

LAW SOCIETY OF ONTARIO UPDATE

Diana Miles CEO

MAY 2021



Law Society
of Ontario

Barreau
de l'Ontario

CEO's Office

Vision and Values in a Pandemic

The CEO and Senior Management Executive set the objectives for the organization's COVID-19 Response. Highlights of just a few of the Law Society's efforts and continuing support of our employees, the public and licensees during the ongoing pandemic are referenced throughout this report. The challenges of managing a multi-faceted organization during a global health crisis were significant. The Law Society rose to that challenge and the 2020 annual results are a testament to the dedication of our team and their singular focus on ensuring that the organization's mandate was fulfilled to protect the public.

In the public interest, we continue to strive for the gold standard in regulatory response, participate in the community as a good corporate citizen, and maintain our reputation as an employer of choice.

Our team remains **UNITED IN PURPOSE** in support of our **LEGACY** of **EXCELLENCE** and **RESPONSIVENESS** while maintaining our **COMPASSION** for one another and those with whom we interact.

2019-2023 Strategic Priorities

2020 Burden Reduction Outcomes

PRIORITY: Achieving Proportionate Regulation

- Initial work of the Proportionate Regulation Task Force with transition of issues to regulatory committees
- Ongoing work of the Technology Task Force
- Implementation of streamlined Annual Report Filings process
- Permission for licensing candidates to choose between an administrative licensing process or participation in a formal licensing ceremony (call to the bar)
- Removal of the requirement for licensing candidates to sign the Rolls of the Court of Appeal and the Superior Court of Ontario
- A shift to more condensed and online licensing examinations (four hours) and a significantly more accessible delivery platform in response to the pandemic
- Removal of the requirement for the Law Society to approve the names of licensee professional corporations
- Removal of requirements that licensees notify the Law Society before entering into affiliations, apply for approval before entering into multi-discipline partnerships and file annual reports in respect of an affiliation or a multi-discipline partnership



2019-2023 Strategic Priorities

2020 Outcomes

PRIORITY: Achieving Proportionate Regulation

- Removal of the reciprocity requirement for the issuance of a Foreign Legal Consultant permit
- Approval in principle to permit Quebec lawyers to practise in Ontario subject to the same terms and conditions as lawyers from other Canadian provinces
- Discontinuation of the Professional Conduct and Practice in Ontario Course
- Adoption of a single default period for the requirements to pay an annual fee, report on compliance with CPD requirements and file an annual report, beginning in 2021
- Elimination of all late fees for non-compliance with the requirements above
- Reduction of the default periods for the requirements above to 30 days for 2021 and 2022 and to a further reduced period for 2023, to enable a prompt suspension process for a licensee who fails to comply with the requirements by the required date

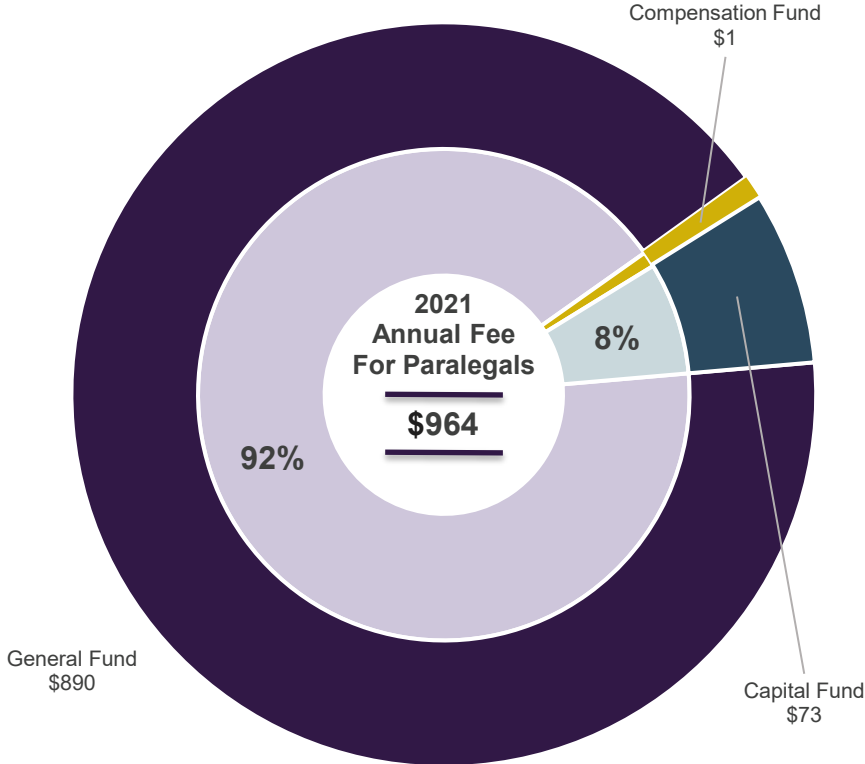
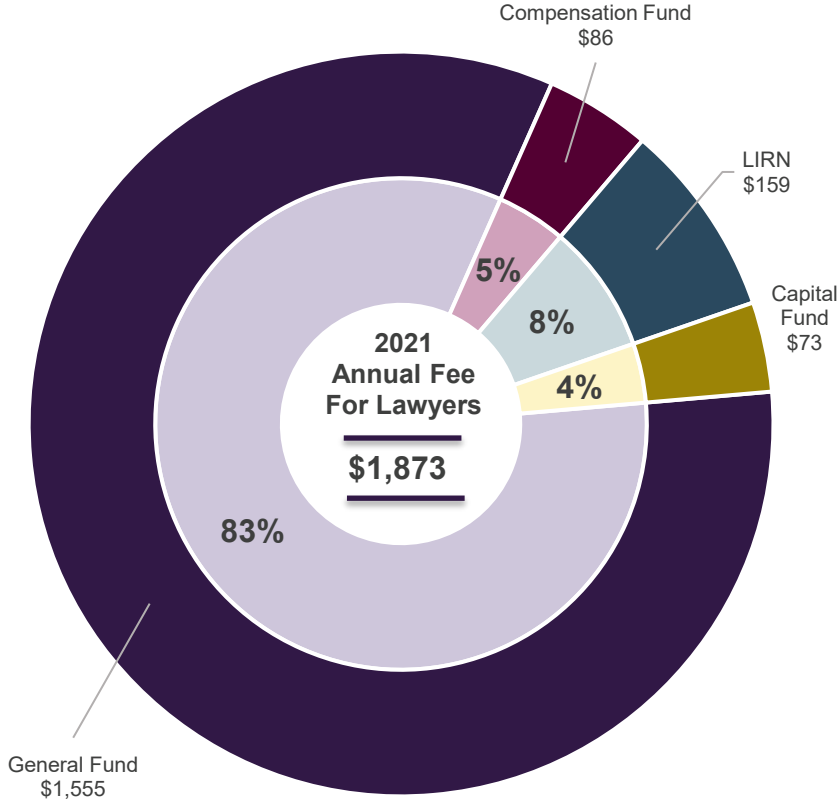
Financial COVID-19 Response and Impacts

