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Douglas W. Judson, Chair
Federation of Ontario Law Associations
731 9th Street West
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3P5
Via Email: info@douglasjudson.ca

Dear Mr. Judson,

Thank you for your letter of February 22, 2023 detailing concerns raised by members of the Federation of Ontario Law Associations (FOLA) regarding the Court's expectations in using CaseLines.

I was very pleased to learn that FOLA members view CaseLines as a positive development in the long-overdue modernization of the Superior Court of Justice. As you know, the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Superior Court of Justice, and the Ontario Court of Justice are working collaboratively on procuring and defining requirements for an end-to-end e-filing and document sharing platform as part of the Courts' Digital Transformation Project. I am grateful to the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General for their leadership and support respecting this initiative.

In your letter you note that FOLA members' immediate concerns relate to the judiciary's expectations regarding the format of documents uploaded for use in CaseLines. In particular, the key issue raised relates to the requirement to have links between documents uploaded to CaseLines, such as hyperlinking the text of an affidavit to each of its exhibits, or linking all evidentiary citations in a factum to the evidentiary record. You advise that requiring hyperlinks within individual documents (also called bookmarking) and hyperlinking to external websites, such as CanLII, do not raise concerns.

Staff in my office have reviewed your concerns and have prepared the attached document titled [CaseLines in the Superior Court of Justice – Quick Tips](#). It is available on the Superior Court of Justice website on the new CaseLines page (<https://www.ontariocourts.ca/scj/caselines/>). Section 9 provides detailed instructions on how to prepare documents so that links between them will remain active after uploading to CaseLines. Short instructional videos are also included. This procedure is much simpler and more time-efficient than creating hyperlinks between documents that have

already been uploaded into CaseLines. More comprehensive instructions for using CaseLines are contained in [CaseLines in the Superior Court of Justice: A Guide to Requirements](#), which is also available on the CaseLines page of the Court's website.

Judges and associate judges are extremely appreciative of the efforts made by counsel and their staff to include hyperlinks and bookmarks in their materials. Searching for documents and scrolling through them to find pertinent paragraphs can be extremely time consuming for the judiciary both during pre-hearing preparation and in post-hearing judgment writing. With the continuing efforts of counsel and their staff, judges and associate judges can more effectively use their time, which is essential as the Court continues to tackle the backlog created during the COVID-19 pandemic and copes with a higher than normal number of judicial vacancies.

With respect to your request that all CaseLines user accounts be given automatic access to a sample matter and individual bundle for their use to practice uploading material, I understand that a similar request was made previously, and Thompson Reuters advised that it is not possible.

Thank you again for bringing your members' concerns to my attention. I trust that the new instructional materials will be helpful.

Yours truly,



Geoffrey B. Morawetz,
Chief Justice.

CaseLines in the Superior Court of Justice – Quick Tips

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Below are quick tips for using CaseLines in Superior Court of Justice cases. More detailed information is available on the Superior Court of Justice Website at: <https://www.ontariocourts.ca/scj/caselines/>.

Only upload to CaseLines documents which have been filed with the Court. For filing, refer to the [Notice to the Profession, Public, Parties and Media](#).

1. **Register**

Register as an *Ontario* CaseLine's user at <https://ontariocourts.caselines.com/>. Avoid emails going to your junk folder by making CaseLines a trusted sender. Save "@caselines.com" in your list of email contacts.

2. **Invitations**

You will receive an invitation for your matter from noreply@caselines.com. If you have not received an invitation 5 days prior to the hearing, contact the [court office](#) or opposing counsel and ask for an invitation to be sent.

3. **Logging onto CaseLines**

Once logged on, find your case by selecting **View Case List**. The **Case Filter** box allows you to search for the case name or hearing date. Find the correct event "bundle" (folder) for your hearing and upload documents.

4. **Inviting other lawyers or legal assistants**

If other lawyers or legal assistants need to upload or view documents in CaseLines, ensure to invite other professionals to your case in CaseLines:

- a. Locate the case (found on your "View Case List" screen)
- b. Select the **Update Case** button
- c. Select the "**People**" tab found in the case file
- d. Select "**Invite New Participant**"
- e. Enter the participant's email address and their role (if they do not already have a CaseLines account)
- f. Select all the items listed under **Bundle Access**
- g. Select all the items listed under **Access Permissions**
- h. Select all the items listed under **Emails**
- i. Once you click "**Invite**", an automated CaseLines email will be sent to the person containing a link to the case

You can view a short how-to video [here](#). An additional walkthrough of inviting participants to a case can be found [here](#).

