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#199



GOVERNANCE REFORM: COMING SOON

Today Ontario legal professionals are still privileged to govern ourselves through the work of 53 Benchers. 20 lawyers elected from inside of Toronto, 20 lawyers elected from outside of Toronto, five elected paralegals and eight laypeople appointed by Ontario.

To any participant or observer, it is clear there are many flaws in the governance structure. Congratulations to Treasurer Wardle and the Benchers for taking the first meaningful and creative reform steps in decades.

Convocation has agreed with the LSO Governance Reform Task Force proposal that the size of Convocation be cut to 37 Benchers made up of 24 elected lawyers, 4 elected paralegals, 6 non-licensees appointed by the government and 3 appointed by Convocation itself. The appointees are to be a Francophone licensee, 1 Indigenous person and a licensee with specified attributes. All of this will require provincial government approval.

However, there are issues that remain for resolution when the Task Force reports back again. These include how to fill mid-term vacancies and the process to be applied to LSO appointments to Convocation as well as the definition of a “Francophone licensee” and “Indigenous person”. Unfortunately, so far, the Task Force has made no mention of other much-needed electoral reforms including restricting Bencher term limits from 12 to 8 years. Without further change, expect to watch a 2027 Bencher election, again pitting one slate against another with a few brave independent souls seeking election. [Read the report.](#)

MANDATORY MINIMUM COMPENSATION

3 years ago, Convocation approved mandatory minimum compensation for licensing candidates during articling and Law Practice Program placements. Following a scheduled

review it has been decided to maintain the policy and exemption framework while indexing the compensation to the Ontario minimum wage over a 40-hour week. [Read the report.](#)

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL TRAINING: DONE DEAL

The recently approved mandatory Indigenous cultural training course will be available to licensees in late 2026. The requirement will come into effect on January 1, 2027. We will have two years to complete the free, six-hour, online course by December 31, 2028. However, who knows what the consequence will be of the intervening 2027 Benchers election. To learn more [Read the report.](#)

LAW SOCIETY AWARDS CEREMONY

Watch the webcast at 5:00 p.m. on May 27th to share in the celebration of the accomplishments of our colleagues at LSO.ca/2026AwardsEvent.

Cathy Corsetti: William J. Simpson Distinguished Paralegal Award

Robert J. Hooper: Lincoln Alexander Award

Nadia Effendi: Laura Legge Award

Michelle Alton: J. Shirley Denison Award

Law Society Medal

Kevin Gordon Cleghorn

Shalene Curtis-Micallef

Douglas D. Ferguson

Lai-King Hum

Alf Kwinter

Paul J. Pape

Amy Salyzyn

MENTAL HEALTH BEST PRACTICES

The American College of Trial Lawyers has produced an important, insightful and helpful WHITE PAPER that deserves everyone's attention. Its conclusion includes "... profound culture change from the top is needed within most every law firm in the United States and Canada if we are to stem the tide of declining mental health in our profession. The time for that change is now."

Must Read:

[*Law-Firm-Mental-Health-Best-Practices_White-Paper_FINAL*](#)

NEWEST TEAM MEMBER:

The Law Society has hired Tim Harlick for the position of Corporate Secretary. His work will dovetail with that of the CEO to make the LSO a model regulator with a service orientation to support licensees in their daily work in the public interest. He replaces the

acting and earlier incumbent Jim Varro who temporarily replaced our previous Secretary, following her resignation.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Law Society recommends and makes various appointments to a variety of boards, councils and committees. It is seeking applications from qualified paralegals and lawyers for the:

- Justices of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee – East
- Justices of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee – Central East
- Legal Aid Ontario Board of Directors
- Family Rules Committee

The application deadline is **May 1, 2026**. For more information and to submit an application, see the: [external appointments application webpage](#)

STAY TUNED:

May 21 Asian and South Asian Heritage Month

<https://lso.ca/News-Events/Events/Events-2026/Asian-and-South-Asian-Heritage-Month>

May 25 Advocates' Society Nomination deadline for

§ **The Catzman Award for Professionalism and Civility by the Advocates' Society.**

Established to honour his legacy of exceptional knowledge of the law, a commitment to mentorship and a dedication to the highest ideals of the.

§ **The Patrick D. Schmidt Future of Family Law Award dedicated to excellence in advocacy and commitment to making a difference to a lawyers community within their first 10 years of practice.**

May 28 National AccessAbility Week

<https://lso.ca/News-Events/Events/Events-2026/National-AccessAbility-Week>

June 11 National Indigenous History Month and Solidarity Day

<https://lso.ca/News-Events/Events/Events-2026/National-Indigenous-History-Month-and-Solidarity-D>

June: Toronto is hosting six matches during the FIFA World Cup tournament.

TREASURER ELECTION COMING SOON

STAYING IN TOUCH:

Remember your contact for all information you may need can be found for:

Law Society at <https://lso.ca/home>

LawPRO at <https://www.lawpro.ca>

NEXT CONVOCATION:

May 28, 2025. Watch via live broadcast connecting through [LSO.ca](https://lso.ca)

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