Selected financial pandemic response efforts:

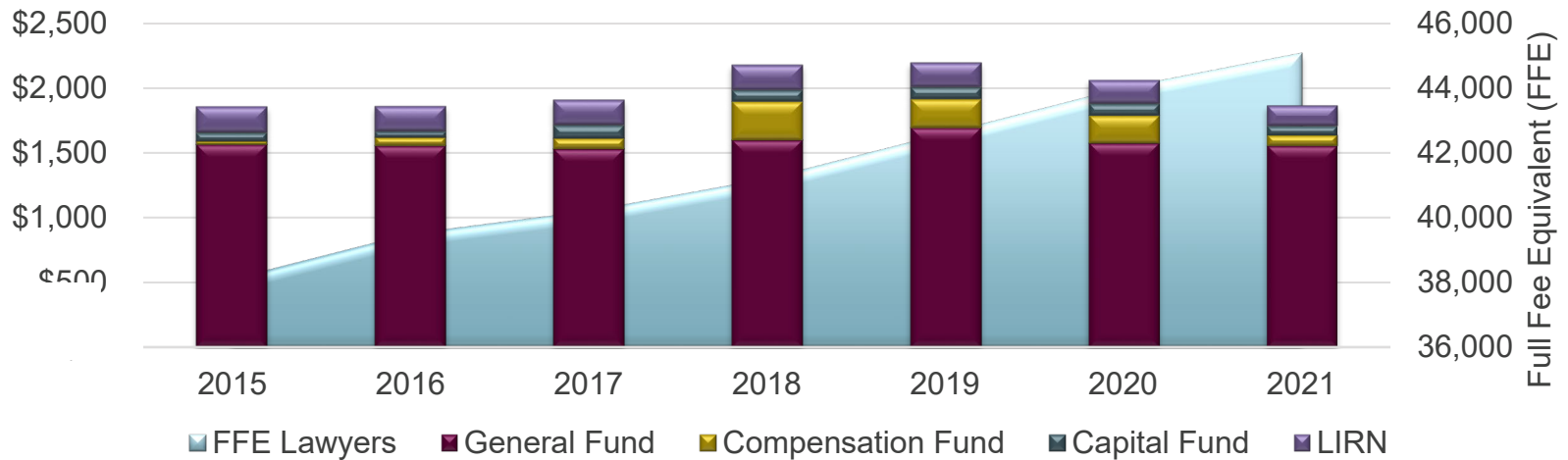
- Implement deferral of monthly payment plan for licensees
- Negotiate refunds and credits for contractual commitments
- Reduction in revenues across the organization: balanced by active reduction in expenditures and pivot of programs and resources
- Implement 2021 Annual Fee COVID-19 Deferral Option: over 1000 applicants for deferral, totalling over \$1.5 million in fees that will not be received in 2021
- Reduction of 77 employees (75 terminations) and decrease in salaries and benefits of \$4.9 million compared to 2020: impact on workflow and production for 2021
- Support to external organizations reduced by 10%: directly in line with overall LSO reductions
- Proactive reduction in expenditures for all LSO programs and operations, including human resources and subsidiaries: licensee fees reduced for 2021.



2021 Annual Fee

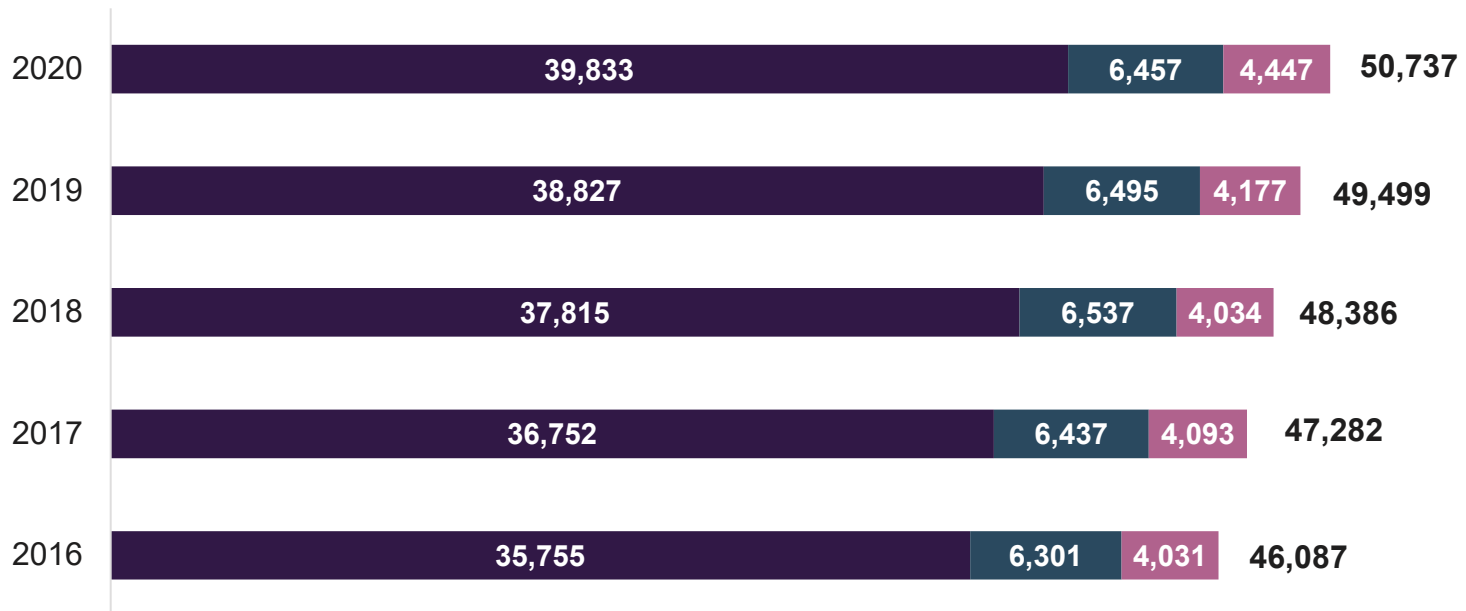


Historical Annual Fees For Lawyers



Annual Fee Breakdown	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 Approved
General Fund	\$ 1,563	\$ 1,555	\$ 1,531	\$ 1,598	\$ 1,693	\$ 1,574	\$1,555
Compensation Fund	32	71	87	300	226	219	86
LIRN	202	194	194	194	191	182	159
Capital Fund	69	47	104	91	91	91	73
Total Annual Fee	\$ 1,866	\$ 1,867	\$ 1,916	\$ 2,183	\$ 2,201	\$ 2,066	\$1,873
FFE Lawyers	38,100	39,500	40,200	41,200	42,600	44,000	45,075

