



# COVID-19 & THE PRACTICE OF LAW

## WEEKLY UPDATE

Fola.ca

### SECTOR CHECK IN LOG #69 September 15 2021 Summary

#### Invited Participants: Sector Calls

OBA, FOLA, LSO, LAO, the Advocates' Society, & OTLA

Superior Court of Justices in Ontario, Court of Appeal for Ontario, & Ontario Court of Justice

MAG - Political, Department staff, and the Recovery Secretariat

#### Issues discussed:

##### 1. COURTS

- ❖ **COURT HOLIDAY:** All Courts (and Court Counters) will be closed on September 30<sup>th</sup> in recognition of Truth and Reconciliation Day. You can learn more and read the notice [here](#). Bail Courts will remain open. Expect a Notice regarding Criminal Matters related to September 30<sup>th</sup> next week.
- ❖ On Monday, the SCJ issued a Province-wide Notice to the Profession Regarding Family Law Cases. You can read that [here](#).
- ❖ The SCJ Central East Region's notice regarding its November 2021 civil sittings trial list has been posted to the SCJ website. It can be found [here](#).
- ❖ Amendments to the Courts of Justice Act came into force on September 1, 2021 changing the title of Case Management Master to Associate Judge. Pursuant to s. 86 (3) of the Act, an Associate Judge may be addressed as "Your Honour" or "Associate Justice (last name of the associate judge)" in English or as "Votre Honneur" or "(M. ou Mme) le/la Juge associé(e) (nom du juge associé)" in French. The role of associate judges remains the same.
- ❖ **OCJ - ADDRESSING THE BACKLOG:** To address the large backlog of cases in the Ontario Court of Justice case management courts arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Court is establishing a new case management court - the Judge-led Intensive Case Management Court (JICMC) - in every base court location across the province. The JICMCs will supplement and assist the permanent ("regular") case management courts already operating at each court location. The JICMCs will supplement and assist the permanent ("regular") case management courts already operating at each court location. Cases will be referred into the JICMC based on case age, with priority being given to older cases. For more details, please see [COVID-19 Judge-led Intensive Case Management Courts](#).
- ❖ **COURT ACCESSIBILITY SURVEY:** The Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee (OCAC) is conducting a survey for court users with disabilities to gather information on the current state of accessibility in Ontario courts. The Advocacy Centre for the Elderly (ACE), a longstanding member of the committee, is hosting the survey. This survey is targeted at persons who have experience attending court either as a person with a disability themselves, or supporting a person with a disability (e.g., as counsel, mental health worker, support person, etc.). Aggregated survey results will be shared with the OCAC to inform future discussions and projects. **The surveys will remain open to responses until September 30th, 2021.** Here are the links to the survey:  
**English version:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OCACSurveyEN>

**French version:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OCACSondageFR>

If you have any questions about the survey or how the data will be used, please contact ACE's general email address: [genace@lao.on.ca](mailto:genace@lao.on.ca).

About the OCAC: The OCAC is a stakeholder committee established in 2007 as one of the recommendations from the report "Making Ontario's Courts Fully Accessible to Persons with Disabilities". The committee provides advice to the courts on accessibility for people with disabilities. The OCAC includes representatives from the judiciary, legal community, disability organizations and the Ministry of the Attorney General executives.

## 2. MAG

- ❖ **JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS:** The Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee (JAAC) is welcoming applications for an OCJ position in St. Catherines. The deadline to apply is September 20th. Also, posted today (September 15<sup>th</sup>) are new postings for OCJ vacancies in Sudbury and North Bay. Those deadlines are Oct 13<sup>th</sup>. You can learn more [here](#).
- ❖ **VACCINES:** MAG is working on a vaccination guidance document. We hope to have that shortly.

