



BULLETIN

News and resources for BC strata owners, councils, and industry professionals



Special Edition:
Guide to the CRT

August 2026

Vancouver Island Strata Owners Association

VISOA Bulletin

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The Bulletin is a digital magazine published by the Vancouver Island Strata Owners Association (VISOA) four times per year.

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VISOA is an independent, non-profit, member-funded society. Formed in 1973, it is the longest-running organization of its kind in Canada. VISOA provides education, support, and advocacy for British Columbia strata owners and strata corporations. As part of its mandate, VISOA meets with government and industry associations, and sits on advisory panels to advocate for BC strata owners and strata corporations.

Membership is open to any resident of BC, strata corporations (such as condominiums, townhouses, bare land, and commercial stratas) and businesses that provide goods and services to stratas. Visit our website or contact us for more information about membership.

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On the cover: Higson Court is a unique, 10-unit strata located a short stroll from the water in beautiful Qualicum Beach. Our lush courtyard blooms with a variety of colourful plants and shrubs most months of the year, garnering accolades from all who visit. - Lenore Leitch

Disclaimer: The material in this publication is intended for informational purposes and cannot replace consultation with qualified professionals. Legal advice or other expert assistance should be sought as appropriate.

■ Editor's Message

Welcome to a special edition of VISOA's Bulletin. This issue marks the 10th anniversary of the Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) which opened its virtual doors on July 13, 2016.

In this issue, we look at the first 10 years of the CRT to evaluate its mandate, performance, and public satisfaction. We've also compiled some tips to help you prepare for and navigate the CRT process.

This issue wouldn't have been possible without the many people who provided advice and comments based on their knowledge and experience.

Thank you to our contributors including Oscar Miklos and Jennifer Lebbert of Refresh Law; Jason Rohrick, Barrister and Solicitor; Alyona Kokanova, Cleveland Doan LLP; Carol Dobell, Oakwood Property Management; CRT participants; and VISOA's Strata Support Team members.

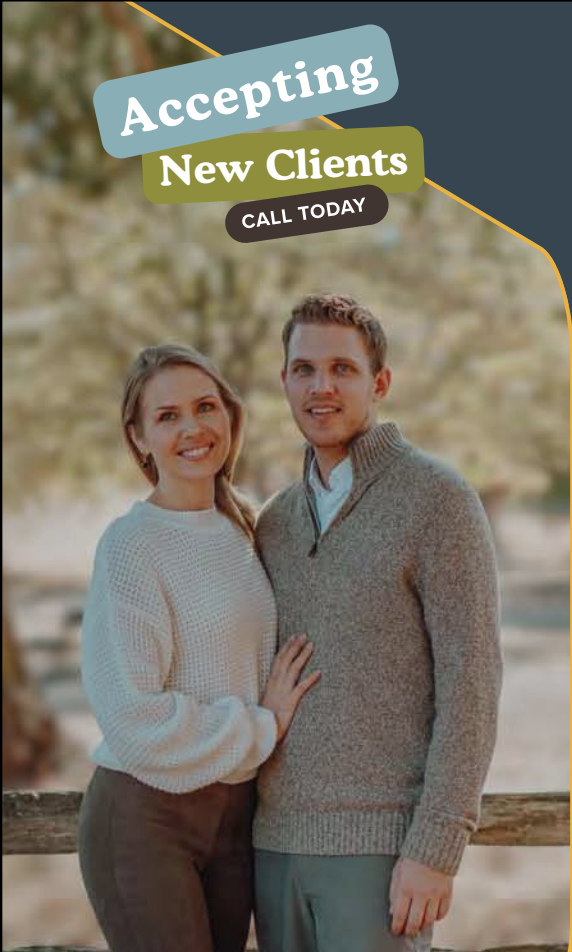
We hope you'll find the information and comments in this issue helpful.

Some of you have asked for reforms to the CRT and the *Civil Resolution Tribunal Act*. Please see the article "Advocating for Changes to the CRT." We've included contact information if you'd like to write to your MLA, the Minister of Housing, and the Premier.

As always, we welcome your suggestions for articles. If you'd like to write an article, contact us at editor@visoa.bc.ca for submission guidelines.

Don't forget to submit a photo of your strata to enter the 2026 photo contest. See details on page 33. 

VISOA Bulletin and Services committee members are Susan Ferster, Ryan Grant, Angus Mumby, Wendy Wall, volunteer Janice Foley, and Advertising Coordinator Cindy Young.



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■ The First 10 Years of The Civil Resolution Tribunal

The [Civil Resolution Tribunal](#) (CRT) began accepting applications for dispute resolution on July 13, 2016. At that time it had one area of jurisdiction: strata disputes. In the years leading up to the launch, VISOA hosted speakers including the CRT chair and executive director, and featured articles in our Bulletin to inform strata councils and owners of its progress. There was great anticipation for this new online service that offered a way to resolve disputes without needing a lawyer or attending court. We can now look back at the first 10 years of the CRT.

As our contributors noted councils, strata owners and tenants now have a cost-effective way to get their strata-related issue heard. This is lightyears ahead of the days when all strata claims had to be filed at the BC Supreme Court. While it still requires improvement, the reality is that many strata claims would go unresolved without the CRT.

Statistics illustrate how few claims were pursued



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in court before the CRT existed. Most people find BC Supreme Court processes too complex to navigate on their own. The cost alone was a barrier. In 2019, a [BC study](#) found the costs to have a lawyer prepare for and attend court averaged \$7,750 per day. This doesn't include other costs or the cost of commencing the action. In comparison, many people find they can navigate the CRT process on their own at a cost of \$125 to \$225 from start to finish.

The CRT process is intended to be affordable and easier than court so that a lawyer isn't required. A strata corporation or owner can request permission from the CRT to be represented by a lawyer but quite often the request is denied. However, anyone can have a helper. Many owners and stratas find it helpful to get some help from a lawyer. This could be advice at the beginning of the process to ensure that the matter is within the CRT's jurisdiction. It could be advice about the likelihood of success and what could be offered and settled by agreement. If the claim proceeds to the CRT decision stage, a lawyer might give advice about what evidence is needed to prove or disprove a claim, relevant court cases to mention, or draft the written arguments. By being able to choose when and if you want help from a lawyer at any particular stage, you may find that it remains a more affordable process than it used to be when all strata claims had to be filed in the BC Supreme Court.

We don't have access to the number of strata claims filed in the BC Supreme Court but we can compare the number of published decisions by 10-year periods as these are available on the Canadian Legal Information Institute website canlii.org.

- Between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2016, **155** BC Supreme Court decisions were published for claims involving strata corporations.
- Between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2026, the CRT published **2,715** decisions for claims in its strata property jurisdiction.
- We know from CRT statistics that another **3,296** CRT claims were withdrawn or resolved by consent during the same period.

continued on page 5

The First 10 Years of the Civil Resolution Tribunal

This extensive body of CRT decisions has shed light on the depth of common issues plaguing strata corporations such as disclosure of records and documents, bylaw enforcement procedures, and repair and maintenance responsibilities.

While CRT decisions don't set precedents like court decisions do, they can provide guidance for outcomes in similar situations. Whether due to the educational benefits of these decisions or fear of legal action, this has shaken some stratas and managers into stricter compliance with the *Strata Property Act* (SPA).

The volume of decisions has also helped illustrate how the more subjective, fact-based legal tests might be applied in various different and unique circumstances. For example, there are now hundreds of CRT decisions that apply the test to determine whether an alteration amounts to a "significant change" to common property under SPA s. 71.

Access to justice

Since so few cases were filed in the BC Supreme Court

prior to 2016, many problems in strata communities remained unresolved for years with no end in sight.

In 1998, the Ontario Court of Appeal said, "The parties and the community require that there be a definite and discernible end to legal disputes...Without a discernible end point, the parties cannot get on with the rest of their lives secure in the knowledge that the issue has finally been determined, but must suffer the considerable economic and psychological burden of indeterminate proceedings in which their respective rights and obligations are revisited and reviewed as circumstances change."

