

A HISTORIC FIRST: SHALINI KONANUR ELECTED TREASURER OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF ONTARIO



History has been made at the Law Society of Ontario. With the election of Shalini Konanur as Treasurer, the legal profession welcomes not only a historic first, but a leader whose early outreach to Ontario's paralegals signals a commitment to collaboration, inclusion, and the future of legal services.

CHARLENE CREWS TALKS ABOUT HER CAREER IN ADJUDICATION



CHRISTIAN GENOVA TALKS ABOUT THE NEW SABS OVERHAUL



JUSTICE IN MOTION? NEW OCJ CRIMINAL DIRECTIVES. WE WALK YOU THROUGH THEM

As Ontario's criminal justice system continues its effort to reduce delays and improve efficiency, the Ontario Court of Justice (OCJ) has introduced several significant practice directions that will reshape how criminal matters move through the courts. Together, these changes represent one of the most substantial procedural shifts in recent years, affecting judges, Crown counsel, defence counsel, paralegals, and accused persons alike.

THE PARALEGAL TOWNHALL NAMES THE RECIPIENTS OF THE PARALEGALS OF EXCELLENCE AWARD!



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS



John Paul Rodrigues



Justin D. Rochester

Welcome to the second edition of The Paralegal TownHall Times!

When we launched our inaugural edition, we set out with a simple but important objective: to create a publication that reflects the growth, accomplishments, and evolving identity of Ontario's paralegal profession. The response from across the province reaffirmed what we had long believed—that there is a genuine desire for a publication dedicated to documenting the people, ideas, and developments shaping our profession.

As we present our second edition, that mission remains unchanged.

The Paralegal TownHall Times continues to be more than a publication. It is a platform. A platform to recognize professional excellence, report on important legal and regulatory developments, highlight educational initiatives, and celebrate the individuals whose work strengthens access to justice every day. It is a space where achievements are acknowledged, ideas are exchanged, and the future of our profession is thoughtfully explored.

Just as importantly, we remain committed to facilitating meaningful discussion. The legal profession continues to evolve through legislative reform, judicial decisions, regulatory developments, and changing professional expectations. Thoughtful dialogue allows us not only to respond to those changes but to help shape them. Through news, commentary, and shared perspectives, we hope to continue fostering conversations that inform, challenge, and unite the profession.

We also believe that a strong profession is built on community. By bringing together practitioners, students, educators, regulators, and stakeholders, this publication reflects the same philosophy that has guided The Paralegal TownHall from the very beginning: that when we share knowledge, celebrate one another's successes, and work collaboratively, the entire profession benefits.

As you read this second edition, we once again invite you to engage with it, contribute to it, and help it continue to grow. This publication belongs to all of us, and together we will continue telling the story of Ontario's paralegal profession—one edition at a time.

The Editors
The Paralegal TownHall Times

COVER STORY

HISTORIC APPOINTMENT MARKS A NEW CHAPTER FOR ONTARIO'S LEGAL REGULATOR



Pictured above: Shalini Konanur, Treasurer

The election of Shalini Konanur as Treasurer of the Law Society of Ontario represents more than a routine leadership transition. It is a defining moment in the history of Ontario's legal profession—one that reflects the evolution of legal governance, the growing importance of diverse leadership, and the continuing pursuit of a regulator that more closely reflects the communities it serves.

On June 17, 2026, Convocation elected Konanur to serve as Treasurer for the 2026–2027 term. She officially assumed the role at the June 25 Convocation, becoming the first racialized woman in the Law Society's 229-year history to hold its highest elected office. The Treasurer serves as the elected leader and public face of the Law Society of Ontario, the body responsible for regulating more than 60,000 lawyers and licensed paralegals across the province in the public interest.

An advertisement for 'SPENCER RESUME REVIEW SERVICE'. The top half shows a close-up of hands typing on a laptop keyboard. The bottom half is a white box with text. On the left, 'SPENCER' is written vertically above 'RESUME REVIEW SERVICE'. On the right, the text reads: 'TRYING TO BREAK INTO THE LEGAL FIELD? SRRS HAS YOUR BACK! Armed with personal and professional experience, SRRS provides resume and cover letter review services for those trying to break into the legal field. Curious as to how SRRS can help you? Reach out today!'. At the bottom, there is a small line of contact information: 'spencerresumereview@gmail.com 903-882-8888 Stephanie Spencer on LinkedIn'.

