



# COVID-19 & THE PRACTICE OF LAW

## WEEKLY UPDATE

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### COVID-19 - WEEKLY CHECK IN LOG #26

September 16, 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, Department staff, and the Recovery Secretariat

#### Issues discussed:

##### 1. COURTS

- ❖ The OCJ issued a Notice on September 15, 2020 that the resumption of in-person criminal hearings at Gore Bay, Orillia and Woodstock and of in-person family hearings in Gore Bay and Woodstock will now proceed as of September 16th, 2020. See Criminal Notice [here](#) and the Family Notice [here](#).
- ❖ The Courts have announced two Judicial Vacancies in Thunder Bay: one criminal; and one 50% criminal / 50% family. See details [here](#).
- ❖ The SCJ will be sending out a Notice related to the Central East region tomorrow that will cover Motions, Trials, and Applications.

##### 2. MAG

- ❖ The Ministry of the Attorney General has announced that both the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (MTCC) and the Pearson Convention Centre in Brampton are now prepared to host jury events.
- ❖ MAG, along with the Recovery Secretariat and the SCJ, continue to explore off-site locations for Jury Trials and are specifically looking at options in Ottawa.
- ❖ MAG reported that the response rate for Summons for Jury Duty is slightly lower than the normal 50%.

##### 3. RECOVERY SECRETARIAT

- ❖ **REMINDER:** Questions about Courthouse re-openings can be directed to Samantha Poisson at [MAGrecoverysecretariat@ontario.ca](mailto:MAGrecoverysecretariat@ontario.ca).

##### 4. FOLA

###### ❖ SUBMISSIONS:

###### 1. FINAL CALL: JUSTICE SECTOR CONSULTATIONS: MANDATORY MEDIATION AND ONE-JUDGE MODEL

Earlier this month, the Attorney General requested input and perspective from FOLA on legislative potential changes to the mandatory mediation program and a single-judge model (building on the current One Judge Pilot Program) in the SCJ. You can read our submission [here](#).

###### 2. LEGAL AID - CALL FOR ACTION

On August 20th, FOLA sent a letter to Justice Minister Lametti requesting he work with Ontario's Attorney General to address the shortfall in funding to Legal Aid Ontario as a result of the Law Foundation's

decreased revenues due to lower interest rates. You can read that letter [here](#). FOLA is now calling on all Associations to send similar letters to their local MP and, if you have not yet done so, please do. If you would like to see a template for such a letter, please email [Katie.Robinette@fola.ca](mailto:Katie.Robinette@fola.ca).

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 License Consultation Paper. To ensure we hear from Law Association members in advance of drafting our Submission, FOLA scheduled three Zoom meetings and have reached out to Presidents to delegate one or two members practicing in Family Law to attend. **The final meeting will be held on Friday, September 18<sup>th</sup> from 9:00am to 10:00am. Attendance is limited to 100 people per meeting.** If you are interested in attending, please email Katie at [Katie.Robinette@fola.ca](mailto:Katie.Robinette@fola.ca).

❖ **EVENTS:**

**SPECIAL FOR LAW ASSOCIATION MEMBERS!** Clio's Cloud Conference (Oct 13-16 - 11am-4pm EST each day) brings together the best and brightest from the legal, business, and technology worlds for the industry's top conference. All sessions are recorded and available on demand. Clio is offering all Law Association members conference passes for only \$99 (a \$200 discount). You can learn more and register [here](#).

**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@fola.ca](mailto:katie.robinette@fola.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](mailto:MAGrecoverysecretariat@ontario.ca).