## 3. RECOVERY SECRETARIAT

- ❖ **GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT PROOF OF VACCINATION POLICY:** On September 14<sup>th</sup>, the Ontario government released [regulations](#) and [guidance](#) for businesses and organizations to support them in implementing [proof of vaccination requirements](#), which take effect on September 22, 2021. In advance of September 22, all Ontarians can print or download their vaccination receipt from the [provincial booking portal](#). The Ministry is working on additional supports and services to assist Ontario residents who need help obtaining proof of vaccination, including requesting a copy be sent by mail. Those who need support obtaining a copy of their vaccination receipt including those who do not have access to a computer or printer can call the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900. Ontario is developing an enhanced vaccine certificate with a unique QR code to make it safer, more secure and convenient to show that you have been vaccinated, when required to do so. The enhanced vaccine certificate and verification app will be available by October 22, 2021. Ontario's proof of vaccination guidance will be updated to reflect the new processes.
- ❖ **REMINDER:** Questions about Courthouse operations during COVID-19 can be directed to Samantha Poisson at [MAGrecoverysecretariat@ontario.ca](mailto:MAGrecoverysecretariat@ontario.ca).

## 4. LSO

- ❖ **APPOINTMENTS:** The Law Society of Ontario is currently seeking applications from qualified lawyers and paralegals for the [Justices of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee](#) for the following regions:
  - Central West region: Deadline September 15 (today!)
  - East region: Deadline September 15 (today!)
  - Northwest region: Deadline October 1
  - West region: Deadline October 1Learn more and apply [here](#).
- ❖ The LSO is currently working on their vaccination protocol for staff and visitors. In the meantime, you can view their most recent COVID/Vaccine notice [here](#).

## 5. LAO

- ❖ Legal Aid Ontario will be closed on September 30<sup>th</sup> for Truth and Reconciliation Day.

## 6. FOLA

### SUBMISSIONS & CONSULTATIONS:

- ❖ **LSO COMPETENCE TASK FORCE:** FOLA will be preparing a Submission in response to the LSO's Call for Comment on the [Competence Task Force's Report: Renewing the Law Society's Continuing Competence Framework](#). If you would like to provide FOLA with comments for consideration for inclusion in our Submission, please do so prior to October 20th by emailing Katie at [katie.robinette@fola.ca](mailto:katie.robinette@fola.ca). If you would like to respond directly to the LSO, you may respond to some or all of the questions through their [Call for Comment portal](#) until Nov. 30, 2021.
- ❖ **MENTAL HEALTH SPEAKER:** You may remember that Beth Beattie (who spoke at FOLA's May 2021 Plenary and who the LSO featured during their Mental Health for Legal Professionals Summit) has emailed FOLA to offer her services to any of our Law Associations who might like her to speak to your members. She noted that 68% of all attendees from the LSO's Mental Health Summit were from outside the GTA and many were sole practitioners or came from small firms – meaning that your members are likely interested in learning more. If you would like to invite Beth to speak to your organization, please email Katie ([katie.robinette@fola.ca](mailto:katie.robinette@fola.ca)) with proposed times/dates and indicate the name of your Law Association and she will pass that information on to Beth.
- ❖ **EVENT!** Develop the edge you need to drive new levels of success for your practice at the Clio Cloud Conference, happening virtually October 26-29, 2021. With over 100 learning-intensive sessions to choose from, you'll be sure to walk away with actionable strategies to level up your practice – and your career. Use the code **FOLA-BAR-MEMBER** at checkout to secure your \$79 pass today – and save \$120 off the regular price. Register [here](#).
- ❖ **SAVE THE DATE - FOLA'S FALL 2021 PLENARY!** FOLA's Fall Plenary will be held via Zoom on November 18<sup>th</sup>. Our theme is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Legal Profession. Have a look at our Draft Agenda on our [Plenary Page](#). Updates are ongoing so be sure to keep visiting!
- ❖ **FOLA IN THE NEWS:** FOLA'S Vice Chair, Nathan Baker, was featured in Lawyer's Daily earlier this week with an article about the importance of Law Libraries. You can read that [here](#).
- ❖ **AWARDS!** The deadline for submitting nominations for FOLA's 2021 Awards is September 30th. We know you have members and staff who are worthy so please do take 2 seconds to fill out a nomination form [here](#).

### QUESTIONS/CONCERNS?

Law Association members are welcome to send any issues/concerns related to the practice of law caused by the COVID-19 epidemic to FOLA at [katie.robinette@fola.ca](mailto:katie.robinette@fola.ca) and we will continue to address them in as timely a manner as possible. Please also note that FOLA cannot assist in issues related to a specific case and the Courts will NOT provide clarification on any Notice to the Profession.