Even if some people don't agree with the decision of a court or tribunal, the decision can resolve a deadlock and bring finality to an issue so everyone can move on. A decision can help everyone involved understand bylaws and processes and give council members the confidence to carry out their duties in the future. For owners frustrated by years of their strata operating in non-compliance, there can be a sense of justice.

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The First 10 Years of the Civil Resolution Tribunal

While finality is important, the legal system isn't perfect. We often hear complaints that CRT decisions aren't consistent. However, CRT tribunal members (decision-makers) frequently have to decide cases where the parties don't provide relevant evidence or any evidence at all. Material facts and relevant case law may not have been brought to the tribunal member's attention. As a result, their decision might have turned out differently if the strata owner and council had received some legal advice.

As BC Justice Mackenzie wrote in 2006, "It goes to the heart of a system of civil justice that strives for the truth of the matter but recognizes that perfection is an unattainable goal and finality is a practical necessity."

The CRT's mandate

Under section 2 of the *Civil Resolution Tribunal Act*, the CRT's mandate is to provide dispute resolution services in a manner that is accessible, speedy, economical, informal, flexible, fair, and uses electronic

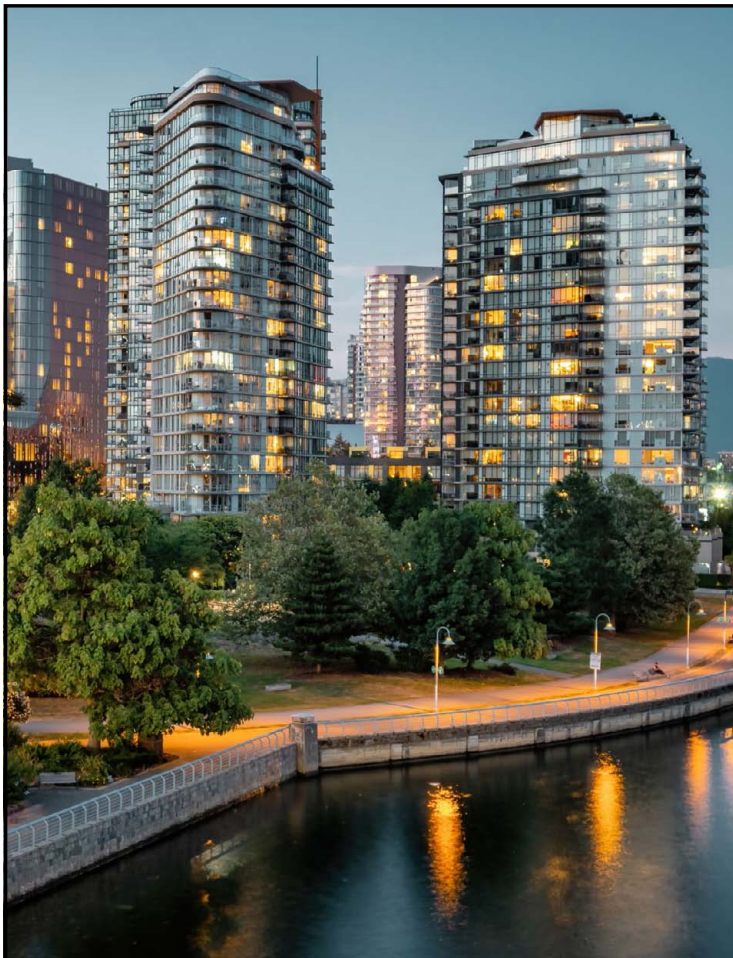
communication tools to facilitate resolution of disputes.

The CRT's data about dispute volumes and outcomes is publicly available through annual reports and monthly blog posts. CRT statistics from July 13, 2016 to June 30, 2026 show:

- **8,873** applications for resolution of strata claims were received
- **7,179** were closed
- **1,694** are in progress

One of the interesting things is the low percentage of disputes that require a final decision. The CRT process includes opportunities to resolve the dispute at any stage. Most are resolved earlier in the process, often with the help of a CRT case manager during the facilitation stage. A strata council might realize they didn't follow a process in the SPA correctly and agree to remove fines or call a special general meeting to have something approved properly.

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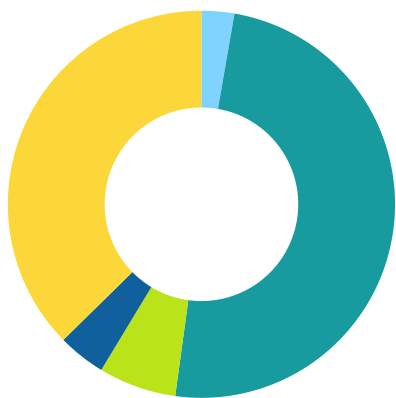
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The First 10 Years of the Civil Resolution Tribunal

Owners might better understand their responsibility under a bylaw. As a result, many claims are withdrawn, settled, or the participants agree on a consent resolution order or consent dismissal order.

During the April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026 fiscal year, 49% of closed disputes were resolved by consent or withdrawn.



Closed Disputes: Outcomes 2025-2026

- 3% Refused to accept
- 49% Resolved by consent/withdrawn
- 7% Default
- 4% Refused to resolve
- 37% Final decision

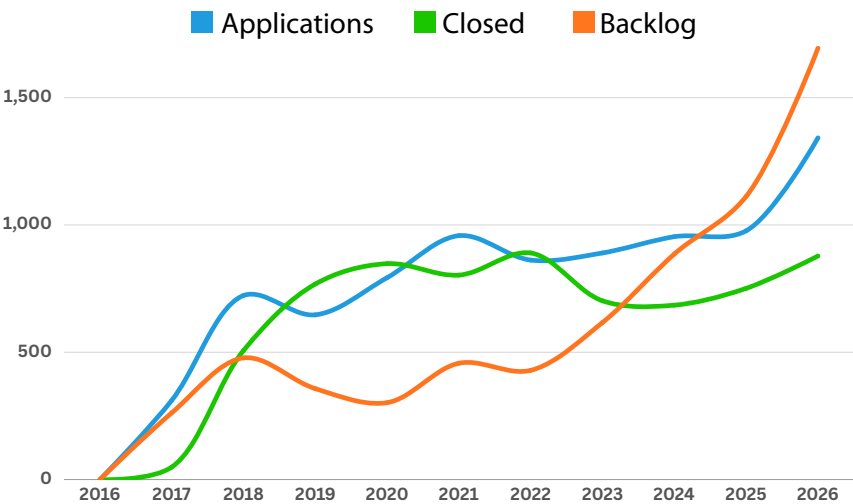
A 2026 performance review

The CRT’s jurisdiction has expanded over the years to include small claims up to \$5,000, motor vehicle accident claims, claims involving societies and housing cooperative associations, and claims about sharing intimate images without consent.

Based on the CRT’s annual reports and blog posts, the budget allocated to the CRT from the BC Government has not kept pace with the sheer volume of disputes. As a result, there are now long wait times between each stage of the CRT process: to process an application and issue a Dispute Notice, to be assigned a case manager for the facilitation stage, to begin the decision preparation stage of uploading evidence and submitting arguments, and finally for the dispute to be assigned to a tribunal member for a final decision.

In the 2017-2018 fiscal year, the CRT received 723 applications for strata disputes. Until 2022, it was closing about 800 strata disputes per year, keeping pace with roughly the same number of new applications filed each year. As of March 31, 2022, there were 429 strata disputes in progress. Over the years this backlog has grown to 1,694 strata disputes as of June 30, 2026.

Volume of CRT Disputes 2016–2026



Long wait times

Timeliness has become a growing issue. For the 37% of disputes that require a final decision by a tribunal member, the CRT process is now taking 2 or more years from start to finish. There are several contributing factors:

- Increased volumes:** In the 2025-2026 fiscal year the CRT received 1,342 new applications for strata disputes.
- Staff shortages:** In 2022-2023 fiscal year, the number of strata disputes being closed took a sharp dip presumably due to staff shortages.
- Limited budget:** The CRT has not been allocated the financial resources to keep pace with the volume of disputes, including strata disputes.

