



WHO ARE WE?

As of January 1st the Law Society has appropriated the name Law Society of Ontario. While there is hope the legislature will promptly approve legislation formally amending the name before the fall provincial election, the Law Society has already begun the process of change.

ANNUAL REPORT:

The 2017 Annual Report, due March 31, 2018 is now available for filing through the Law Society Portal. Lawyers who fail to file an Annual Report by May 30, 2018, will be charged a \$200 late filing fee and will be subject to administrative suspension.

HOW WILL YOU ANSWER THE BIG QUESTION ON OUR ANNUAL REPORT:

I declare that I abide by a Statement of Principles that acknowledges my obligation to promote equality, diversity and inclusion generally, in my behaviour towards colleagues, employees, clients and the public.

Yes no

If "No", provide an explanation below:

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES:

The Law Society now requires *"every licensee to adopt and to abide by a statement of principles acknowledging their obligation to promote equality, diversity and inclusion generally, and in their behaviour towards colleagues, employees, clients and the public."*

To assist, the Law Society has published guidelines and has provided two sample templates setting out Statements of Principles that meet the requirement (www.lsuc.on.ca). We are not limited to the templates and are not required to adopt either of them. Additional resources are available on the Law Society's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion webpage. We are not required to disclose the content of our Statement of Principles to the Law Society but are only required to confirm its existence by annually answering the above question.

SO WHERE ARE WE?

LEVEL HEADED AND COMMON SENSE BENCHER SID TROISTER HAS WRITTEN:

"With the recently published guidelines regarding the application of the requirement, compliance for most will be almost perfunctory. But you still have to comply. As you will see from the guidelines, you can prepare your own statement of principles.

"Promoting" diversity means not doing anything that does not advance diversity. You do not have to take any active positive steps to reduce discrimination but only to refrain from conduct that creates barriers. Basically, if you do not now act badly, you can have a statement that says that you will not act badly and that is enough. And your statement is private and personal and need not be disclosed to any one including the Law Society. All you need to do is have a statement, any statement, and confirm that you have one on the annual return and you will satisfy the requirements. Use the law society templates if you like or prepare your own. I am satisfied that saying that I will honour all human rights laws is a valid statement of principles."

AS AN ALTERNATE: Another lawyer's statement is said to be *"I won't be an ass."* And now it is your turn to prepare your own statement of principles.

TREASURER ELECTION:

Treasurer Schabas has not left the building but the jockeying has begun to assume his chair in the coming Spring election to be determined by a vote of Benchers. A number of wannabees have been testing the water for some time. Some have made their intentions known and more may follow. Stay tuned.

CONTINGENCY FEES:

If you are confused about the current state of play it is understandable as the Law Society has now received a revised 7th report of its Working Group on Fee Arrangements. Convocation continues to approve recommendations in respect of the operation of contingency fees. To review the latest considerations respecting partial contingency fees, interlocutory costs, costs of an appeal, costs submissions, disbursements and legal expense insurance, go to www.lsuc.on.ca to see the most recent report. The history of the Working Group can be found at

<https://www.lsuc.on.ca/advertising-fee-arrangements/>. Full implementation of the new measures will also require legislative change to the Solicitor's Act.

BERNARD MORROW:

Mr. Morrow has ably served the profession and public with great distinction as Complaints Resolution Commissioner for two consecutive terms starting in April 2014 and ending March 31, 2018. In that capacity, Mr. Morrow independently reviewed complainant's concerns when complaints were closed without formal discipline proceedings to ensure they were in fact handled appropriately and the results were reasonable. As well, he provided alternative dispute resolution to lawyers, complainants and the Law Society. Following an advertised search process a successor will be announced shortly. We are all indebted to Mr. Morrow for his dedication and contributions.

BENCHER HEATHER ZORDEL:

With the appointment of Sandra Nishikawa to the Superior Court of Justice, Ms. Zordel an experienced Corporate/Securities Lawyer with experience serving on the Board of Directors of Toronto Hydro, has become a Bencher to fill the vacancy.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEE INCREASES:

Our mistakes and oversights will cost more this year. Administrative fees that Convocation had approved in the past to encourage compliance with payment and filing deadlines have been increased. The new amounts are:

- Late payment fee - \$150
- Late compliance fee for CPD - \$200
- Late filing fee for annual report - \$200
- Reinstatement fee - \$300
- Returned cheque fee - \$50

Please note that the Law Society is no longer making calls to remind us about administrative obligations. Check the Portal.

DAY OF THE ENDANGERED LAWYER:

It is marked on January 24th each year to reflect on the personal and professional safety of lawyers around the world, who face mounting persecution, prosecution, arbitrary detention, threats, torture, assaults and death in reprisal for their work to protect rights and secure justice. You may wish to join a special event this year honouring our legal colleagues in Egypt to be held at the Law Society on January 31, 2018 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Look for other important programs at the Law Society including:

February 12th:	Black History Month
February 27th:	Legal History for legal professionals; Osgoode Society
March 8th:	International Women's Day
March 20th:	International Francophonie Day

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