Lawyers by Fee Category

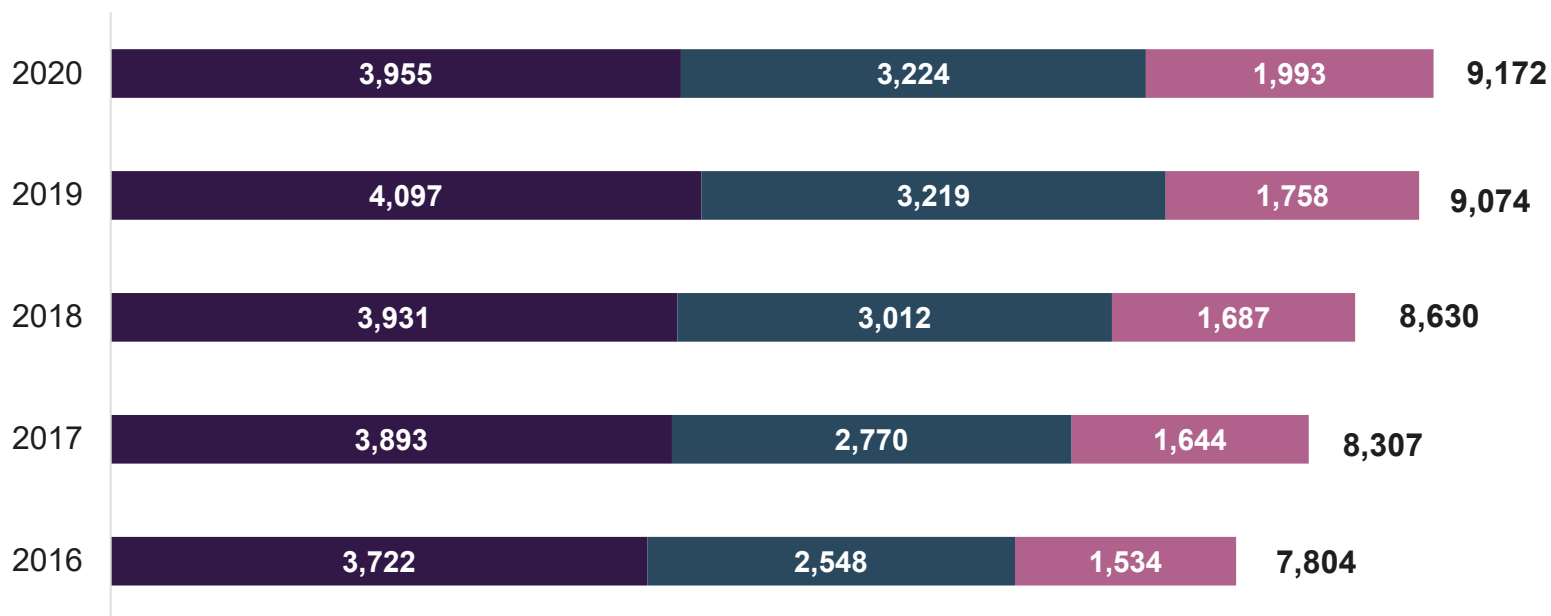


Number of Licensees

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
■ 100% Fee	35,755	36,752	37,815	38,827	39,833
■ 50% Fee	6,301	6,437	6,537	6,495	6,457
■ 25% Fee	4,031	4,093	4,034	4,177	4,447

■ 100% Fee ■ 50% Fee ■ 25% Fee

Paralegals by Fee Category



Number of Licensees

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
■ 100% Fee	3,722	3,893	3,931	4,097	3,955
■ 50% Fee	2,548	2,770	3,012	3,219	3,224
■ 25% Fee	1,534	1,644	1,687	1,758	1,993

■ 100% Fee ■ 50% Fee ■ 25% Fee

*25% Fee includes licensees on parental leave. Any no fee or blank items were categorized with the majority fee category class of that class/status group.

Client & People Services

Client Service Centre

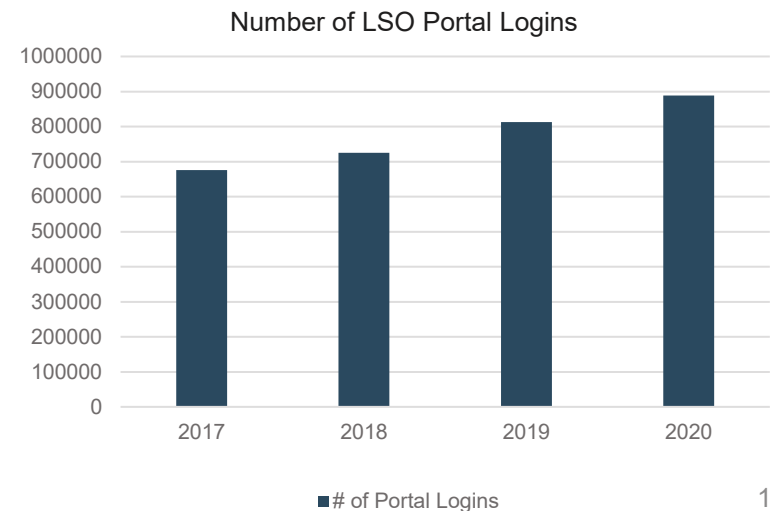
The Client Service Centre is often the first point of contact at the Law Society for thousands of members of the public and licensees. Services provided in this area include:

- Front line services such as Call Centre, Portal Support and assistance with general licensee inquiries
- Administration of licensees' obligatory requirements including Annual Report, Annual Fees, Continuing Professional Development and Insurance
- Intake, review and resolution of complaints
- Applications for practice permits and certain licences for lawyers from other jurisdictions
- Law Society Referral Service

Typically a paper-heavy area, the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic led the CSC to transform their processes to new electronic processes to ensure continuity of service. In doing so, the CSC worked to make their PDFs more accessible and easy to complete and transitioned to processing 100% of applications with electronic files.