Ad

A Career Dedicated to Access to Justice

Konanur brings decades of experience to the role.

A graduate of Osgoode Hall Law School, she was called to the Ontario Bar in 2000 and has spent her legal career within Ontario's community legal clinic system. As Executive Director and Senior Lawyer at the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO), she has become widely recognized for her advocacy on issues including immigration, family law, human rights, employment, housing, income security, and gender-based violence.

Her work has extended well beyond courtroom advocacy. She has advised governments, appeared before the Supreme Court of Canada, contributed expertise internationally through the United Nations, and consistently championed initiatives aimed at reducing systemic barriers to justice.

Those experiences have naturally informed the priorities she outlined upon her election.

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A Meaningful Moment for Paralegals

For Ontario's licensed paralegal profession, Konanur's election arrives at a particularly significant time. The profession continues to evolve through discussions surrounding scope of practice, access to justice, technological change, and the ongoing work of the Law Society's Paralegal Future Vision initiatives. Throughout these conversations, many paralegals have expressed a desire for leadership that recognizes both the profession's unique contributions and its growing role within Ontario's justice system. Against that backdrop, one recent gesture stood out.

Just days before assuming office as Treasurer, Konanur recorded a video message for attendees of the Blue Mountain Paralegal TownHall. In her remarks, she reaffirmed her support for Ontario's licensed paralegals and acknowledged the important role they play in improving access to justice throughout the province.

Although brief, the message resonated with many within the profession. It demonstrated a willingness to engage directly with paralegals during an important moment of transition and reinforced the principle that meaningful regulation begins with meaningful dialogue.

For many attendees, the video served as an early indication that Ontario's incoming Treasurer understands the importance of maintaining strong relationships across both branches of the legal profession.

While a single appearance does not define a regulatory agenda, it reflected an openness that was widely welcomed by those gathered at Blue Mountain.

Leadership Beyond Symbolism

It would be easy to focus solely on the historical significance of Konanur's election. Doing so, however, risks overlooking the extensive leadership experience that positioned her for the role in the first place.

Prior to becoming Treasurer, Konanur served as Co-Chair of the Law Society's Equity and Indigenous Affairs Committee, sat on the Audit and Finance Committee, served on the Law Foundation of Ontario Board, participated in the Paralegal Future Vision Working Group, and worked as a Hearing Adjudicator with the Law Society Tribunal.

These responsibilities exposed her to many of the complex governance issues facing the regulator—from professional standards and financial oversight to access to justice, equity, and the future direction of legal regulation.

Those experiences suggest that her election reflects more than the importance of representation alone. It also reflects confidence in her ability to navigate the increasingly complex challenges facing Ontario's legal professions.

STORY CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE..

Looking Ahead

Every Treasurer leaves a distinct imprint on the Law Society.

Some oversee major governance reforms. Others guide the profession through legislative change, technological transformation, or evolving public expectations. What ultimately defines a Treasurer's legacy is rarely known at the beginning of a term.

What is already clear is that Konanur assumes office during a period of considerable change. Questions surrounding innovation, affordability of legal services, professional wellness, artificial intelligence, tribunal modernization, and continued expansion of access to justice will require thoughtful leadership and collaboration across Ontario's legal community.

Her stated priorities—effective regulation, strong governance, public protection, and the removal of barriers—provide an early indication of the direction she intends to pursue.

A Moment Worth Recognizing

History is often measured not simply by who occupies a position, but by what that appointment represents.

Shalini Konanur's election as Treasurer marks an important milestone for the Law Society of Ontario, for the legal profession, and for the many aspiring lawyers and paralegals who now see themselves reflected in the regulator's highest elected office.

It is also a reminder that progress is most meaningful when accompanied by a commitment to service.

As Ontario's legal professions continue to evolve, there will undoubtedly be robust discussions about regulation, governance, and the future of legal services. Those conversations will continue, as they should.

For now, however, there is broad agreement on one point: Shalini Konanur's election represents a historic moment worthy of recognition—not only because it breaks a longstanding barrier, but because it places an experienced advocate for access to justice, inclusion, and public service at the helm of Ontario's legal regulator.

ANNOUNCEMENT



THE PARALEGAL TOWNHALL NAMES THE RECIPIENTS OF THE PARALEGALS OF EXCELLENCE AWARD!