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The First 10 Years of the CRT

CRT participants have told us that “justice delayed is justice denied.” By the time a tribunal member makes a decision, subsequent annual general meetings have been held, budgets passed, council members elected, and major projects completed.

Their CRT claim is essentially moot. It’s often dismissed or it’s simply too late for the tribunal member to make a meaningful order. Their frustration is understandable. A delayed remedy is the same as no remedy at all. Timeliness is essential for the CRT to be a useful dispute resolution mechanism.

The “hurry and wait” nature of the process is also frustrating for participants. They wait months to advance to the next stage, only to be given tight deadlines of, for example, 7 days or 2 weeks to complete the next step.

Another frequent complaint is that the CRT can’t enforce its own decisions. Like other tribunals in BC such as the Human Rights Tribunal, Employment Standards Tribunal, and the Workers Compensation Appeal Tribunal, CRT orders are enforced by the court.

See “Advocating for Changes to the CRT” on page 9. Our contributors make suggestions for changes to legislation and how CRT processes could be improved. You’ll also find information to contact your MLA, the Premier, and the Minister of Housing. [V](#)

Thank you to Oscar Miklos, Jennifer Lebbert, Jason Rohrick, Alyona Kokanova, Carol Dobell, and VISOA’s Strata Support Team members.

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■ Advocating for Changes to the CRT

We asked our contributors for their suggestions to improve the Civil Resolution Tribunal's dispute resolution process and what legislative changes could benefit parties in CRT claims or benefit the CRT's ability to resolve claims. They had plenty of suggestions!

Timeliness

The most frequent suggestion, by far, is about timeliness. Currently it appears that it is taking 2 years or more for strata claims to proceed to a final decision by a tribunal member.

Evidence exchange

Currently evidence and written arguments are submitted at the same time. Allowing participants to exchange evidence sooner would give owners and councils the opportunity to assess their likelihood of success much earlier in the process which may lead to faster resolution. It would also allow time to identify

gaps in the evidence, request missing evidence, and obtain expert evidence if needed.

Technology improvements

Dispute participants log in to their CRT Account to upload evidence and submit their arguments. This portal can be complicated to navigate for first-time participants and would benefit from a redesign to make it easier to find the evidence and arguments submitted by the other parties.

The evidence upload process is also time consuming. Loading evidence in batches tends to crash the system so it's best to upload one piece of evidence at a time.

The system currently doesn't allow the user to save drafted arguments. It routinely logs users out in the middle of typing their arguments and they have to log in and start over again.

Those familiar with the process have learned to draft arguments in a document first and paste them into the system to avoid losing hours of work.

Changes to legislation

We asked our contributors what changes to the *Strata Property Act* (SPA) or *Civil Resolution Tribunal Act* could benefit parties in CRT claims or benefit the CRT's ability to resolve claims.

1. Strata corporation records

The current requirements of SPA s. 35 (records the strata must keep) and Regulation 4.1 (how long they must be kept) often lead to situations where a strata corporation doesn't have, or isn't required to disclose, certain records that would otherwise be highly relevant to a dispute.

It would be helpful if strata corporations were required to keep written correspondence for longer than 2 years and be required to keep additional records such as invoices, copies of proxy appointment forms, and sign-in sheets for general meetings.

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Advocating for Changes to the CRT

2. Special levies

The CRT often orders the strata corporation to conduct repairs of common property or components the strata is responsible for under the bylaws. However, it doesn't have the jurisdiction to make an order about how to pay for the project. This leaves the strata in an untenable position if owners won't approve the funding. It would be helpful if the CRT had jurisdiction to impose a special levy under SPA s. 108 or order the strata to fund the project from the contingency reserve fund (if adequate funds exist).

3. Council member's standard of care

Strata owners frequently want to make CRT claims against one or more council members, claiming a breach of SPA s. 31. This section requires a council member to act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of the strata corporation and to exercise the care, diligence and skill of a reasonably prudent person in comparable circumstances.

For several reasons, the CRT can't decide these claims.



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It would likely require amendments to the *Civil Resolution Tribunal Act* to change the CRT's jurisdiction as well as changes to SPA s. 31-33 to set out clear remedies for a breach of the standard of care, separate from the remedies for violations of SPA s. 32 (Disclosure of conflict of interest). Whether the CRT or the BC Supreme Court should have jurisdiction to order remedies should also be considered.

Education

Some contributors commented that organizations such as VISOA play a big role in educating strata owners and council members on strata governance and procedures. They recommended that the government should focus on expanding the capacity of such organizations, to cut down on the number of disputes before the CRT.

Who to contact

While the CRT has given strata owners and their corporations an affordable and accessible system for resolving strata disputes, many of you have told us you want reforms to the CRT, including a faster process.

More funding would go a long way to helping the CRT hire more staff and improve its processes and online systems.

Here are some contacts if you wish to express your concerns and suggestions:

Find your MLA at www.leg.bc.ca/members

The Honourable David Eby, M.L.A., Premier of British Columbia:

"Dear Premier" premier@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable Christine Boyle, M.L.A., Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs:

"Dear Minister" HMA.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Teri Collins, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs:

"Dear Deputy Minister" HOUS.DMO@gov.bc.ca

The Housing Policy Branch: housing.policy@gov.bc.ca

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How to Avoid Common CRT Disputes

Most people don't want to take legal action. They just want a problem or situation resolved. When an issue persists, they often turn to the Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) as a last resort.

Many CRT claims can be avoided. Follow these tips to prevent some of the most common disputes.

Comply with requests for records

About 15% of CRT decisions published involve requests for strata documents and records under *Strata Property Act* (SPA) s. 35 and 36 such as financial records, correspondence, and a list of owners and tenants. Strata councils and managers can avoid many CRT claims simply by providing the records and doing so by the deadline. If an owner asks for records the strata isn't required to provide (such as invoices), council can provide them if it wishes to, and that may resolve the owner's concern.

Before making a claim about obtaining records, be sure the records you are requesting are records the strata is legally required to provide. Your claim will likely fail if you request other records, records that are beyond the timeframe the strata must retain the records, or your request is vague, overly broad, or excessive.

See [What records must the strata keep](#) to learn about requests for records. Read some [CRT decisions about access to records](#).

Enforce bylaws correctly

Nearly 25% of CRT decisions published involve fines and enforcement of bylaws and rules. In about 1/3 of those cases, the tribunal member finds the fines invalid because the council didn't follow the steps in SPA s. 135 correctly before charging the fines.

continued on page 13



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Under SPA s. 135(1), before imposing fines the strata corporation must have received a complaint, given the owner or tenant particulars of the complaint in writing, and a reasonable opportunity to answer the complaint, including a hearing if one is requested. If the complaint is about a tenant, the strata must give a copy to the landlord and the owner.

Under section 135(2), the strata corporation must, as soon as feasible, give the owner or tenant written notice of its decision to impose fines. These requirements are strict with no leeway.

Before pursuing a CRT claim, it's a good idea to check correspondence and council meeting minutes to ensure each step was performed perfectly. If a step was missed there may be an opportunity to fix it before making a claim. Councils may want to seek legal advice.

See [How bylaws and rules are enforced](#) in our Resource Centre and read some [CRT decisions about bylaw enforcement](#).

Only spend money as authorized

Numerous CRT claims involve strata expenditures. There are often disagreements about whether the strata council had authority to spend money, whether the money was spent from the correct fund, and whether the resolutions were passed correctly by owners at an annual or special general meeting.

Many of these legal conflicts can easily be avoided. To learn how spending is authorized for expenditures from the operating fund, contingency reserve fund, and special levies, see [Spending Money](#).

Be active owners

If you read CRT decisions, you'll notice patterns of human behaviour. There is often a great deal of discord and miscommunication between strata owners and councils. Owners often characterize their councils as secretive. Some councils or council members assume more authority and decision-making power than they actually have under the SPA and bylaws. Owners often allow this to continue,



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How to Avoid Common CRT Disputes

abdication of the overreach rather than being active owners holding their strata councils to account, or committing their own time to volunteer as a council member. The opposite is true as well. Some owners act as if their home is their castle and the bylaws and rules don't apply to them. Some councils let things slide and don't enforce the bylaws.