The push towards electronic processes included encouraging licensees to use the LSO Portal to change their information and fulfill their obligations. In 2020, there were 888,913 logins to the Portal, a 9% increase from 2019.

Greater utilization of the Portal is more resource efficient and in 2021 efforts will continue to increase Portal usage with the addition of the new obligation to have and use an LSO Portal account.



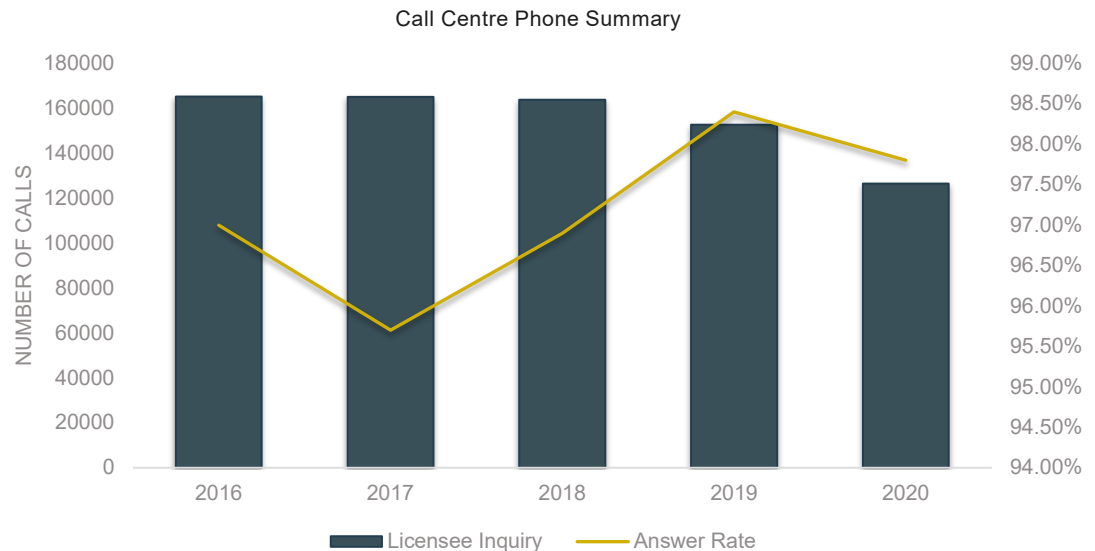
Client & People Services

Client Service Centre

Call Centre

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the Call Centre saw a temporary reduction in calls during the months of April and May as licensees and the public dealt with the crisis. This resulted in lower annual volume for 2020, as compared to other years. By mid-year, Call Centre volume began to return to pre-pandemic levels as business resumed. In December, call volumes were 8.6% higher than in December, 2019.

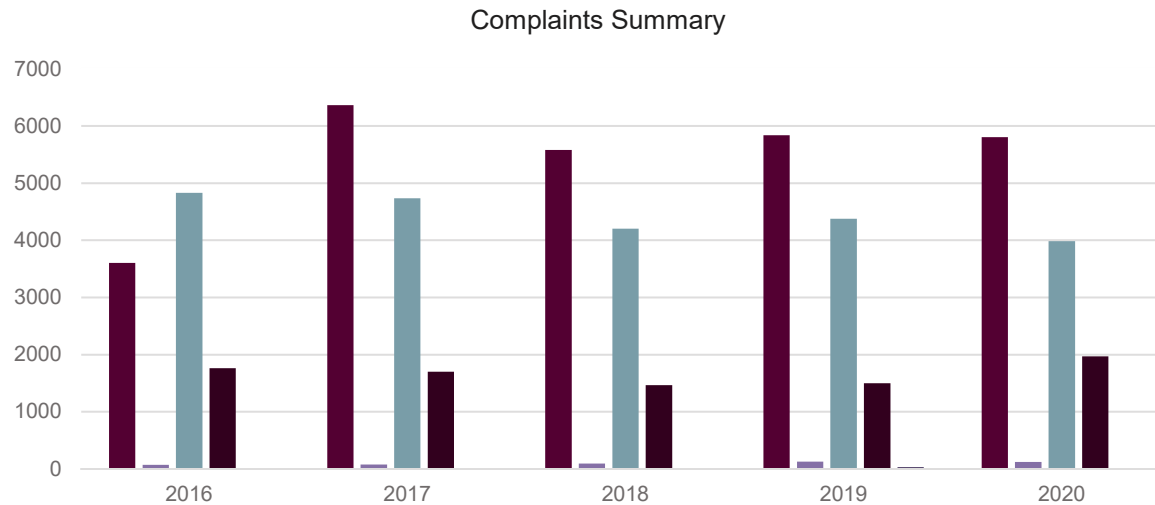
The Call Centre received 126,482 phone calls in 2020 and achieved an **Average Call Answer Rate** of 97.8%. While still high, there was a slight decline in the 2020 Call Answer Rate from 2019. The slower Call Answer Rate was largely the result of a reduction in the Call Centre's headcount as part of the LSO's response to the pandemic.



Client & People Services Complaints and Compliance

The Complaints and Compliance team is the first point of contact for complaints against licensees. As a front-line service, it is managed within the LSO's Client Service Centre and supports all initial intake for complaints. Volumes have remained relatively stable for the past five years, with 5808 complaints received in 2020.

Efforts are made to resolve complaints at this level and reduce the volume being transferred to Professional Regulation. In 2020, 34% of complaints received were closed within Complaints and Compliance, a 31% increase from 2019.



