

COURTHOUSE ISSUES - TALKING POINTS - FOLA 2023

KEY ISSUES

- We've made some great progress in modernization since the onset of the pandemic, but we need to finish the job. Doing so is in the interests of all participants in the litigation process, in all areas of law that comes to court.
- We need more standardization from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, some of which can be accomplished by codifying some processes in the rules of court.
- We encourage the Ministry of the Attorney General to centralize some Court Services functions and localize others where it makes sense to do so.
- We need standardize points of contact for all courthouses. Right now there are myriad email address types and separation of duties in individual courthouses. This is unrealistic for counsel who are now representing clients across Ontario.
- CaseLines has been a helpful courtroom tool. We now need to integrate it into the filing system to develop an end-to-end solution that supports the needs of the parties, the judiciary, and the public (who are entitled to an open court). This includes improving OntarioCourtDates.com to display Zoom links and accurate courtroom locations with dockets.
- We need courtroom technology to be standardized so that participants in a proceeding know what to expect when they arrive. This includes wifi that is sufficient for all parties, appropriate tech for virtual participants to see the judge or a virtual judge to see the body of the court and the counsel table.
- We need to address the unacceptable level of frivolous filing rejections. Court staff are not licensees and lawyers should not have to debate interpretations of law with them to file their documents.

KEY POINTS TO LEAVE ON

As members of FOLA and our Law Association, we want to work with you to help with any policy initiatives impacting justice. We would be pleased to convene informal consultation groups or to host further, focused consultations on any of the issues we have raised.