



COVID-19 & THE PRACTICE OF LAW

WEEKLY UPDATE

Fola.ca

COVID-19 - WEEKLY CHECK IN LOG #18

July 22, 2020

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 - Political and Department staff

Issues discussed:

1. Courts

- ❖ The OCJ produced a guide for family Self Represented Litigants during COVID-19. You can view that [here](#).
- ❖ The OCJ is working to consolidate their Family and Criminal Practice Notices and are working towards an early August posting date.
- ❖ The SCJ posted a new notice (on July 21st) from Chief Justice Morawetz regarding justice participants unable to attend SCJ proceedings in person. You can view that [here](#).
- ❖ The SCJ mentioned that they continue to experience bandwidth issues and reminded us that they are aware of the issue and are working to address this.
- ❖ The SCJ noted that some regions are experiencing a low uptake on trials with many requesting adjournments. Of note was at the Brampton Courthouse in Peel Region (where there seems to be a spike in COVID-19 cases).
- ❖ The SCJ has not posted any new regional notices over the past week and there is no indication that any are forthcoming. To see all Regional Notices click [here](#).
- ❖ The College Park (Toronto) Courthouse remains closed.

2. LSO

- ❖ As part of its mandate, the Law Society recommends and makes appointments to a variety of boards, councils and committees and they are currently seeking applications from qualified individuals for the following appointments:
 - Legal Aid Board of Directors
 - Federal Judicial Advisory Committee
 - Civil Rules Committee
 - Family Rules Committee
 - Legal Aid Board of Directors (deadline - August 15, 2020)
- They will be considering applications for other appointments beginning this fall. For more information, and to submit an application, please click [here](#).

3. FOLA

❖ **RE-OPENING OF THE COURTS:**

Wondering what to expect when visiting a courthouse? Visit our [Courts](#) page on our website to access a link to get pre-screened, a video, and a guidebook.

❖ **REMINDERS:**

1. **LIBEL & SLANDER ACT CONSULTATIONS:** The Ontario's Attorney General has a **call for submissions/comment on Ontario's Libel & Slander Act**. Submissions are due August 1st and FOLA is preparing a submission. If you would like to share your thoughts for FOLA to consider as we prepare our submission, please visit [here](#) for more information and email your comments to Katie.Robinette@folo.ca with "LIBEL & SLANDER" in the subject line. While our deadline for member comment was July 20th, we are still open to comments for the remainder of this week.
 2. **DISCOUNT RATE CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:** The Court of Appeal has asked FOLA to prepare a submission regarding the report of the Discount Rate Subcommittee of the Civil Rules Committee dated April 27, 2020 and entitled "[Report to the Civil Rules Committee on rules 53.09 and 53.10](#)". If you would like to offer input, please email your comments to Katie.Robinette@folo.ca with "DISCOUNT RATE" in the subject line. While our deadline for member comment has passed, we are still open to comments for the remainder of this week. [See more](#).
 3. **FAMILY LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDER (FLSP) LICENSING MODEL CALL FOR COMMENT:** The Law Society's Access to Justice Committee is inviting lawyers to provide comments on a FLSP Licensing model. The proposed scope of permissible activities, required competencies, and outline of the training program are detailed in the Access to Justice Committee's FLSP Licence Consultation Paper. FOLA is preparing a submission and if you would like to offer input for our Submission, please email Katie.Robinette@folo.ca and put "FLSP" in the subject line by October 15, 2020. [See more](#).
 4. **REMOTE HEARINGS:** The e-Hearings Task Force (of which FOLA is a member) has drafted some documents that have been designed to help you prepare for Remote Hearings (which you can find on our Courts page [here](#)). If you have participated in a remote hearing and have some additional suggestions, FOLA would love to hear them! Please email Katie Robinette at katie.robinette@folo.ca and put "REMOTE HEARINGS" in the subject line.
- ❖ **FAVOUR:** FOLA is looking for content for our now-regular "Association Shout-out" section in our August newsletter. If your Law Association is doing something that you consider unique that is either giving back to the community or helping to engage your members, please do share this with Katie at katie.robinette@folo.ca. The goal of this section is to get other Associations to either copy your idea or adapt it into something that they, too, might be able to offer their members. Thanks!

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. If your concerns are related to issues surrounding health and safety measures as the Courts expand in person operations, please indicate the name of the Courthouse and the steps you have already taken to address your concerns to MAGrecoverysecretariat@ontario.ca.