Professional Development & Competence Licensing Process

716 candidates wrote the rescheduled March Solicitor examination online in June 2020

5,839 online lawyer and paralegal examinations written in summer and fall 2020 (over 8000 to end of 2021 first quarter)

Online Licensing Examinations

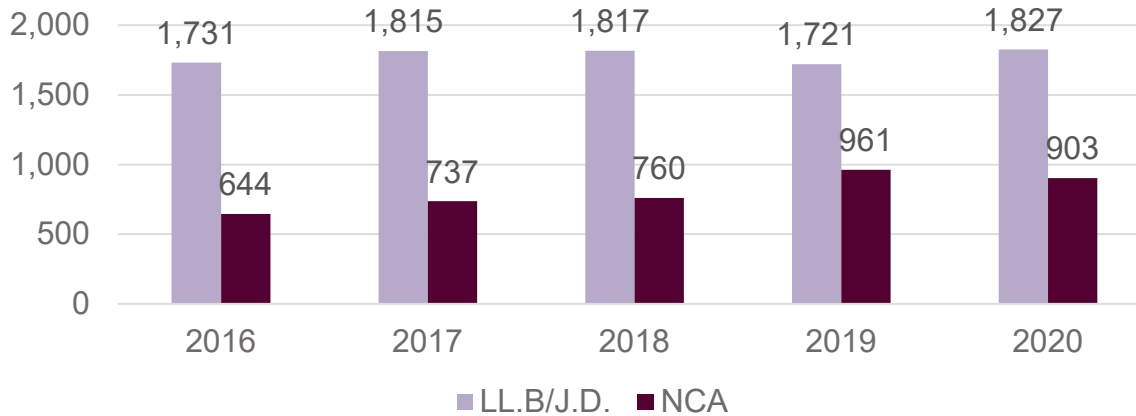
Transitioned from the in-person, paper based model to an online, remote proctored model in **9 weeks**

Candidates have expressed high levels of satisfaction with the online platform and remote proctoring

Security protocols have functioned effectively to maintain examination integrity

Professional Development & Competence Licensing Process

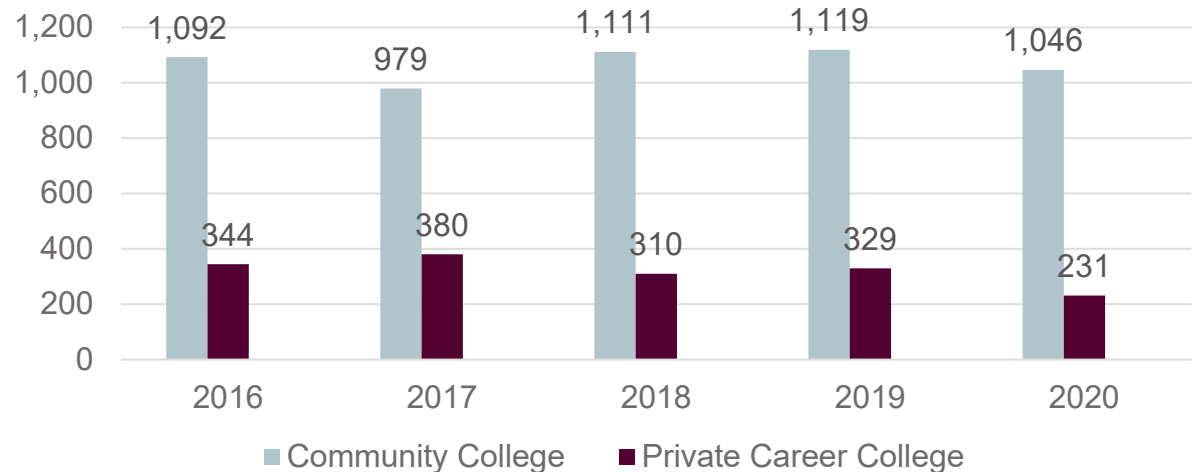
Lawyer Registrants by Education Path



In 2020, 67% of registrants graduated from a Canadian law school and 33% obtained their law degree outside of Canada. COVID-related delays to the NCA credentialing process in the summer of 2020 may have impacted the number of internationally trained applicants.

In 2020, 82% of registrants graduated from a community college and 19% graduated from a private career college. While the number of applicants from private career colleges has been decreasing over the past 5 years, the 2020 data may be skewed as a result of COVID-related restrictions that impacted college graduation rates.

Paralegal Registrants by Education Path



Professional Development & Competence Licensing Process

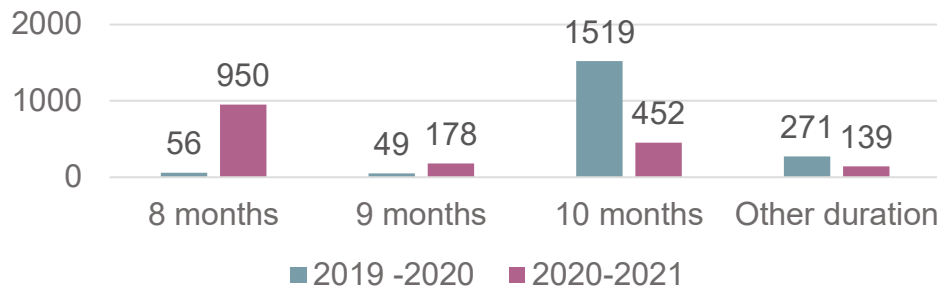
Lawyer Licensing – Experiential Training

	2019	2020
Number of articling placements	2104	1913
Law Practice Program enrollment	199	270
Programme pratique du droit enrollment	13	12



~190 fewer articling positions
~70 more LPP registrants

Length of Articling Placements



More than **50%** of 2020-2021 articling placements have been 8 months long: 84% of placements in large firms, 59% of placements in medium firms, and 55% of placements in solo and small firms were reduced to 8 months.

Professional Development & Competence Practice Management Helpline

9,887 inquiries

15% increase compared to 2019

46 COVID-19 practice management, trust
accounting and bookkeeping FAQs

170,000 page
views

7,945 lawyer
inquiries

1,271 paralegal
inquiries

67% of inquiries
from solo and
small

Professional Development & Competence

Continuing Professional Development

Policy Change

In 2020, lawyers and paralegals were permitted to engage in up to 12 hours of on demand learning towards the CPD requirement. In the past, on demand learning has been limited to 6 hours per year. This flexibility was introduced to address the restrictions created by the pandemic and has been extended for 2021.



