



COVID-19 & THE PRACTICE OF LAW

WEEKLY UPDATE

Fola.ca

COVID-19 - WEEKLY CALL CHECK IN LOG #8

May 6, 2020

Summary

Invited participants on 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 Courts are drafting an update regarding media access and hearing lists. At present, members of the public and the media must submit a request to the Registrar's office. This process is unlikely to change.
 - ❖ The SCJ has three new notices: [Notice to the Profession, Litigants, Accused Persons and the Media Regarding the Continued Suspension of in-court matters to July 6, 2020](#) (May 5, 2020); [Order Further Adjourning Criminal Matters](#) (May 5, 2020); and [Order Adjourning Child Protection Matters](#) (May 6, 2020).
- ❖ Weekly Court hearings for the SCJ can be found [here](#).
- ❖ New SCJ Regional Notices are expected later this week.
- ❖ The Courts reminded us about the work they are doing with MAG on the FAST Action Groups. There are 4 groups: Bankruptcy, Criminal, Family, and Civil - each group meets daily within MAG and regularly with the Courts. Aside from the Bankruptcy Group, each FAST Action Group has 6 people from the e-Task Force.
- ❖ A FAST Action Group re: Small Claims Courts is also being created.
- ❖ Information on how to offer your input to the FAST Action Groups can be found at the end of this document.
- ❖ Priorities for the FAST Action Groups include: 1) Identifying a Document Sharing Platform to be used by lawyers, self reps, and Judges; 2) Assessments of Video Conferencing Platforms with the goal to make a recommendation for Ontario-wide Court adoption; and 3) How to best instruct Court staff so that they can support virtual hearings. The Document Sharing Platform has been determined to be the most pressing need with a decision anticipated imminently.

2. LSO

- ❖ The Law Society is moving forward with online delivery of the licensing examinations using a staged approach, beginning with the cancelled March Solicitor Examination. The March Solicitor Examination will be available to candidates via online delivery beginning in early June.
- ❖ You can view the notice [here](#).

NOTE:

Law Association members are welcome to send any issues/concerns related to the practice of law caused by the COVID-19 epidemic to FOLA and we will continue to address them in as timely a manner as is humanly possible. Please note that prior to submitting a question, you are requested to visit the [Ontario government's website](#), the [Courts' websites](#), and the [Law Society's FAQ](#) page. These websites are all updated daily. You may find your question/issue/concern has already been addressed. Links to all above sites can also be found on FOLA's [COVID-19](#) page.

If you have any questions/concerns related to court and ministry issues as a result of COVID-19, please send them to Katie Robinette at katie.robinette@fola.ca. No phone calls please. And please also note that FOLA cannot assist in issues related to a specific case.

NOTE:

Also, starting this week, in addition to our weekly sector calls, the Association members from the group will be convening a sub-group to develop recommendations for the OCJ on post-COVID shutdown practices and technology changes related to family and criminal matters. If you have seen any short-term solutions that the Courts and MAG are currently allowing for due to the pandemic that you'd like to see continue in the long term, please do let me know. I will ensure they get passed on to the appropriate parties.

Similarly, if there are any long-term recommendations to problems/issues that have yet to be solved, those would be welcome too.