



COVID-19 & THE PRACTICE OF LAW

SECTOR MEETING UPDATE

Fola.ca

SECTOR CHECK IN LOG #76

January 19, 2022

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 -Department staff and the Recovery Secretariat

Issues discussed:

1. COURTS

- ❖ **SCJ NOTICE UPDATE:** Today (Jan 19, 2022), the SCJ issued a Notice to Profession and Public regarding court proceedings. You can read that [here](#).
- ❖ **SCJ:** The SCJ Clerkship Program is up and running! It offers law students the unique opportunity to experience the trial process firsthand, to work closely with judicial officials, and to substantively engage in a myriad of legal issues. [Learn more](#) or apply directly [here](#).
- ❖ **COURT OF APPEAL FOR ONTARIO:** They are currently 100% virtual and will remain so until further notice.
- ❖ **REMINDER - SCJ JDR PILOT PROGRAM:** In the Spring of 2021, MAG launched an innovative family pilot project to help get simpler cases to conclusion more quickly. The pilot project is already available in Barrie, Muskoka, Cornwall, and Ottawa, as well as in the Northeast and Northwest centres. Additional centres are expected to be added in early 2022. Parties in the above locations may now, on consent, choose to participate in a Binding JDR hearing to reach a final resolution of their family law dispute more quickly and through less formal processes. Learn more [here](#).
- ❖ **REMINDER - SCJ SMALL CLAIMS COURT WORKING GROUP:** FOLA is requesting that practitioners as well as Deputy Judges take a moment to consider and comment on what works well and what could use improvement in our Small Claims Court so that constructive feedback can continue to flow to the Small Claims Court Working Group. Please send comments to Jane Robertson (FOLA Treasurer) at jajadiver@bellnet.ca.
- ❖ **OCJ & CASELINES:** The OCJ paused its rollout of CaseLines across the Province. You can learn more [here](#). (Side note about CaseLines: FOLA will be announcing a new series of CaseLines live training webinars starting in February. Stay tuned!).

2. MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (MAG)

- ❖ Together with its justice partners, the Ministry of the Attorney General's Court Services Division (CSD) continues to explore ways to streamline and improve the processing of submissions received through the Ministry's online Justice Services Online (JSO) submissions portals: Family Submissions Online, Civil Submissions Online, Small Claims Court Submissions. To facilitate these efforts, CSD is seeking feedback

from members of the bar in identifying the top 5-10 reasons that documents uploaded to the portals for filing are rejected (i.e., lack of proof of service; document already filed with the court). While only recently implemented, has the enhancement to include the memo to court staff assisted your members? You can send comments to Katie at katie.robinette@fola.ca.

3. RECOVERY SECRETARIAT

- ❖ **UPDATED GUIDEBOOK:** MAG has updated their [COVID-19: Recommended Precautionary Measures for Resuming Court Operations Guidebook \(English\)](#) . For the French version, [click here](#). Key changes deal with mask wearing; HVAC; and Vaccination.
- ❖ **REMINDER:** Questions about Courthouse operations during COVID-19 can be directed to Samantha Poisson at MAGrecoverysecretariat@ontario.ca.

4. LSO

- ❖ **ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING & TERRORIST FINANCING: NEW BY-LAW AMENDMENTS IN EFFECT JANUARY 1, 2022:** The Law Society's new by-law amendments aimed at combatting money laundering and terrorist financing came into effect on January 1, 2022, and will have an impact on client identification and verification and cash transaction and trust accounting obligations for lawyers and paralegals. They've created resources to support licensees to assist with understanding and complying with the new requirements. [Visit: LSO.ca/amltf](http://LSO.ca/amltf)
- ❖ **CALL FOR APPLICATIONS:** The Law Society has posted a call for applications for a seat on the LSO's Certified Specialist Board and they are in need of a Certified Specialist from outside of Toronto! Deadline is January 31, 2022. See posting [here](#).
- ❖ **ACCESS TO INNOVATION (A2I):** The LSO has published Access to Innovation fact sheets in English and French and has begun accepting applications from providers of innovative technological legal services (ITLS). You can learn more [here](#).

5. FOLA

- ❖ **LOBBY DAY 2022:** FOLA is hosting our 2nd Lobby Day on February 23, 2022! While this time we'll be hosting a virtual event, the day is shaping up to be a full one! We have the AG speaking at noon and the NDP Critic for the AG at 1pm. Plus, there are many small roundtables focusing on a variety of practice-specific issues (i.e.: Family Law, Criminal Law, Legal Aid, Real Estate Law, and Court Issues in general). If you are interested in joining us (for the whole day or just part of it), we have a quick [form](#) we ask that you complete. Have a look at our Agenda [here](#).
- ❖ **MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID:** Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is the support provided to a person who may be experiencing a decline in their mental well-being or a mental health crisis. FOLA has partnered with an MHFA-certified trainer who offers in-person and virtual programs. Sign up individually or arrange for group training via your Association. Mention FOLA and you'll get a great discount! Learn more [here](#).
- ❖ **FOLA's FREE CPD:** Did you know that FOLA has a library of **FREE LSO accredited CPD** videos? Get your hours in before the deadline! Check out our playlist [here](#).
- ❖ **ACCESS TO JUSTICE SURVEY:** The [Action Committee](#) is preparing its annual progress report on access to justice in Canada. New projects or initiatives that happened in 2021 are tracked according to each of the Justice Development goals. Anyone advancing A2J in Canada is invited to share their 2021 activities by completing the JDGs survey [here](#). **The survey is open until February 15, 2022.**
- ❖ **BELL LET'S TALK CAMPAIGN:** Bell Let's Talk Day 2022 will be on January 26th and FOLA is running a #BellLetsTalk Awareness campaign on Twitter! Make sure to share our posts and help share resources and information for and about lawyers and mental health! Follow us on Twitter [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 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.