18 free
COVID-19
programs



138 regular
CPD programs



142 free
archived
programs

119,269 total registrations in 2020
compared to **52,805** in 2019

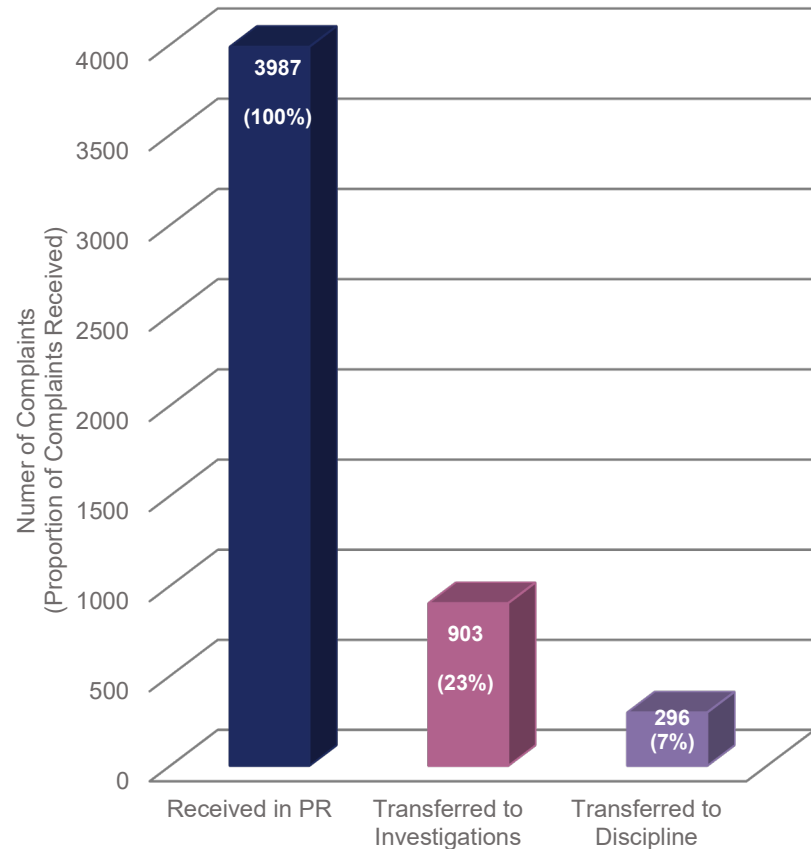


Professional Regulation Complaints by Department

In 2020:

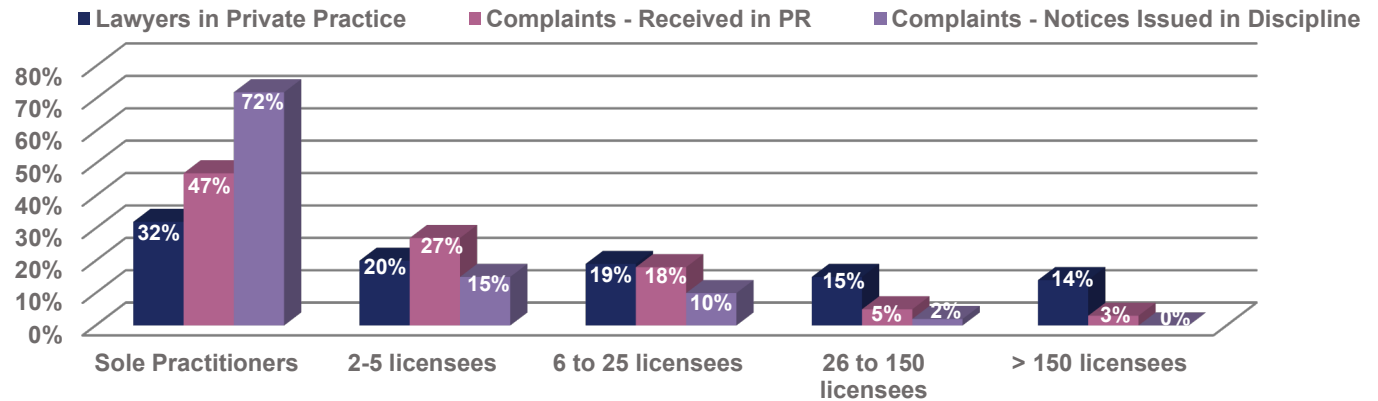
- 23% of new complaints received in the Division were transferred to Investigations
- 29% of complaints received by Investigations were referred to Discipline
- 7% of all complaints were referred to Discipline.

These percentages are relatively stable annually.

