



FEDERATION OF ONTARIO
LAW ASSOCIATIONS
FÉDÉRATION DES ASSOCIATIONS
DU BARREAU DE L'ONTARIO

Legal Aid Report

Dear Presidents and Plenary Delegates:

It is with great pleasure that I have been entrusted to represent the Federation of Ontario Law Association's interest as a liaison with the Ontario Legal Aid Plan. These duties were passed on in the late spring 2018, from long-standing Board member, H. Jane Robertson, who served as the Legal Aid Chair commencing in June of 2014 and who has now transitioned to Treasurer. Over the many years of past service Jane fostered and developed a very healthy and positive relationship with the Legal Aid directors. We have much to thank Jane for in her dedication and concerted efforts. It is my goal to maintain Jane's achievement and to continue to foster good lines of communication with the Ontario Legal Aid officers and staff.

This past year, I attended an informal initial introduction meeting with David McKillop (Vice President, Policy, Research & External Relations) on July 11, 2018. This meeting led to an invitation to a subsequent attendance, on September 14, 2018, with Mr. McKillop along with David Field (President & C.E.O.). Newly hired Executive Director for F.O.L.A. Katie Robinette was in attendance too.

Both Katie and I then followed up by meeting further with Mr. McKillop on October 11, 2018 at which time introductions were made to Kathleen Murphy (Director, Communications and Stakeholder Relations Group). Later that same day Ms. Murphy sent an email to various stakeholders announcing an internal reorganization which effective January 1, 2019 will see various Vice Presidents assigned new enumerated responsibilities. If you have not seen the memo and need it forwarded to you, please, advise.

With the change in the Provincial Government, it has been a wait and see situation, as funding questions loom in the minds of many interested parties.

As your F.O.L.A. L.A.O. Chair, I also sit on the Alliance for Sustainable Legal Aid [A.S.L.A.]. This group meets from time to time, and in addition to our representation, consists of delegates from:

Association of Community Legal Clinics Ontario, Criminal Lawyers Association, Family Lawyers Association, Ontario Bar Association, Refugee Lawyers Association, the Advocate's society, Mental Health Legal Committee, Law Society of Ontario. The most recent meeting was attended by both Katie and myself by teleconference on September 5, 2018.

I can also report to you that Nathan Bakker, F.O.L.A. Board member, and I have been approached as of July, 2018 and have agreed respectively to serve on the L.A.O. Standards Committee with Nathan covering the area of Youth and I, Mental Health. Currently we are waiting for the next step to participate in these forums.

As a new representative of F.O.L.A. with L.A.O. the membership concerns are of significant importance to me and I welcome questions or input from our membership. This is needed for there to be an open dialogue and representation of your interests. I want to be your voice of reason and sustainability for L.A.O.. I welcome your input and invite emails to: terrylbrandon@sympatico.ca.

At present, I have specifically been pursuing remedies for billing irritants and seeking a voice in this area. Plus looking at duty counsel services in the S.C.J. for Family Court Motion days. Staff at the L.A.O. appear most keen to remedy problems and to improve systems. To that end, I hope to hear from any member who has information to share, suggestions or inquiries.

In closing, I thank F.O.L.A. for placing your trust in me and I look forward to continued service in the year to come.

Terry L. Brandon
South-West Regional Representative