



Bureau du président du conseil de l'ÉUM

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

SSMU Office of the Speaker

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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MOTION REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEGAL ESSENTIAL PLAN FEE

Submitted for: 2023-02-09

Submitted to:	SSMU Legislative Council	Document no.:	LEG-PUB-MOT-2023-02-09-015
Moved by:	Marco Pizarro <i>Vice-President Finance</i>	Current Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> FOR APPROVAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> POSTPONED <input type="checkbox"/> COMMITTED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPROVED
Seconded by:	Benson Wan <i>Medicine Representative</i>		

Issue

During Summer 2022, the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) signed a contract with Student Care (ASEQ), the SSMU health insurance brokers, for the future implementation of the Legal Protection Plan. The contract stipulated for the Plan to undergo a trial period during the academic year 2022-2023, and the SSMU would put the fee to referendum for a period of two (2) years. .

The plan consists of unlimited access to legal representation for housing, employment, academic, and human rights disputes, small claims support, and civil mediation where legal representation services would apply until the case is resolved, even after a student finishes their studies.

Background and Rationale

The possibility of a trial of a legal protection plan was first discussed in April 2022. These discussions were not continued over the summer term as this committee does not meet over this term.

The Executive Committee decided to implement this plan, considering that other associations such as the PGSS, CSU and MCSS have already implemented this.

Student Care offered to pay for one semester, which influenced the Executive Committee's decision to pursue this trial period. Over the course of this academic year (2022-2023), the Health and Dental Review Committee



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met three (3) times. This plan and its implementation was discussed in detail at these meetings, which led to the presentation of this motion..

Alignment with Mission

Affordable Student Housing through the better capacity of student to protect their rights, equity, and student's protection.

Consultations Completed

Consultations were completed with the Health and Dental Plan Committee, as well as with the Membership Executive of PGSS and the Mental Health Coordinator of PGSS. SACOMSS, AVCs and Sal Cuthbertson, the Sustainability Commissioner, were also consulted.

Risk Factors and Resource Implications

If this motion would not pass, we would be in violation of our contract with Student Care which had been signed by the Executive Committee.

Sustainability Considerations

As there will be a fee for the plan, there is no issue of financial burden for the SSMU.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If the motion passes, the question will be brought to students at referendum.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Whereas, the SSMU and Studentcare have identified a need for legal representation for students facing legal challenges in their day-to-day lives, as currently available legal resources may be expensive, inaccessible, or inadequate;

Whereas, the SSMU has been offering its membership access to a Legal Essentials service since September 2022 and that it is being actively used by the students;

Whereas, the Legal Essentials would offer unlimited access to legal representation for housing, employment, academic, and human rights disputes, small claims support, and civil mediation where legal



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representation services would apply until the case is resolved, even after a student finishes their studies;

Whereas, the Legal Essentials further offers students unlimited access to Legal Consultations for questions on any area of the law, including but not limited to Immigration Law queries for international students amongst others;

Whereas, the proposed Legal Essentials service would provide all SSMU members with access to the service for an entire year (September to August) at no extra cost beyond the proposed referendum of \$30.00;

Whereas, members who begin their studies in January will be charged a pro-rated fee in the Winter semester of \$20.00 to access the Legal Essentials service for the months of January to August;

Whereas, this fee is fully opt-outable and the opt-out procedure will be overseen through Studentcare (in a process similar to the SSMU Health and Dental Insurance change-of-coverage period);

Be it resolved: that the Legislative Council approve the following question for the Winter 2023 Referenda:

“Do you agree to establish an opt-outable SSMU Legal Essentials service set at \$30.00 per student to be charged in the Fall semester for full year access (September to August); students who begin in the Winter semester will be charged a prorated fee of \$20.00 to access the program from January to August? The fee will be payable by all SSMU members, for 2 years starting Fall 2023 until Winter 2025 (inclusive) to access the Legal Essentials service, at which time it will be brought back to the membership for renewal.”

Be it further resolved that a budget will be provided on referendum ballot outlining the allocation of this fee for financial transparency

Results of the Vote

In favour	(UNANIMOUS)
Opposed	()
Abstain	()