2008). [Towards an Integrated Network: Working Together to Avoid Criminalization of People with Mental Health Problems](#). Ottawa, ON: St. Leonard's Society of Canada.

External Reports/Publications:

- Gagnon, M. (2016). *Aging Well: An Elderly-Focused Criminological Intervention Model*. Montreal, QC: Maison Cross Roads Corp.
- The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology. (2006). *Out of the Shadows at Last: Transforming Mental Health, Mental Illness and Addiction Services in Canada*. Retrieved from:
https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/out_of_the_shadows_at_last_-_full_0_0.pdf