5. What to Upload

You must upload into CaseLines:

- a. Every document you have filed with the court in respect of the hearing or conference, except sealed documents or un-redacted affidavits for the removal of a lawyer;
- b. A factum with hyperlinks to cases on CanLII, or where no factum is required filed, a list of authorities with hyperlinks to cases ([not copies of the cases](#));¹
- c. A completed [Participant Information Form](#);
- d. Any previous orders and endorsements;
- e. In civil and Divisional Court cases, a compendium linking to portions of cases and evidence to which the party intends to refer during the hearing or conference;
- f. If there are to be any exhibits, each exhibit uploaded separately and saved with a descriptive name (the Registrar can only add one electronic exhibit stamp per document);
- g. Draft orders; and
- h. Affidavits of service must be uploaded in family cases. In civil and Divisional Court cases, they should only be uploaded if service is contested, or proof of service is necessary for determining the matter.

For criminal cases, see the [Notice to Profession, Parties, Public and the Media](#) for a list of documents prohibited from being uploaded in CaseLines.

6. Naming Uploaded Documents

To upload into CaseLines, you must save your document using the Court's [Standard Document Naming Protocol](#) by indicating:

- a. Document type (including the form number in family cases);
- b. Type of party submitting the document;
- c. Name of the party submitting the document (including initials if the name is not unique to the case); and
- d. Date on which the document was created or signed, in the format DD-MMM-YYYY (e.g. 12-SEP-2021).

¹ Hyperlink to caselaw on publicly available online sources (such as CanLII). CaseLines will retain hyperlinks to external websites after your document is uploaded. Where these hyperlinks are provided, it is not necessary to file Books of Authorities. For caselaw that is not available online, an abbreviated Book of Authorities should be provided to the court.

7. Hyperlinking documents uploaded to CaseLines to external websites

Hyperlinks in documents that point to external websites will remain active after the document is uploaded to CaseLines (e.g., linking a factum to caselaw on www.canlii.org). Use the hyperlinking function in your word processing software.

8. Hyperlinking to sections within the same document (i.e. bookmarks)

Internal hyperlinks (bookmarks) pointing to a place within the same document will remain active after the document is uploaded to CaseLines. For example, a table of contents in an abbreviated book of authorities can be linked to each of the authorities within. Use the bookmarking function in your word processing software.

9. Hyperlinking two or more documents uploaded to CaseLines to one another

Following the procedure below, you can prepare your documents so that links between them will remain active after uploading to CaseLines. This procedure is much simpler than creating hyperlinks between documents that have already been uploaded.

We will use the example of linking a factum to a trial record. Follow these steps:

- a. Save your factum and trial record as one document.
- b. Create a bookmark or heading for each document in the trial record that will be linked from the factum. Name the bookmark using the [Standard Document Naming Protocol](#) (e.g. Statement of Defence - Defendant – Loblaws Inc. – 13-MAR-2023).

To apply first level bookmarks in Adobe:

- i. Select the area in the PDF file that will serve as the destination for the new bookmark.
- ii. Click on the “**Add Bookmark**” button.
- iii. The new bookmark will either be named “Untitled” or will contain the text that you selected.
- iv. Ensure this bookmark is a top-level bookmark.
- v. Use “**Rename Bookmark**” so the title of the bookmark is consistent with the Court’s naming protocol referenced above. CaseLines will use the title of the bookmark as the document title after upload.

See a short video:  [Prepping Bookmarked Documents in PDF.mp4](#)

To apply Heading 1 bookmarks in MS Word:

- i. Type the name of the document using the Court's naming and numbering protocol referenced above. CaseLines will use the title of the bookmark as the document title after upload.
- ii. In the "**Home**" tab, find the "Styles" feature.
- iii. Select "**Heading 1**".
- iv. The name of your document will be formatted as a heading. This will enable CaseLines to recognize what is under the heading as a distinct document and separate it after upload.
- v. You can use the "Acrobat" tab to convert your Word document into a PDF. Converting your document from Word format to a PDF will retain the first level bookmarks you applied and the links you created between documents.

See a short video:  [Prepping Bookmarked Documents in Word.mp4](#)

- c. Add links from the factum to each bookmark/heading in the trial record.
- d. Upload the document into CaseLines using the "**Upload bookmarked PDF into a single section**" option. (This process can sometimes take several hours for the documents to appear in CaseLines.)
- e. View the list of documents in CaseLines and see that the bookmarks/headings that you applied in the trial record have been created as separate documents. All the links you applied from the factum to the trial record will be retained, even though the documents have been separated by CaseLines.

The above process is particularly important for linking affidavits to multiple exhibits. Exhibits must be displayed as separate documents in CaseLines so that court staff can apply a unique electronic exhibit stamp to each one.

10. Page Numbering

If you are applying your own page numbers in your document creating software, do not use the top or bottom right corner for your pagination. CaseLines will use the top and bottom right of the page to apply its autogenerated page number.

11. How to upload your documents to CaseLines:

To upload your documents to CaseLines:

- a. Find your case and select the **Update Case** button.
- b. Select the "**Upload**" tab.