Congratulations to the 2026 Paralegal Town Hall Ontario Paralegals of Excellence Award recipients, proudly presented by Ask Fides!

We are proud to recognize the following individuals for their outstanding contributions to Ontario's paralegal profession:

- Megan Alexander
- Stephanie Bent
- Christina De Palma
- Samantha Glass, LL.B., LL.M. Candidate
- Hetham Karky, Ph.D.
- Helen Lightstone, LL.M., C. Med., Q. Arb., P1
- Laurie Marshall
- Matthew C. Olson
- Leon Presner, BA, PI, P1
- Dan Schofield
- Lyschin (Liz) Smith
- Ryan Swalm

Through your leadership, advocacy, mentorship, service, and unwavering commitment to excellence, you continue to elevate our profession and inspire those who will follow in your footsteps. Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition, and thank you for everything you do to strengthen Ontario's paralegal community.

The winners and their bios in the TownHall Bulletin aspect of the paper

IN THE NEWS

UNDERSTANDING THE NEW ONTARIO COURT OF JUSTICE CRIMINAL PRACTICE DIRECTIONS



Pictured above: Ontario Court of Justice Coat of Arms

A Comprehensive Guide to the Most Significant Changes Affecting Criminal Practice in Ontario: We Walk you Through it in Two Parts!

Part I:

The Criminal Transformation Initiative and the New Bail Practice Direction

For criminal practitioners, procedural law is just as important as substantive law. A missed filing deadline, an incomplete surety declaration, or a failure to properly prepare for a judicial pre-trial can derail proceedings, inconvenience clients, and consume valuable court resources. While legislative reforms often attract public attention, some of the most significant changes to the justice system occur through the practice directions issued by the courts themselves.

That is precisely what has occurred in Ontario.

Over the past year, the Ontario Court of Justice (OCJ) has introduced one of the most comprehensive overhauls of criminal court procedures in recent memory. Rather than making isolated amendments, the Court has implemented a coordinated package of reforms designed to modernize criminal proceedings, reduce unnecessary appearances, improve trial readiness, enhance access to justice, and ensure compliance with the constitutional right to be tried within a reasonable time.

Collectively, these reforms form part of the Court's Criminal Transformation Initiative, an ambitious effort to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of criminal proceedings across Ontario while preserving fairness to accused persons and maintaining public confidence in the administration of justice.

For lawyers, licensed paralegals authorized to appear under the Criminal Code, prosecutors, students, and court staff, understanding these changes is no longer optional—it is essential.

Story Continued on Next Page...

IN THE NEWS

Why the Court Introduced These Changes

The Ontario Court of Justice continues to manage one of Canada's busiest criminal court systems. In recent years, courts have faced unprecedented pressures arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing case complexity, disclosure volumes, evolving technology, and the constitutional imperatives flowing from the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in *R. v. Jordan*.

The Court's response has not been to simply work faster.

Instead, it has sought to redesign how criminal cases progress from first appearance to disposition. The underlying objectives are straightforward:

- reduce unnecessary court appearances;
- improve early case management;
- encourage meaningful resolution discussions;
- ensure trials are scheduled only when parties are genuinely prepared;
- increase consistency throughout Ontario;
- improve public access to justice; and
- make better use of judicial resources.

Many of the new practice directions reflect a simple philosophy: Preparation should occur before court—not during court. That principle is evident throughout the revised directions.

A Shift in Professional Expectations

Although many of the procedural requirements themselves are not entirely new, what has changed is the Court's expectation regarding compliance.

Counsel are now expected to arrive prepared, having:

- reviewed disclosure;
- communicated with opposing counsel;
- identified outstanding issues;
- discussed potential resolution;
- confirmed witness availability;
- identified anticipated applications; and
- ensured the matter is genuinely ready to proceed.

The era of routine administrative adjournments is rapidly disappearing. Instead, the Court expects each appearance to move a matter meaningfully closer to its resolution. For practitioners accustomed to older practices, this represents a significant cultural shift as much as a procedural one.

Story Continued on Next Page...

IN THE NEWS

The New Bail Practice Direction

Among all of the reforms introduced by the Ontario Court of Justice, none may have a more immediate day-to-day impact than the new Practice Direction Regarding Bail Hearings, which came into effect on June 1, 2026.

