



COVID-19 & THE PRACTICE OF LAW

SECTOR MEETING UPDATE

Fola.ca

SECTOR CHECK IN LOG #78

February 16, 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 CASELINES NOTICE UPDATE:** Paragraph 7 of Part C of the Superior Court of Justice's [Supplementary Notice to the Profession and Litigants in Civil and Family Matters Regarding the Caselines Pilot, E-Filing, and Fee Payment](#) has been amended to clarify when proof of service must be uploaded to CaseLines in civil matters. The paragraph now reads:
"Affidavits of Service - Upload affidavits of service to CaseLines in all family cases. In civil cases, upload affidavits of service only if service is contested or proof of service is necessary for determining the motion (e.g. motions where responding materials were not filed, solicitor removal motions, motions to add a party (defendant), etc.)".
- ❖ **OPENING OF THE COURTS - SAVE THE DATE:** the 2022 Opening of the Courts of Ontario Ceremony will be held on Monday, October 3, 2022 at 3:30 pm.
- ❖ **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.

2. MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (MAG)

- ❖ **JUSTICE SERVICES ONLINE (JSO) ENHANCEMENTS:** The following enhancements came into effect on the JSO platform on February 14th:
 - Time sensitive documents will be flagged in the Civil Submissions Online (CSO), Family Submissions Online (FSO) and the Small Claims Court Submissions Online (SCCSO) portals. Filers will be asked to identify time sensitive submissions which will be flagged for staff. This new feature will help staff prioritize time sensitive filings and ensure that such submissions are reviewed in advance of a closely approaching court date or deadline. Members of the legal community are encouraged to submit their documents well in advance of the deadline to ensure staff have sufficient time for review. The addition of the “Time Sensitive” column will provide an opportunity to eventually move more filings online and reduce the need for email filings.
 - Filers will have the option to upload a separate document for proof of income where the submission includes a fee waiver request. Separately uploaded proof of income documents will be automatically purged after the submission is accepted or rejected.
 - Accessibility upgrades will be made to allow documents to be submitted in Word (.docx) format. Previously, only PDF documents were accepted. Instructional text with additional information about compatible browsers will also be included.
 - A list of all existing filed documents in a family case will be provided to filers who have submitted documents through FSO. The list will be sent to filers as an attachment to the auto-generated email notice of the accepted submission and will be identical in format to the case history report currently available in FRANK.
 - French names of processed documents will be included in the auto generated notices of acceptance or rejection of a submission for filing and/or issuance in FSO, CSO and SCCSO.

This iterative approach to JSO enhancements builds on earlier work and seeks to prioritize the user experience while minimizing disruption. You will continue to be informed of ongoing enhancements through notices to legal and paralegal associations. If you would like to discuss this initiative, please contact Vaia Pappas, Director, Operational Support Branch at 416-326-2514.

- ❖ **JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS:** The OCJ has posted an opening for an OCJ Judge in Cornwall. Deadline is February 18th. Learn more and apply [here](#).
- ❖ **RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE AMENDMENTS:** On January 21, 2022, a regulation was filed to amend the court rules and forms for civil proceedings in the Superior Court of Justice: [O. Reg. 18/22](#), amending the Rules of Civil Procedure. This regulation makes amendments regarding the service of experts’ reports, the scheduling of pre-trial conferences, the test for leave to admit evidence at trial, and other related provisions. It introduces one new rule, makes amendments to a further twelve rules, and creates one new form. A summary of the regulation is available on Ontario’s Regulatory Registry [here](#).

3. SOLICITOR GENERAL

- ❖ **EXPANSION OF e-INTAKE PLATFORM:** The Ontario government is expanding the use of a digital platform that allows police officers to file criminal charges electronically. The eIntake system will be available in courthouses in the West Region this month following successful launches in the Northeast, Northwest, Central East and Toronto regions. The eIntake digital platform will be available in all courthouses across the West Region including London, Kitchener, and Owen Sound by February 23, 2022. The Ontario government is working to ensure the platform is available provincewide by summer of 2022. You can read the announcement [here](#).

4. RECOVERY SECRETARIAT

- ❖ **REMINDER:** Questions about Courthouse operations during COVID-19 can be directed to Samantha Poisson at MAGrecoverysecretariat@ontario.ca.

5. LSO

- ❖ **CONVOCAATION:** The LSO's next Convocation will be on February 24th starting at 9am. You can watch live via webcast [here](#) (link to be uploaded to the website on that page the morning of the 24th).

6. FOLA

- ❖ **CASELINES TRAINING:** FOLA has announced a new series of CaseLines live training webinars starting in February. Dates/times will be: Wednesday, February 23rd - 4-5:30 PM; Monday, February 28th 1-2:30 PM; and Wednesday March 2nd - 4-5:30 PM (**All times Eastern*). You can register [here](#).
- ❖ **FLSP - JOINT COMMUNIQUE:** In advance of next week's Convocation, FOLA, The Advocates' Society, the Toronto Lawyers Association, and Family Lawyers Association have issued a Joint Communiqué on the LSO's FLSP licencing Report to Convocation. You can read our Communiqué [here](#). As a reminder, the LSO's [Report on Family Legal Services Provider Licence](#) will proceed to Convocation on February 24. If you would like to watch the webcast of the meeting, a link will be available via [LSO.ca](#) on the morning of. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m.
- ❖ **NEW MEMBER REWARDS PARTNER - BOODLES OF BASKETS:** Law Association members get a 15% discount applicable before taxes on all orders! Check out what they offer and start ordering by clicking [here!](#) Your Law Librarian will have the FOLA Code.
- ❖ **LOBBY DAY 2022:** FOLA is hosting our 2nd Lobby Day on February 23, 2022! While registration has now closed, we still have a few spots available for both the Attorney General's talk and Q&A at noon and the NDP's Critic for the Attorney General's talk and Q&A at 1pm. If you are interested and available, please email Katie at katie.robinette@folo.ca and you will be added to our waitlist.

7. LIRN

- ❖ LIRN has signed contracts for several new centralized electronic resources. More information coming shortly but you can see some details here: [LiRN's Electronic Resources Suite](#).

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@folo.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.