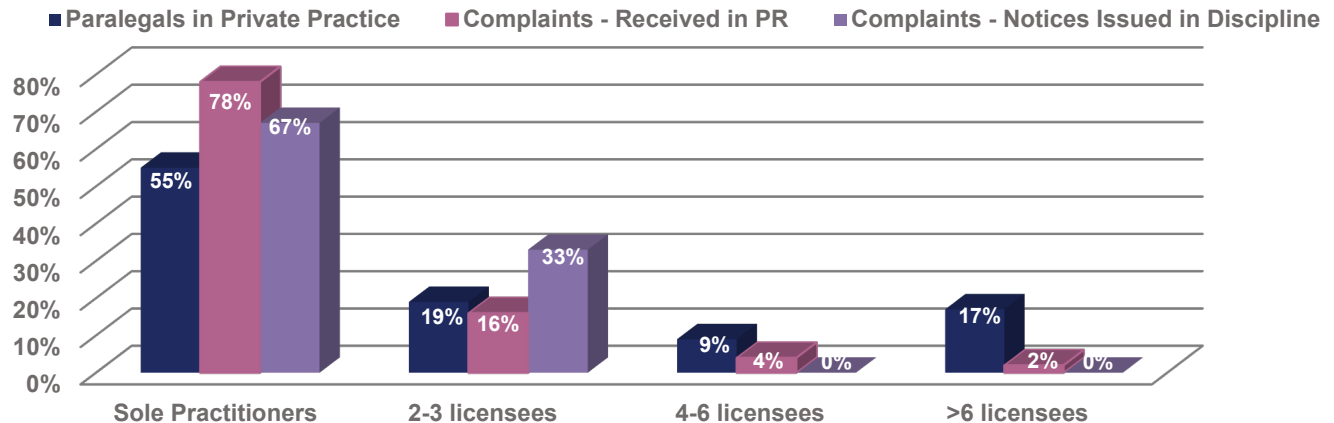


Professional Regulation Firm Size

Lawyer Firm Size - Complaints Received & Notices Issued



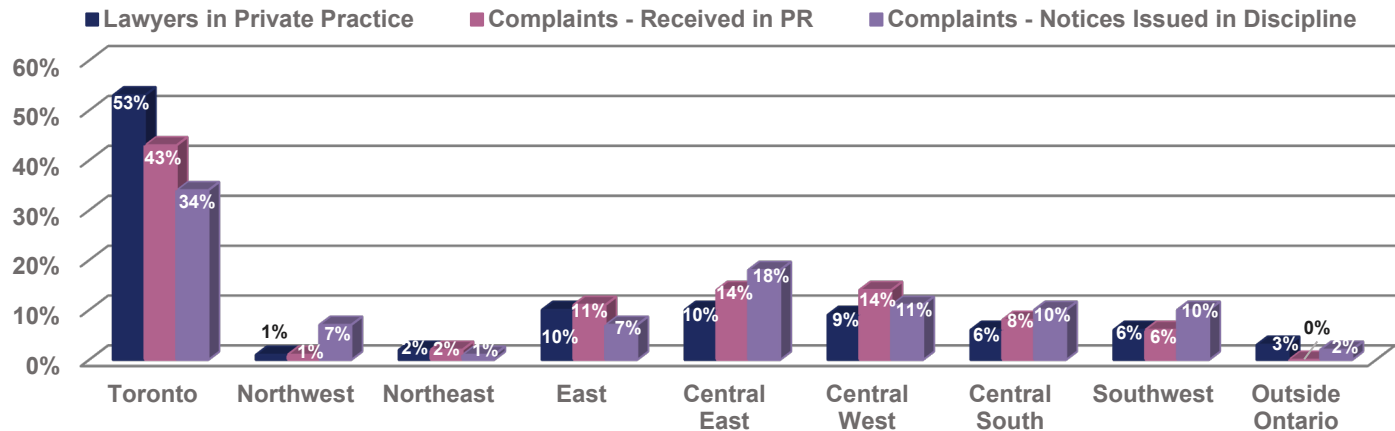
Paralegal Firm Size - Complaints Received & Notices Issued



Complaints received and discipline action taken by firm size.

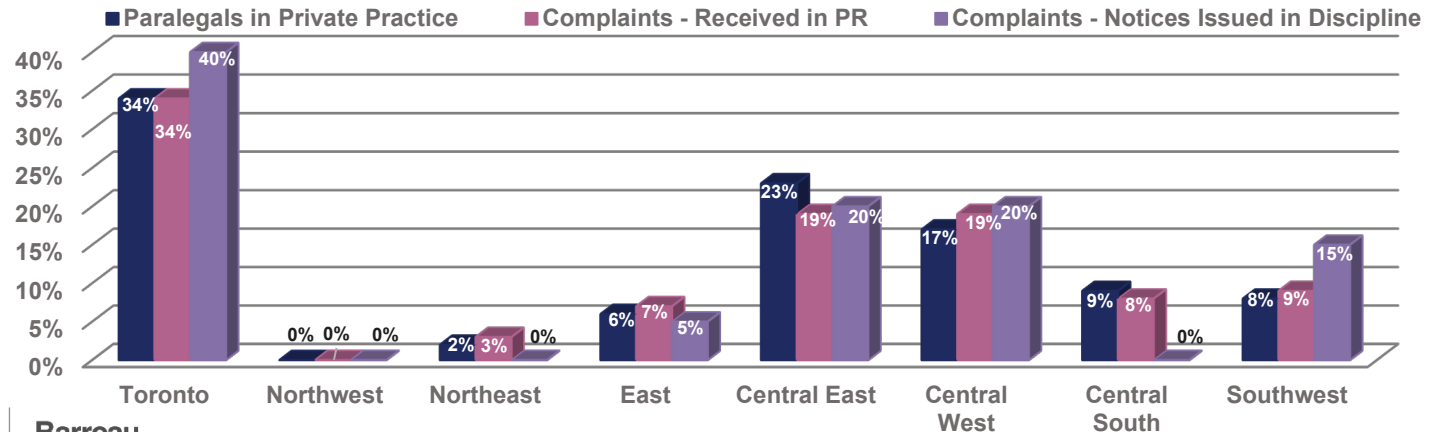
Professional Regulation Geographic Location

Lawyers - Complaints Received & Notices Issued



Complaints received and discipline action taken by geographic location.

Paralegals - Complaints Received & Notices Issued



Professional Regulation Trustee Services

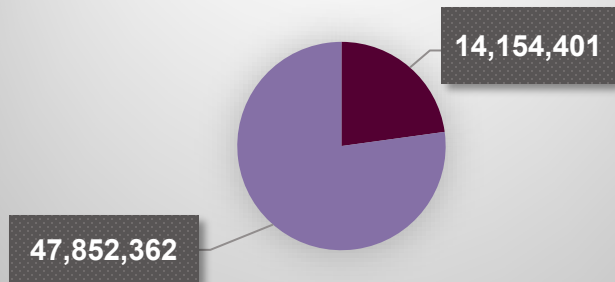
The sharp increase in active practice assistance requests is likely due in part to the pandemic and associated challenges for practitioners.

	Mid-March to end December 2019	Mid-March to end December 2020
Active practice wind-up to licensees or their families: new cases	114	208
Court ordered trusteeship cases	13	12
Active practice wind-up assistance to licensees or their families: completed	34	64
Court ordered trusteeship cases completed	6	5
Inventory: Active Practice wind-up assistance to licensees or their families: ongoing administration – mid-March	74	96
Inventory: Active Practice wind-up assistance to licensees or their families: ongoing administration – December 31	93	138
Inventory Court Ordered Trusteeships – mid-March	27	34
Inventory Court Ordered Trusteeships – December 31	35	41
Responses to requests from public/licensees looking for files, wills, and funds relating to active and closed trusteeships or for practice disposition information	2,696	2,223
Unclaimed Trust Funds – applications completed	366	466
Inventory Unclaimed Trust Funds – applications December 31	116	69

External Relations and Communications Website

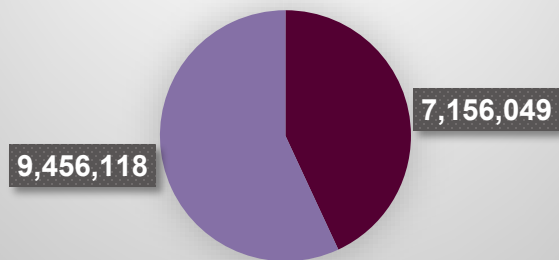
Sitewide page views

■ 2019 ■ 2020



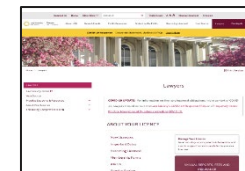
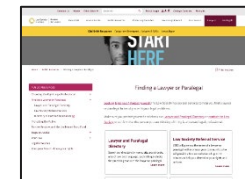
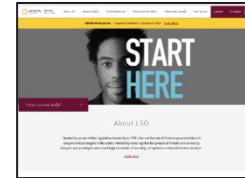
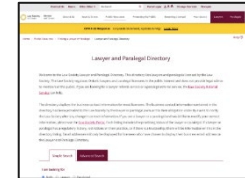
Sitewide unique views