Bail hearings have long represented one of the busiest areas of criminal court practice. Every day across Ontario, judges determine whether accused persons should remain detained or be released while awaiting trial. Those decisions directly engage the constitutional presumption of innocence, public safety, and the efficient operation of the justice system.

The revised Practice Direction seeks to ensure that bail hearings are:

- better organized;
- better documented;
- more focused;
- completed more efficiently; and
- supported by meaningful pre-hearing preparation.

Rather than altering the legal test for bail—which remains governed by the Criminal Code and Supreme Court jurisprudence—the Practice Direction changes how bail matters are prepared and presented.

Story Continued on Next Page...

2ND ANNUAL

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IN THE NEWS

Preparation Begins Before Court

Perhaps the most significant philosophical change is the emphasis placed on preparation before the hearing begins.

The Court now expects parties to communicate early regarding:

- anticipated evidence;
- proposed release plans;
- sureties;
- areas of agreement;
- anticipated areas of dispute; and
- estimated hearing length.

This early communication serves several purposes.

First, it allows judges to better manage their lists.

Second, it reduces unnecessary adjournments.

Third, it enables parties to narrow disputed issues before valuable court time is consumed.

This reflects a broader trend throughout Ontario's criminal justice system: court time should be reserved for genuine disputes rather than administrative matters.

The Expanded Surety Declaration

One of the most visible procedural changes is the expanded use of the Surety Declaration.

Although declarations have been used in many jurisdictions for years, the Court has now standardized expectations regarding the information that should be provided before a contested bail hearing.

The declaration is intended to provide reliable information about the proposed surety, including:

- employment;
- financial circumstances;
- relationship with the accused;
- prior experience acting as a surety;
- understanding of the responsibilities involved; and
- ability to supervise the accused if released.

From a practical standpoint, this offers several advantages. Judges receive relevant information earlier. Crown counsel can review potential concerns before the hearing. Defence counsel can identify deficiencies before arriving in court. The result is a more focused hearing with fewer interruptions.

Story Continued on Next Page...

IN THE NEWS

Why This Matters

The responsibilities of a surety are significant. A surety is not simply someone willing to sign paperwork. They undertake a legal obligation to supervise the accused, encourage compliance with court orders, report breaches where appropriate, and potentially risk pledged funds.

Historically, many of these issues emerged for the first time during oral testimony. The expanded declaration allows much of that foundational information to be exchanged beforehand. This does not eliminate viva voce evidence where required. Rather, it allows the hearing to focus on disputed issues instead of basic background information.

Practice Tip

For defence counsel and licensed paralegals: Do not treat the surety declaration as a formality. Review it carefully with the proposed surety before filing. Incomplete or inconsistent information can delay the hearing or undermine the credibility of the proposed release plan.

Better Time Estimates

Another notable feature of the Practice Direction is the expectation that parties provide realistic estimates for hearing length.

Historically, bail hearings frequently exceeded anticipated durations.

This created scheduling challenges for judges, delayed other matters on the court list, and often resulted in hearings continuing into subsequent days.

The Court now expects counsel to provide more accurate estimates based on:

- number of witnesses;
- anticipated cross-examination;
- documentary evidence;
- interpreter requirements; and
- legal issues likely to arise.

Although no estimate will ever be perfect, better forecasting allows the Court to allocate judicial resources more effectively.

Story Continued on Next Page...

IN THE NEWS

What Has Not Changed

It is equally important to recognize what the Practice Direction does not change. The constitutional framework governing bail remains unchanged.

Judges continue to apply the Criminal Code, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and binding appellate jurisprudence.

The principles established in decisions such as *R. v. Antic*, *R. v. Myers*, and related bail authorities continue to govern release decisions.

The Practice Direction addresses procedure, not the substantive law of judicial interim release. That distinction is important.

The reforms are intended to improve the administration of bail hearings—not to alter the legal test itself.

Part II: Jordan-Compliant Trial Scheduling, the Three-Appearance Model, and the New Era of Case Management

In Part I of this article, we explored the Ontario Court of Justice's Criminal Transformation Initiative and examined the Court's new approach to bail hearings. While those changes are significant, they represent only one component of a much broader effort to modernize criminal proceedings across the province.

Perhaps the most consequential reform for day-to-day criminal practitioners is the Court's revised Practice Direction: Jordan-Compliant Trial Scheduling, effective June 1, 2026.

Although the original practice direction came into force in November 2023, the 2026 amendments introduce an entirely new approach, fundamentally changing how many out-of-custody criminal matters are expected to progress through case management court.