Many CRT claims can be avoided by practicing good governance and communicating openly and transparently. As owners and council members, take the time to understand your respective roles, responsibilities, powers and duties. Know where to find information and access it whenever a question or issue arises. Visit VISOA's [Resource Centre!](#)

Get legal advice

Too often, council members or owners say they don't get legal advice because it's too expensive. However, getting advice early before a situation grows into a larger issue can save everyone money, time, and stress. Legal advice can help a strata council correct its processes and avoid legal action. Similarly, owners can benefit from legal advice to understand their issue, how the law applies, and the likelihood of success if they make a claim.

Maintain a good reputation

A strata can gain a bad reputation when it's been involved in legal cases that show it made errors conducting AGMs, spending money, enforcing bylaws, and more. Anyone can search court and tribunal decisions on CanLii.org to see if a strata corporation has a history of legal disputes.

Nearly all prospective purchasers ask for a Form B – Information Certificate. When completing this form, the strata must disclose any court proceeding, arbitration, or tribunal proceeding in which the strata corporation is a party. It must also disclose any judgments or orders made against the strata corporation, no matter how many years ago those orders were issued. Past orders made against the strata or involvement in current legal proceedings could affect the sale of strata lots.

It may be in the best interests of the owners and the strata to make every effort possible to resolve the issue without resorting to legal action. 



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■ Top 10 Tips for Success in Your CRT Dispute

Over the last 10 years, VISOA's members, Board of Directors, and Strata Support Team have read over 2,700 Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) decisions for strata claims. Many of you have participated in claims. Much of what we've learned is what NOT to do.

Our contributors narrowed down some of the most common mistakes that owners and councils make that lead to being unsuccessful in their claim or defending a claim.

Here are 10 tips to help you avoid common mistakes.

1. Perfect your application

Applicants: your entire case could be doomed from day one if your application isn't well written or you ask for the wrong remedies (what you want the CRT to order the strata or the person to do.)

See the article "Pro Tips for Filing Your CRT Claim" on page 27.

2. Learn about the CRT process

There are currently long wait times during the CRT process. After you submit your application, use that time to learn about the CRT process and to gather and organize your evidence.

- Read the [CRT's FAQs](#) about each stage in the process on the CRT's website.
- Read the [CRT Standard Rules](#) for additional details.
- Watch [CRT videos on YouTube](#).
- Read [past CRT decisions](#) about situations that are similar to your dispute.

3. Follow the CRT's directions

Read emails carefully, follow all directions, and answer any questions the CRT asks of you. Don't ignore emails that say "you may" do something. It could be an important step you "should" do. Learn more about

continued on page 16

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the CRT process before ignoring a “you may” email.

Add the CRT’s email addresses to your contacts to avoid emails going to your junk or spam folder. Check your email inbox often and respond or complete the task by the due date. For example, in the decision preparation stage, you usually have just 14 days to submit your evidence and arguments.

Beware. Make sure you understand what you are required to do. Missing a step could result in a non-compliance or default decision against you. You’ll have missed your chance to argue your side.

Be patient, and as polite, calm, and professional as possible throughout the entire process.

4. Make a counterclaim

Respondents: After submitting a response to a claim, you may make a counterclaim. Many respondent strata corporations forget to do this. For example, an owner might make a claim asking the CRT to order the strata to remove fines. If their claim fails, the strata

doesn’t have to remove the fines, but that’s not a requirement for the owner to pay the fines. The strata needs to make a counterclaim to ask the CRT to order the owner to pay the fines!

5. Amend a claim

Applicants: After you file your application or start the facilitation stage, you might want to add a new claim. Under the CRT rules, applicants can request amendment of the Dispute Notice to add new claims and remedies.

Do this sooner than later. You can’t add new claims and remedies in the decision stage.

Talk to your case manager. If new claims or remedies are added, the CRT will issue an amended Dispute Notice and the respondents will be given the opportunity to submit a new Dispute Response.

6. Get ready for facilitation

Organize your documents. You could summarize your points into a “negotiation brief”. Do this early so you’re ready when a CRT case manager is assigned to begin settlement discussions in the facilitation stage.

In settlement discussions, stay focused on the claims and remedies in the Dispute Notice. When case managers and opposing parties are trying to see your side, irrelevant details or raising new issues can cause confusion and waste time. Be productive.

7. Focus on your evidence

CRT disputes are won or lost on their evidence, so it’s critical to have objective, relevant, credible evidence. The applicant who made the claim must prove their claims on a balance of probabilities, meaning more likely than not. The respondent should have evidence to disprove the claim.

One of the biggest challenges is figuring out which facts really matter for your case to succeed. Work hard throughout the process to determine what documents, records, or witness statements you need to prove these facts.

Expert witness statements are very important. You may need an opinion from an expert to prove an industry standard or something that is technical and considered outside the knowledge and expertise of an ordinary person.

continued on page 17



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Top 10 Tips for Success in Your CRT Dispute

Contributors offered the following tips for evidence:

- Organize your evidence chronologically.
- Give each file a very short name (no more than 20 characters and spaces.) Files with longer names will fail to load in the CRT's online portal.
- Don't forget to include evidence such as invoices and payment receipts to prove that an expense was incurred and paid.

Common mistakes are a lack of relevant evidence and providing too much evidence.

- Only provide relevant evidence. Unnecessary details such as prior history between people, especially people who aren't part of your dispute, can cause confusion and may weaken your case.
- Focus on evidence that is directly relevant to the issue that the CRT tribunal member must decide.
- Don't give redundant evidence. For example, submit only one pdf of an email conversation, not 12 separate pdfs of each individual reply.

- Don't upload evidence that another party has already uploaded.
- Don't make the tribunal member watch 12 hours of video to get to the one-minute section that's relevant. Send just the portion that is important.
- Don't submit 50 photos of the same thing!
- It's not always obvious why you took a photo or video and why you think it's important. Be sure to explain its relevance in your written arguments.
- When taking photos be sure the viewer can understand the size or scale of an object or damaged area.
- For councils, make sure letters to owners and tenants about alleged contraventions of bylaws include all relevant details and give the opportunity for a hearing. Make sure council decisions are recorded in the minutes. Provide those minutes as evidence and highlight the section that contains the council's decision.

continued on page 18



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8. Write effective arguments

While you can request an oral hearing, they are rarely granted. The tribunal members usually decide “to hear” the disputes through written submissions called “arguments”.

There are 3 steps:

1. The applicant submits their arguments.
2. The respondent reads those arguments and submits their response arguments.
3. The applicant reads the respondent’s arguments and may respond to those arguments by submitting a final reply.

Applicants: Focus on what you requested in the Dispute Notice. The tribunal member will only consider the claims and remedies in the Dispute Notice so don’t add new issues, claims, or remedies in your written submissions.

Respondents: You have just one opportunity, so be sure that your arguments are complete, address all the claims and remedies in the Dispute Notice, and rebut the arguments the applicant made in their arguments.

Be clear. What is the issue in the Dispute Notice that the tribunal member needs to make a decision about? What information do they need? Don’t state something, or rely on hearsay (something someone told you), if you don’t have proof.

Refer to each piece of evidence you uploaded to explain how the evidence proves what you are saying.

Be precise and stick to the facts.

Remove all emotion and don’t attack or abuse the opposing party.

9. Don’t use AI

It may seem like a time-saver to use ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or other AI tools. **Don’t do it.**

AI often produces fake information such as legislation or legal cases that don’t exist. You risk losing your case because the information you used to support your claim or defend yourself was unreliable.

You could also be ordered to pay the other party because you wasted everyone’s time and caused them additional expenses such as legal fees. See our article [AI and ChatGPT: Cautionary Tales for Stratas](#).

10. Don’t file the same claim twice

If you lose your case, the matter has been decided. Don’t bog the CRT down by filing the claim again. Most of these get dismissed as “res judicata” (a legal principle that means already decided).

If you are considering this, get legal advice. Otherwise, you’re just wasting everyone’s time and money. 