■ 2019 ■ 2020



LSO.ca: top performing content

- 1 Directory**
 5,551,053 page views
 11.60% of 2020 site traffic
- 2 Home Page**
 2,685,985 page views
 5.61% of 2020 site traffic
- 3 COVID-19 Response**
 1,213,655 page views
 2.54% of 2020 site traffic
- 4 Find a Lawyer/Paralegal**
 938,909 page views
 1.96% of 2020 site traffic
- 5 Lawyers**
 466,717 page views
 0.98% of 2020 site traffic



Licensee and Firm Data

As of December 31, 2020



Law Society
of Ontario

Barreau
de l'Ontario

Licensee and Firm Data

December 31, 2020

Lawyers by Status	Total
Sole Owner*	9,470
Partner	7,049
Employee	1,512
Associate	9,345
Employed in Education (100% Fees)	109
Employed in Government (100% Fees)	5,011
In-House	6,235
Legal Clinic	621
Canadian Legal Advisor - Practising	42
Practising Law Total	39,394
Employed in Education (Not 100% Fees)	517
Employed in Government (Not 100% Fees)	1,399
Otherwise Employed	2,981
Not Working or Retired	4,777
Exempt over 65 (By-Law 5)	5,016
Excused Fee (By-Law 5)	502
Emeritus	3
Canadian Legal Advisor – Not Practising	6
Not Practising Law Total	15,201
New or Status to be Confirmed	782
Not in Ontario	1,576
To be Confirmed Total	2,358
Total excluding Suspended and Abeyance	56,953

*Sole Owner: the number of lawyers who have self-identified as a Sole Owner of the firm, as opposed to being a partner, associate or employee. This should not be confused with a lawyer who is Practising Alone, as Sole Owners may employ other licensees. Lawyers do not specify the number of licensees that they work with when selecting or updating their employment status; therefore these lawyers may or may not be practising or working alone. These statistics are based solely on the status selected by the lawyer. On the website, the description of this status is "Sole Practitioner (Sole Owner)".

Licensee and Firm Data

December 31, 2020

Paralegals by Status	Total
Sole Owner*	1,677
Partner	172
Employee	810
Associate	246
Employed in Education (100% Fees)	7
Employed in Government (100% Fees)	244
In-House	433
Legal Clinic	110
Providing Legal Services Total	3,699
Employed in Education (Not 100% Fees)	80
Employed in Government (Not 100% Fees)	536
Otherwise Employed	2,592
Not Working or Retired	2,019
Exempt over 65 (By-Law 5)	228
Excused Fee (By-Law 5)	78
No Proof of Insurance (Paralegal)	9
Not Providing Legal Services Total	5,542
New or Status to be Confirmed	335
Not in Ontario	31
To be Confirmed Total	366
Total excluding Suspended and Abeyance	9,607

*Sole Owner: the number of paralegals who have self-identified as a Sole Owner of the firm, as opposed to being a partner, associate or employee. This should not be confused with a paralegal who is Practising Alone, as Sole Owners may employ other licensees. Paralegals do not specify the number of licensees that they work with when selecting or updating their employment status; therefore these paralegals may or may not be providing legal services or working alone. These statistics are based solely on the status selected by the paralegal. On the website, the description of this status is "Sole Practitioner (Sole Owner)".

Licensee and Firm Data

December 31, 2020

Lawyers by Age Range

Total Number of Lawyers: **56,953**

Average Age of Lawyers: **49**

Age Range	Female	Male	Total Lawyers
Under 30	2,387	1,652	4,039
30-39	8,273	7,231	15,504
40-49	6,431	5,900	12,331
50-65	6,175	8,868	15,043
Over Age 65	1,830	8,206	10,036
Total	25,096	31,857	56,953

Paralegals by Age Range

Total Number of Paralegals: **9,607**

Average Age of Paralegals: **42**

Age Range	Female	Male	Total Paralegals
Under 30	1,763	427	2,190
30-39	2,148	749	2,897
40-49	1,125	593	1,718
50-65	1,149	1,052	2,201
Over Age 65	150	451	601
Total	6,335	3,272	9,607

Licensee and Firm Data

December 31, 2020

Lawyers and Paralegals By Region

Region	Lawyer	Paralegal	Total Licensees
Central East Muskoka, Haliburton, Northumberland, Peterborough, Simcoe, Victoria, Durham, York	4,867	1,918	6,785
Central South Brant, Haldimand-Norfolk, Hamilton-Wentworth, Niagara, Waterloo	3,054	844	3,898
Central West Bruce, Dufferin, Grey, Wellington, Halton, Peel	4,916	1,756	6,672
East Frontenac, Hastings, Lanark, Lennox and Addington, Prince Edward, Renfrew, Leeds and Grenville, Prescott and Russell and Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, Ottawa-Carleton	7,390	666	8,056
Metropolitan Toronto	27,806	3,485	31,291
Northeast Algoma, Cochrane, Manitoulin, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Sudbury, Timiskaming	764	120	884
Northwest Kenora, Rainy River, Thunder Bay	457	23	480
Outside Ontario	4,915	167	5,082
Southwest Elgin, Essex, Huron, Kent, Lambton, Middlesex, Oxford, Perth	2,784	628	3,412
Total	56,953	9,607	66,560

Licensee and Firm Data

December 31, 2020

Lawyers and Paralegals in Private Practice by Firm Size of Primary Business

Firm Size	Number of Lawyers	Number of Paralegals	Total Licensees
Practising alone (1 licensee in private practice)	8,552	1,559	10,111
2-5 lawyers/paralegals in private practice	5,491	714	6,205
6-10 lawyers/paralegals in private practice	2,436	223	2,659
11-15 lawyers/paralegals in private practice	1,287	93	1,380
16-20 lawyers/paralegals in private practice	818	49	867
21-25 lawyers/paralegals in private practice	499	17	516
26-50 lawyers/paralegals in private practice	1,861	128	1,989
51+ lawyers/paralegals in private practice	5,987	18	6,005
Total	26,931	2,801	29,732

This table breaks down lawyers and paralegals who are in a private practice status and are linked to a business type of Law Firm or Paralegal Firm, by their Firm Size. These statistics are based only on businesses that have been designated as a primary business for a licensee. Firm Size is based on the number of lawyers and paralegals in a private practice status linked to the firm. Lawyers and paralegals in a Sole Owner, Partner, Employee or Associate status are considered to be in private practice.

Questions?

Contact
Diana

- dmiles@lso.ca
- 416-947-3328