

**Attorney General**  
McMurtry-Scott Building  
720 Bay Street  
11th Floor  
Toronto ON M7A 2S9  
Tel: 416-326-4000  
Fax: 416-326-4007

**Procureur général**  
Édifce McMurtry-Scott  
720, rue Bay  
11<sup>e</sup> étage  
Toronto ON M7A 2S9  
Tél.: 416-326-4000  
Télec.: 416-326-4007



Our Reference #: M-2020-5561

Dear Stakeholder:

I am writing to you today regarding proposed reforms for Notaries Public and Commissioners for Taking Affidavits.

Since assuming the role of Attorney General, I have made it my key priority to identify opportunities to modernize Ontario's justice system and to implement those changes.

As part of our government's commitment to advancing Ontario's outdated justice system, we are speeding up our proposal to pave the way for Ontarians to sign documents online. Not all legal and business transactions should require a visit to a law firm or government office, and Ontarians should be able to verify legal and business documents from the safety and convenience of home.

Experience gained during the COVID-19 outbreak has underscored the need to establish innovative ways for Ontarians to access legal services, including moving more services online for safety and convenience. As part of the permanent action we are taking to bring Ontario's justice system into the 21st century, our government is proposing to modernize the work of notaries public and commissioners for taking affidavits.

Building on the Ministry of the Attorney General's outreach in 2019, and further to the passage of Bill 190, the *COVID-19 Response and Reforms to Modernize Ontario Act, 2020*, my ministry is interested in hearing your views and experiences to help inform future regulation development with respect to virtual notarization, virtual commissioning, appointment term lengths and fees.

As with any changes our government makes, safety and security are our top priorities. Our government will be basing its approach on feedback from the legal community and best practices from other jurisdictions to ensure data and online security continues to be protected.

As a next step towards modernizing the process for notaries public and commissioners for taking affidavits, we will be holding stakeholder consultation sessions from June 1 to June 12, 2020. To ensure the health and safety of all involved, the consultations will be conducted via teleconference.

If someone from your organization would like to participate in a consultation, please provide your availability as soon as possible. We would appreciate receiving your response to this invitation no later than Friday, May 29, 2020. We will do our best to accommodate your preferred times.

Please note that the ministry may share or disclose any comments that are made on behalf of an organization or business with respect to this consultation process. By submitting comments, you are deemed to consent to the sharing of information contained in the comments and your business contact information. Business contact information is the name, title and contact information of anyone submitting comments in a business, professional or official capacity.

An individual who provides a response and who indicates an affiliation with an organization will be considered to have submitted the response on behalf of that organization. If you have any questions regarding the collection of information or the consultation process, you may contact Ms. Arielle Hercules-Ramcharan by email at [arielle.hercules-ramcharan@ontario.ca](mailto:arielle.hercules-ramcharan@ontario.ca) or by telephone at 437-229-2552.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding these important proposed reforms to modernize Ontario's justice system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Downey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end of the name.

Doug Downey  
Attorney General