Thank you to our contributors including Oscar Miklos and Jennifer Lebbert of Refresh Law; Jason Rohrick, Barrister and Solicitor; Alyona Kokanova, Cleveland Doan LLP; Carol Dobell, Oakwood Property Management; CRT participants; and VISOA’s Strata Support Team members.

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You Asked

Q: What is a limitation period? Does it apply to all CRT claims?

A: Under BC's *Limitation Act* (LA), there's a 2-year deadline to file most legal claims. It's called a limitation period. The clock starts running on the first day a person "discovers" their claim. That's the day they knew, or reasonably ought to have known, that a person (or a strata corporation) caused them to incur "an injury, loss or damage", and that a legal proceeding, such as the CRT process, would be an appropriate way to seek a remedy. If the time limit expires, the right to bring the claim disappears, and the CRT must dismiss the claim, even if it otherwise would have been successful.

If you're making a claim at the CRT, note that the limitation period stops running once you submit your application and pay the CRT application fee. The limitation period "is preserved" even if it takes a long time to receive a final decision. So, just make sure to file the claim on time and pay the CRT fee.

See CRT [claims about limitation periods](#) and [claims where the limitation period expired](#).

The tricky part is establishing the date the limitation period starts.

Strata fees and special levies: The day the limitation period starts is usually obvious. The strata council should know the date the payment was due.

Date discovered: A claimant might not discover they incurred a "loss" right away. In *Lam v. The Owners, Strata Plan NW340*, [2026 BCCRT 926](#), the owner didn't realize she was being overcharged parking fees until years later. She made a claim within 2 years of discovering the issue and the strata was ordered to pay her for 6.5 years of overcharges.

Significant unfairness: An owner might make a CRT claim saying the strata council acted in a significantly unfair manner by not investigating or enforcing the bylaws about noise that has been ongoing for 8 years.

continued on page 25



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■ You Asked

If the owner asks for damages (payment of money to compensate them for the harm they suffered), the maximum the CRT can order is based on the significant unfairness experienced within the 2 years prior to the date the claim was filed. This is because the LA applies to a claim for damages.

The LA doesn't apply to every kind of legal claim.

Repair of common property: If an owner claims that the strata should have repaired the roof 5 years ago and the strata still hasn't repaired it, the LA doesn't apply because the strata's maintenance obligations are ongoing. The *Strata Property Act* still requires the strata to repair common property.

Fines: The LA doesn't apply to a strata's claim for payment of fines or an owner's claim for the strata to remove unpaid fines from their account. This is because a "claim" under the LA doesn't include a penalty, which is what a bylaw fine is. The LA only applies to "a claim to remedy an injury, loss or damage

that occurred as a result of an act or omission." See the BC Supreme Court case *The Owners, Strata Plan KAS 3549 v. 0738039 B.C. Ltd.*, 2015 BCSC 2273, affirmed by the BC Court of Appeal in 2016 BCCA 370.

The LA only applies to courts and tribunals.

It doesn't apply to the bylaw and rule enforcement process within a strata or housing cooperative association. This means that even if complaints are made more than 2 years after an alleged incident, the LA doesn't prevent the strata from considering the complaint. However, it's difficult to investigate after so much time has passed.

Determining whether the LA applies to your CRT claim and the start date of the 2-year period can be complex. You may want to get legal advice before spending time and money on a legal claim. 

Are you a VISOA member? Log in to your profile to submit questions to the [Strata Support Team](#).



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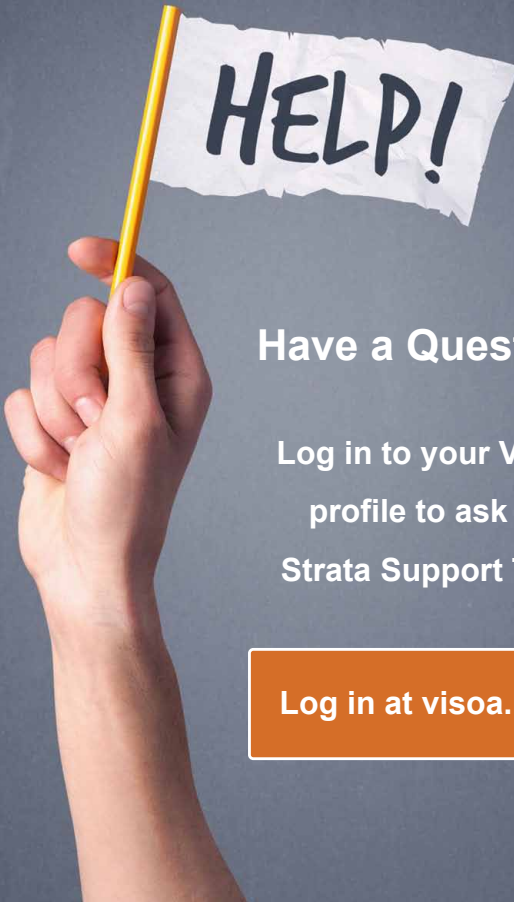


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■ Pro Tips for Filing Your CRT Application

Here are some expert tips for strata owners and councils to make an effective application for resolution of a strata claim at the Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT).

Understand your claim is public information

Everything you write in the CRT application form, including your name and contact information, will be put into a Dispute Notice. This is a legal document that is served on the person or strata corporation the claim is against. It's not private. The document will become part of the strata's records. The strata is also legally required to inform owners as soon as feasible if it is sued or is a party in a CRT dispute. See *Strata Property Act* (SPA) s. 167 and 189.4.

A Dispute Notice is also public information. Any member of the public can request documents from the CRT: the Dispute Notice, Dispute Responses, and the CRT decision, if any. The CRT doesn't disclose settlement discussions, arguments, or evidence.

Therefore, when writing your claim, keep the language professional, factual, and don't include any personal details about yourself or others that aren't necessary. Remove all emotion. Don't make insults or personal attacks. It won't help you and could actually harm your case.

You may also want to create an email address to use exclusively for the claim and throughout the process so you can keep your personal email address private.

Preparation for owners and tenants

Request a hearing at a council meeting to speak to your council about your issue. Under SPA s. 34.1, the council must hold the hearing within 4 weeks after receiving your written request.

SPA s. 189.1 requires that an owner or tenant request a council hearing before making a CRT claim. If you don't do this before applying, it can cause delays for the CRT to accept your application.

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Pro Tips for Filing Your CRT Application

Preparation for councils

Before making a CRT claim for payment of money owed, the council must send the owner or tenant a letter under SPA s. 112 demanding payment and indicating what may happen if they don't pay by the deadline. For example, "If the total amount owing is not paid within 20 days, the strata corporation will be entitled to file a dispute with the Civil Resolution Tribunal to recover the amount owing."

If you don't do this before applying, it can cause delays for the CRT to accept your application.

If the claim is about fines for a breach of a bylaw or rule, ensure all steps under SPA s. 135 were completed perfectly before making a CRT claim. See the article "How to Avoid Common CRT Disputes" on page 12.

Be sure of who your claim is against

For a strata corporation or strata section, the claim is against an owner or tenant. Purchase the title record for the strata lot to confirm the name of the owner on title. The strata lot might be owned by one or more persons, businesses, or corporations.

If you're an owner or tenant, your claim is usually against the strata corporation or your strata section. If you name individual council members or section executive members, the CRT will usually suggest you amend your application to remove them. If you leave them in, it can waste everyone's time if your claim against them is dismissed later.

If you make your claim against the wrong party, your claim will almost surely fail. For example, an owner might make a claim against a strata corporation to remove bylaw contravention fines. However, what if it was the residential strata section that charged the fines under its bylaws? The claim will fail because the residential strata section wasn't named on the Dispute Notice, wasn't served the Dispute Notice or given an opportunity to respond to it, and had no opportunity to submit evidence and arguments.

A dispute between 2 owners is usually a small claim, not a strata dispute. For example, when there is water damage to a strata lot, one owner might make a small claim against another owner to pay the homeowner's insurance deductible. See [CRT decisions for small claims disputes between owners](#).