- c. Ensure the bundle selected is the correct bundle you want to upload your document into (either the event bundle, the Pleadings bundle, or the Orders and Endorsements bundle). If the incorrect bundle is selected, select “**Select Bundle**” to choose the appropriate one from the dropdown list.
- d. In the “Select Section” field, ensure you select the appropriate section to upload your document(s).
 - Select “**Upload File(s)**” if you are uploading documents that do not contain links to other documents that are also being uploaded.
 - Select “**Upload bookmarked PDF into a single section**” if you are uploading documents that you have linked to other documents also being uploaded (see part 7 above for information on how to properly format these types of documents for upload).
- e. Once you select the appropriate upload option, select “**Add Files**” and choose the file(s) you want to upload. If uploading multiple documents, ensure you number them so that CaseLines uploads them in the appropriate order.
- f. Select “**Start Upload**”. Depending on the size of your file, it may take a moment for your documents to appear in the case in CaseLines.

12. Uploading draft orders and forms with fillable fields to CaseLines

You should include draft orders with your materials so the judicial official can access it directly through CaseLines.

You can also upload documents with fillable fields, such as the Trial Management Plan under Rule 76.

Draft orders and forms with fillable fields should be uploaded in Word format so that the judicial official can easily access and provide the appropriate authorization on it. You should ensure all documents in Word format are not password protected prior to uploading them to CaseLines.

13. Accessing virtual hearing details

To access the video conference link through CaseLines:

- a. Log into CaseLines and find your case.
- b. Select **Update Case**.
- c. CaseLines will open your case on the **Case Home** screen.
- d. Select the **Video Conference Link** button.
- e. CaseLines will open a new tab on your web browser that will take you to the virtual hearing room. The Meeting ID and Passcode will also be available on this page.

14. Refer the judicial official to a specific page in your materials

Through the “**Review**” screen, you can direct the judicial official and other parties to a specific page in your material during your hearing or conference. There are two ways to do this:

- a. Provide the judicial official or other parties with the CaseLines-generated document and page number (e.g., B17). Once provided with the page number, access the “**Find**” tab at the top of the screen. Select “**Find page**” and type the CaseLines-generated page number. Press Enter on your keyboard, and CaseLines will take you directly to that page.
- b. You have the option to immediately direct everyone to a specific page during your hearing through the system. To do this, access the “**Find**” tab at the top of the screen and select “**Direct others to Page**”. Using this feature will send a message to all other parties that they can be taken to that specific page. Before selecting “Direct others to Page”, you must ensure “Lawyers, Judges, Court Staff” is selected. You can tell if this option is selected if there is a checkmark in the icon. If there is no checkmark, select the “Lawyers, Judges, Court Staff” button before selecting “Direct others to Page”.

15. Orders and Endorsements

Any orders or endorsements resulting from a hearing using CaseLines will be distributed to parties directly through CaseLines. Once the order or endorsement has been signed, the Court will upload it into the Orders and Endorsements bundle in your case using the following naming protocol: Endorsement - Pre-trial - Justice ABC - 04-MAR-2022. You will receive an email from CaseLines when the order or endorsement has been uploaded.

You can download the order or endorsement directly from CaseLines in two ways:

- a. From the “**Review**” screen:
 - Ensure the selected bundle is the “Orders and Endorsements” bundle;
 - Click “**Download**” at the top of the screen;
 - Select “**Download Document**”.
- b. From the “**Update**” or case file screen:
 - Click on “**Index**” at the top of the screen;
 - Click “**Select Bundle**” to choose the Orders and Endorsement bundle;
 - Find the order or endorsement and select the “**PDF**” button.

Using either of these options will download a PDF version of the order or endorsement directly to your computer.

16. Help

A complete list of CaseLines guides is accessible at the following website:
<https://www.thomsonreuters.ca/en/caselines/ontario-courts-support.html>.

For assistance with technical issues, please contact Thomson Reuters technical support at 1-800-290-9378 and select either “CaseLines”, “Case Center” or “Evidence Sharing” when you reach the directory, or email decsupport@thomsonreuters.com. Support is available from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Monday to Friday).

If you are a **self-represented litigant**, the Ministry of the Attorney General’s Court Services Division is now offering telephone support. Please dial 1-800-980-4962 or 647-438-0403 and select option 4 for CaseLines support or email your questions to info.CaseLines@ontario.ca.

If you are **counsel**, the Ontario Bar Association (OBA) offers training, hands-on tools, and services to assist lawyers and firms in making the transition to using CaseLines. The OBA has partnered with Thomson Reuters in order to receive the training and test environment necessary to help support members of the bar. To learn more about these training packages, visit: <https://www.oba.org/Professional-Development-Resources/Caselines/Case-Training-Options>.