Check the strata's legal name and mailing address

If you're making a claim against the strata corporation, be sure to enter the strata's legal name and mailing address. In a court or tribunal case, if legal documents are served on the strata corporation by mail, that is the address that is used.

Per SPA s. 2, the strata's legal name is "The Owners, Strata Plan [the registration number of the strata plan]". Check the registration number on page one of the strata plan, or on your title record. It might have a prefix of 1, 2, or 3 letters. For example, a legal name could be "The Owners, Strata Plan 59", "The Owners, Strata Plan K59", or "The Owners, Strata Plan KAS59." In your CRT application, you only need to enter the registration number such as 59, K59, or KAS59.

The strata's legal mailing address is on file at the Land Title Office. When a strata plan is filed to create a strata corporation, the developer also files a "Form X – Strata Corporation Mailing Address."

For older stratas, the original mailing address is on page one of the strata plan. These older addresses are unreliable as they are often the address for the developer or their lawyer from decades ago.

You can hire a lawyer or BC registry agent to conduct a search of the "general index" at the Land Title Office to find the most recent legal mailing address for your strata corporation. Alternatively, you could ask the strata manager or the council, however some councils aren't aware of a legal mailing address.

It's a good idea for all strata corporations to file a [Form D – Change of Mailing Address](#) at the [Land Title Office](#). This ensures the strata corporation's mailing address is up to date and that important legal documents aren't sent to an incorrect address. The address can be your strata management company's mailing address. If your strata changed management companies, ask your strata manager if they filed a new Form D. Most stratas need a professional to file it electronically. Stratas of 7 or fewer strata lots can file it by mail.

You can find lawyers in VISOA's business directory or visit the [BC Association of Professional Registry Agents](#) website to find a BC registry agent.

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Pro Tips for Filing Your CRT Application

Learn what the CRT can and cannot order

Just because you want something doesn't mean that the CRT can order it.

The remedies that a tribunal can order is limited by their legislation. Under *Civil Resolution Tribunal Act* (CRTA) s. 123, for strata property claims, the CRT may:

- Order a party to do or stop doing something
- Order a party to pay money (there is no monetary limit)
- Make an order to prevent or remedy a significantly unfair action, decision or exercise of voting rights
- And, under CRTA s. 48, the order may set terms and conditions the CRT considers appropriate

For example, a **strata corporation** might make a CRT claim to ask the tribunal to make an order for an owner to:

- Pay strata fees, special levies, or fines

- Pay an insurance deductible or repair costs below an insurance deductible
- Comply with a bylaw or rule
- Remove an alteration or repair a strata lot

An **owner** might make a CRT claim to ask the tribunal to make an order for the strata corporation to:

- Provide copies of records
- Remove fines or chargebacks
- Correct an error regarding conduct of meetings or expenditures
- Repair and maintain common property or limited common property
- Approve a request for an alteration, heat pump, or EV charging station
- Enforce the bylaws about noise or smoking
- Pay damages for a significantly unfair decision or action

The CRT must refuse to resolve a claim that it considers to be outside the CRT's jurisdiction.

Claims that are outside the CRT's jurisdiction or otherwise tend to be unsuccessful include claims about: a council member's duty of care, conflicts of interest, removing a council member, changing a bylaw, declaratory or prospective orders, defamation, libel, slander, punitive damages, bullying, emotional or mental distress, pain and suffering, ordering an apology, vague orders to follow the *Strata Property Act*, and more.

See the **The CRT Dictionary – A Glossary of Terms** on page 34 to learn more.

It can be helpful to seek legal advice.

There may be another way of approaching the issue that has a greater chance of success.

Read past CRT decisions. You'll quickly learn from the mistakes of others.

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Pro Tips for Filing Your CRT Application

Draft your claim and remedies

The application form asks you to enter your claim (what happened) and the remedies you want (the orders you want the CRT to make.)

Try not to submit an application in the heat of the moment. Type your thoughts into a document and come back to it when you're feeling calm. Now, think about what outcome you want. Focus on the remedies. To be within the CRT's strata property jurisdiction, it must be "in respect of the *Strata Property Act*." Note which sections of the SPA and/or your strata's bylaws relate to your claim and remedies.

Now write your claim over again and include only the details that relate to the specific remedy you want. If you want fines removed, there's no need to talk about 5 years of disagreements over other things. Stay focused.

Write your claim in English. If English isn't your first language, ask a friend or family member to help with translation. Don't include images, emojis, or links to

websites in your draft document. These will cause technical issues if you put them in your application.

Remember that what you write in the application form will be put into a Dispute Notice and served on the respondent (who the claim is against). The purpose of a Dispute Notice is to provide fair notice so they can respond to the claims made against them.

The Dispute Notice is meant to give them a broad overview of what the issues are about, not every little detail. Provide a clear and brief explanation or timeline of events and get to the crux of the issue right away. Later in the process, you'll have an opportunity to provide lengthier written submissions and upload evidence to support your claims.

Ask a friend or lawyer to review your draft

Ask a friend or a legal professional who knows nothing about your situation to read the drafted claim and the requested remedies. Would a complete stranger understand the situation?

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Kate, Council member VIS 639



Pro Tips for Filing Your CRT Application

Does the claim flow in a logical timeline or series of events? Is there anything they find confusing? Does the remedy you are asking for solve the problem? Is the requested remedy too vague? Is there another way of wording the remedy you want? Is there a different remedy that would provide a better result?

Rewrite your draft claim and remedies. Check to make sure each claim is no more than 5,000 characters in length including spaces.

Do a final check

- Is your issue within the CRT's jurisdiction?
- Can the CRT make an order for the remedy you want?
- Do you have the legal name and address of the respondent(s)?
- What sections of the *Strata Property Act* or bylaws relate to your claim?
- Is there a deadline to make your claim? There is

a 2-year deadline (limitation period) for some claims.

- Will you be able to provide evidence later to support the claim and convince the CRT to make the order you're requesting?
- Do you have evidence that can prove a fact? Don't assume that a fact can be proven simply by mentioning it.
- Did you read CRT decisions? Have similar claims been successful in the past?
- Did you get legal advice? Getting help from a strata lawyer early in the process can identify the applicable legal doctrines, the elements of your claim that will need to be proven, and what documents and evidence will be useful.

File your CRT application for dispute resolution

When you're ready to fill out the application form, go to the CRT's website and use the [Solution Explorer for strata claims](#).



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Pro Tips for Filing Your CRT Application

When the Solution Explorer asks a question, don't worry about making a wrong answer. It's just trying to give you relevant information and educational materials. Read all the information sheets it gives you. If these help you learn more about your issue, you can go back and edit your draft document.

At the end of the exploration, click "Make a CRT claim". The Solution Explorer will take you to the strata claims application form. Copy the text from your document and paste it into the claims section of the application form. Enter the remedies you want. If you're asking a party to pay money, be sure to check the box to ask for an order for them to pay interest. At the end of the application process, you can review and edit any section of your application or save your draft application and complete it later. After you click "Submit", you can't make edits.

Pay the application fee or, if you have low income, you can submit a fee waiver application. Then wait for the CRT to process your application and contact you. Processing may take several weeks or months.

Have a strategy for settlement

We sometimes hear that a strata council or owner is non-responsive to a request or issue that has arisen at their strata. The parties involved sometimes feel ignored or that they aren't being taken seriously.

Some councils or owners start a CRT claim with the intention of grabbing the other party's attention. Sometimes just being served a CRT Dispute Notice can get them to address the issue or at least open the lines of communication to talk about it.

This is an opportunity to make an honest and sincere attempt to resolve the matter without the need for a CRT final decision. Have a goal of settling on a fair outcome, if possible. If you reach an agreement on your own, the applicant can withdraw all their claims and receive a refund of their application fees, or a CRT case manager can turn settlement terms into a consent order.

Thank you to our contributors including Oscar Miklos, Jennifer Lebbert, Jason Rohrick, Alyona Kokanova, Carol Dobell, CRT participants, and VISOA's Strata Support Team members.

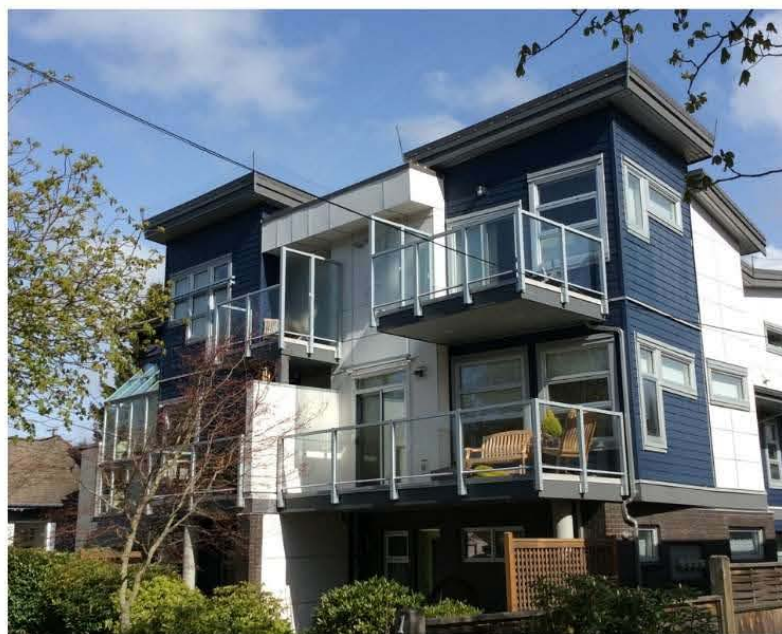


2026 Cover Photo Contest

Submit your photo of a BC strata to editor@visoa.bc.ca. Photos selected for the cover of Bulletin issues in 2026 will be entered into a draw on December 1, 2026.

First prize: a one-year VISOA corporate membership for all owners in your strata.

Second prize: \$50 to the submitter.



■ The CRT Dictionary – A Glossary of Terms

Arguments

Arguments explain your side of the claim. CRT hearings are usually conducted in writing so your arguments are submitted in writing, not orally like a court room.

Case manager

CRT case managers have training and experience in mediation and many are lawyers. During the facilitation stage of the CRT process, your case manager will help the strata and the owner try to reach an agreement.

Consent dismissal order

During the CRT facilitation stage, you can ask your case manager for a consent dismissal order. This kind of order doesn't include settlement terms. It means that the parties agree to dismiss all the claims, the CRT will close the file, that no further action can be taken on the claims, and that none of the parties can

file a new claim about the same issue.

Consent resolution order

If you reach an agreement during the CRT negotiation or facilitation stage, and want the agreement to be enforceable, ask your case manager to put the terms of the settlement into a consent resolution order.

CRT account

When you file an application online, the system will prompt you to create a CRT Account and password, or log into your account if you already have one. The respondent is prompted to create or log into a CRT Account when they submit a response to the Dispute Notice online. After the respondent's response is received, the CRT account is where self-directed negotiation occurs. Later in the CRT process, each party or their representative will log in to their CRT Account online to submit arguments and upload evidence.

CRT rules

The CRT Standard Rules set out the CRT's practices and procedures such as who can be the contact person for a strata, what the CRT can consider when it receives a request for a representative, and the required methods for serving a Dispute Notice on a person, strata corporation or strata section. It also sets rules about timelines, fee waivers, requests for extensions, amending claims, withdrawing claims, expert evidence, the number of characters permitted in written arguments, recovery of fees and expenses, and more. It's a good idea to read the [CRT Standard Rules](#) to understand your rights and your responsibilities during the CRT process.

Declaratory orders

A declaratory order confirms something but doesn't require the person to do or stop doing something, or to pay money. The court can make declaratory orders but the CRT only has authority to grant declaratory relief in the limited circumstances where it is incidental to another order. For example, the CRT might refuse to resolve a claim asking the CRT to

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declare that the strata's attempt to collect a fee was contrary to the strata's bylaws. However, if the owner had also asked the CRT to order the strata to remove the charge from their account or reimburse them, the CRT could make a decision about that and whether the strata complied with the bylaws.

As another example, ordering that the strata acted significantly unfairly is declaratory if an owner doesn't ask the CRT to order the strata to do or stop doing something, or pay money, to remedy the significant unfairness. It's declaratory because the owner is just asking the CRT to confirm that it occurred.

See [CRT decisions about declaratory orders](#).

Default decision

If you make a claim against someone and they don't respond to the CRT Dispute Notice by the deadline, you can ask the CRT for a default decision and order. When a respondent is in default, the CRT usually assumes they are at fault.

Dispute Notice

The CRT Dispute Notice is a legal document that is served on the respondents. It contains the claims and requested remedies that the applicant submitted in their application form. Once served, the respondents have 14 calendar days to submit their Dispute Response.

Dispute Response

Respondents are the people, strata corporation, or strata section that the claim was made against. The Dispute Response is the legal document that shows their responses to the claims made against them.

Emotional distress

Naturally, people are upset about their situation. Some have made CRT claims asking for money to compensate them for pain and suffering, mental or emotional distress, mental trauma, or anguish that they feel the strata caused. To be successful in this type of claim there must be an "evidentiary basis." The mere presence of psychological upset, worry, stress, or anxiety is not enough for a court or tribunal to award monetary damages. The person making

the claim must prove the disturbance they suffered is serious and prolonged and rises above ordinary annoyances, anxieties and fears. For example, medical records might prove mental or emotional distress beyond ordinary upset. They would also have to prove the strata caused it.

See [CRT claims about mental and emotional distress](#).

Evidence

Evidence is material that proves a fact. It supports your side of the claim or disproves someone else's side. Evidence might include things like meeting minutes, correspondence, photos of damage, invoices, payment receipts, quotes, contracts, indemnity agreements, and expert evidence.

Expert evidence

Your statement or opinion is not enough to prove a fact. You may need an opinion from an expert to prove an industry standard or something that is technical and considered outside the knowledge and expertise of an ordinary person. An expert might be an engineer, plumber, roofer, accountant, or other professional. Their letter or report must explain what training, knowledge, and experience makes them qualified to give an opinion on the issue. They have to be neutral. They can't take your side.

Facilitation stage

At this stage in the CRT process, a case manager will help you try to reach an agreement. If the strata and owner or tenant agree on a way to settle the matter, and you want the order to be enforceable, the case manager can put the terms in a consent resolution order.

Final decision

If the dispute isn't settled, a CRT tribunal member will review the evidence and arguments and issue a written decision. If they make an order, it is binding and enforceable like a court order.

Final decisions are available to the public on the [CRT decisions](#) webpage and at [CanLii.org](#)

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The CRT Dictionary – A Glossary of Terms

Frivolous and vexatious claims

A frivolous claim has no merit. It is clearly unsupported by the evidence or the law. It lacks sufficient grounds and has no substance, legal significance, standing, or worth.

A vexatious claim has no merit and, when viewed objectively, is for the sole purpose of annoying or harassing, such as continuously making claims on different issues that are not based on facts.

Judicial review

If you don't agree with a CRT decision, you can ask the BC Supreme Court to review it. For example, the court could review the CRT's decision to see if a finding of fact or law was "patently unreasonable". It could also review whether the CRT's procedures were fair. If the court decides to overturn all or part of a CRT decision, the judge will usually order the CRT to make a new decision about the claim. The CRT will reopen the dispute file and begin the facilitation and decision processes again.

Libel and slander

Defamation is communication of false statements about a person that hurts their reputation by exposing them to hatred, contempt or ridicule, or that is designed to insult the person. The 2 forms of defamation are slander (spoken) and libel (written, published). The CRT must refuse to resolve these claims because they are not within the CRT's strata property or small claims jurisdiction. See [CRT claims about libel and slander](#).

Negotiation stage

This is a stage in the CRT process where the strata's contact person and the owner or tenant try to work out the issue on their own while they wait for a CRT case manager to be assigned.

Noise

See nuisance. Generally, your complaints will not be enough to prove that noise is unreasonable. You may need decibel readings or professional reports. See [CRT decisions about noise](#).

Nuisance

In the strata context, a nuisance is a substantial, non-trivial, and unreasonable interference with the use and enjoyment of property. Examples are unreasonable noise, smoke, or odours. The primary focus in a nuisance claim is the effect of the interference on the applicant.

Whether an interference is unreasonable depends on several factors, such as its nature, severity, duration, and frequency. You need to provide objective evidence that the nuisance is intolerable to an ordinary person in the same circumstances. See [CRT decisions about nuisance](#).

Prospective orders

A "prospective order" means an order about something that hasn't happened yet. The CRT doesn't normally make prospective orders as they would be based on speculation about what may or may not happen in the future. For example, an owner can't shield themselves from fines for breaching valid and enforceable bylaws in the future. See [CRT decisions about prospective orders](#).

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The CRT Dictionary – A Glossary of Terms

Punitive damages

CRT claims for punitive damages are rarely, if ever, successful. The Supreme Court of Canada has said the purpose of punitive damages is to punish extreme conduct worthy of condemnation, and can only be awarded to punish harsh, vindictive, reprehensible and malicious behaviour. The CRT has said this would require a finding of malicious, oppressive, or high-handed conduct. See [CRT decisions about punitive damages](#).

Remedy

A remedy is what you want the CRT to order the strata or the person to do or stop doing. It could also be an order for them to pay money. For example, an owner might want the CRT to order the strata to remove a \$200 fine from their account. A strata corporation might want the CRT to order an owner to stop smoking on the common property.

Significant unfairness

Under *Civil Resolution Tribunal Act* s. 123(2), the CRT can make an order to prevent or remedy a strata's significantly unfair action or decision. The court has the same powers under SPA s. 164 and has described this kind of order as an "equitable oppression remedy."

If you're making a claim for significant unfairness, remember to request a remedy for the strata to do or stop doing something, or to pay compensation. Don't just ask for the CRT to declare the strata corporation or the strata council was unfair (see declaratory orders.)

The owner's reasonable expectations are considered. However, just because a bylaw or situation seems unfair to someone, doesn't mean it is "significantly" unfair. Significantly unfair actions are those that are burdensome, harsh, wrongful, lacking in probity or fair dealing, done in bad faith, unjust, or inequitable. It goes beyond mere prejudice or trifling unfairness.

There are hundreds of [CRT decisions](#) that involve a claim of significant unfairness. In many, the strata was found to have acted in a significantly unfair manner. In some cases, the strata was ordered to pay money to the owner as compensation.

Claims about significant unfairness include:

- Not investigating bylaw complaints such as noise or smoke
- Inconsistent enforcement of bylaws and charging fines
- Refusing to provide a hearing
- Denying a reasonable request
- Disputes about the use of property
- Fees, chargebacks, or division of expenses
- An unfair voting process
- And many other situations

Small claims

Strata disputes and small claims disputes have different legislation so there are different application forms for these at the CRT. Most of your claims will be filed using the online form for strata property disputes. For claims that are not "in respect of the *Strata Property Act*", you might make a "small claim." Under the Tribunal Small Claims Regulation, the CRT has jurisdiction over most small claims up to \$5,000. Use the [Small Claims Solution Explorer](#) to learn about the types of small claims that can be brought to the CRT.

Tribunal decision preparation stage

This stage in the CRT process is sometimes referred to as the TDP stage. It's when the strata and owner or tenant submit their written arguments and upload their evidence.

Withdraw

If you're the applicant, you can withdraw one or more of your claims. The dispute can continue for any other claims on the Dispute Notice. If you withdraw all claims, the dispute file will be closed. If you want to file a new application about the same issue, you must ask the CRT for permission.

Other legal dictionaries

See [Clicklaw – Terminology](#) and the [People's Law School – Glossary](#).

■ President's Message

2027 Budget Consultation

It may be summer, but we're already looking ahead to February 2027 when BC's Minister of Finance will announce the next provincial budget.

BC budget public consultation

As it does each year, the BC Legislature formed a Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services' Budget 2027 to conduct public consultation about the budget for the coming year.

In June, VISOA made a submission to the committee, as we did last year. Had we not done so, the only suggestions would have been from the real estate industry and other commercial interests.

We focused on the following 2 recommendations.

1. The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs is responsible for the *Strata Property Act* (SPA). However, its Annual Service Plan Reports for 2023/24 and

2024/25 do not report on any mandate or progress on strata policy work. We call on the province to increase staffing levels so the Ministry has the capacity to address reforms to the SPA that are long overdue. We ask that staff be given a mandate to do a final review of the amendments drafted by the BC Law Institute and senior policy staff from the Housing Policy Branch in 2013-2019 and put those amendments forward to the Minister and the Premier. Picking up on work already near completion is practical, economical, and efficient.

SPA amendments could also reduce the number of legal claims filed at the Civil Resolution Tribunal which, as of June 30, 2026, had a backlog of 1,694 strata disputes. Many claims could be avoided if confusing and outdated language is updated.

2: Create a category for strata corporations in the BC Corporate Registry and require stratas to register and report the date of their annual general meeting. Having these reports would resolve a growing problem with financial institutions. Banks often insist that stratas provide BC Corporate Registry records each year as part of their regulations to address money laundering and terrorist financing.

The province would also have a mechanism to notify councils of legislative changes and send reminders about deadlines such as for obtaining depreciation reports. The system could potentially collect basic data about the size and age of buildings to inform government policies, programs, and rebates. This proposal streamlines efforts, and benefits both the public and the government, with a low-cost solution.

The committee's report

On August 11, 2026 the Select Standing Committee released its [Report on the BC Budget 2027 Consultation](#) and a [media release](#). The report provides a comprehensive summary of the input shared by British Columbians from 387 presentations and 1,102 written submissions, the committee's discussions, and 81 recommendations for the next provincial budget.

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The graphic features a blue background with a stylized illustration of a blue brick building with a pink awning, flanked by green and orange trees. Several small figures of people are standing in front of the building. The text is in white and yellow/green.

President's Message

An overview of submissions related to stratas appears on page 55. It mentions submissions by the Association of Interior Realtors and the Appraisal Institute of Canada (BC) such as “that government invest in education and support for strata councils to enable strata communities to plan proactively, prevent costly repairs and special levies, preserve existing housing stock, and reduce financial pressure on home owners.”

The committee’s discussion is summarized on page 58. “In terms of Strata Corporations, Committee Members noted that strata housing represents a significant share of BC’s housing market and highlighted the value of conducting a comprehensive review of the *Strata Property Act* to ensure it meets the needs of British Columbians. Members added that this review should examine financial planning requirements, governance standards, and accountability mechanisms. More specifically, the Committee discussed the need for both strata owners and council members to better understand their rights and responsibilities under the Act and recommended integrating mandatory training within the Act.”

The committee’s recommendation

The committee made one recommendation related to stratas: #41 “Conduct a comprehensive review of the *Strata Property Act* and amend the Act to mandate training for strata owners and council members.”

Strata Property Act reform

The fact that the committee saw value in conducting a review of the SPA “to ensure it meets the needs of British Columbians” is a significant step forward.

However, it is concerning that the recommendation specifically mentions the real estate industry’s recommendation for mandatory training for strata councils without consideration of the views of strata owners and councils.

As discussed in the February 2026 issue of the VISOA Bulletin, imposing mandatory training may have unintended consequences. See [Should Strata Council Training Be Mandatory?](#)

I prefer an approach to education that provides positive support rather than fines and penalties.

Will Budget 2027 support strata owners?

Typically, the province doesn’t act on every recommendation made by the budget consultation committee. I can only hope that BC Budget 2027 includes “a comprehensive review of the *Strata Property Act* to ensure it meets the needs of British Columbians.”

Governance of strata corporations will improve if problematic sections of the SPA and Regulations are improved and the language is clearer and easier to understand.

Also, amendments to the SPA and Regulations could reduce the amount of conflict that arises from misunderstandings in stratas and could potentially reduce the volume of claims and the long wait times at the Civil Resolution Tribunal.

Fewer disputes means healthier, more affordable, and more successful strata living.

Wendy Wall, VISOA President

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