For defence counsel, Crown attorneys, licensed paralegals authorized to appear in criminal matters, and self-represented litigants, the message from the Court is unmistakable:

The OCJ wants the days of repeated administrative adjournments to come to an end.

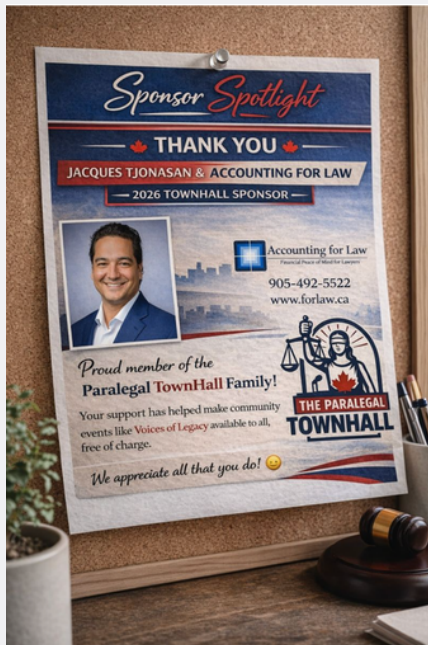
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— Accounting for Law

IN THE NEWS

A Continuing Commitment to Jordan

The revised Practice Direction is rooted in one of the most influential criminal justice decisions in Canadian history: *R. v. Jordan*.

In *Jordan*, the Supreme Court of Canada established presumptive ceilings for the completion of criminal proceedings. Delays beyond those ceilings may result in a stay of proceedings unless the Crown can justify the delay through recognized exceptions.

Rather than simply responding to delay after it occurs, the Ontario Court of Justice has chosen a proactive approach. Its scheduling model is designed to prevent cases from approaching the constitutional ceiling in the first place.

Accordingly, the Court continues to direct that criminal trial dates should be offered with the expectation that the case will be completed within 15 months of the Information being sworn—well inside the 18-month presumptive ceiling applicable to matters proceeding entirely in the Ontario Court of Justice. This built-in buffer is intended to accommodate the inevitable realities of criminal litigation while preserving the accused's constitutional right to be tried within a reasonable time.

The Six-Month Benchmark Remains

Although much attention has been given to the newly added Part III, practitioners should not overlook one of the existing cornerstones of the Practice Direction: the six-month benchmark.

The Court expects that within six months of the Information being sworn, the parties will have completed the necessary intake and case management steps. At that stage, they should be prepared either to resolve the matter or to schedule a trial or preliminary inquiry.

This means that, absent unusual circumstances, the following work should already be complete:

- disclosure has been reviewed;
- outstanding disclosure issues have been addressed;
- meaningful Crown pre-trial discussions have occurred;
- judicial pre-trials have been scheduled where required;
- resolution discussions have taken place;
- anticipated applications have been identified; and
- counsel have sufficient instructions to move the matter forward.

This expectation reinforces the Court's broader philosophy that preparation belongs outside the courtroom, not during routine appearances.

I am running a few minutes late; my previous meeting is running over.

Story Continued on Next Page...

IN THE NEWS

The New Part III

The most significant amendment introduced on June 1, 2026, is the addition of Part III to the Practice Direction.

Its central feature is remarkably simple: Out-of-custody adult criminal matters are now expected to have no more than three appearances in case management court unless a judicial officer orders otherwise.

Although concise, this provision represents one of the most significant procedural shifts Ontario criminal practitioners have seen in years.

Historically, it was not uncommon for relatively straightforward matters to return repeatedly to case management court while disclosure was outstanding, instructions were pending, witnesses were being consulted, or resolution discussions remained incomplete.

The Court has now made clear that such practices should become the exception rather than the rule.

Which Cases Does Part III Apply To?

Importantly, the three-appearance limit is not universal.

The Practice Direction applies only to criminal cases where the Information was sworn on or after June 1, 2026.

In addition, three categories of matters are expressly excluded:

- **accused persons who are in custody;**
- **young persons proceeding under the Youth Criminal Justice Act; and**
- **matters participating in specialized court programs.**

These exceptions recognize that certain proceedings require greater judicial oversight or involve unique procedural considerations that make a rigid appearance limit inappropriate.

Why Three Appearances?

At first glance, limiting case management appearances may appear to be little more than an administrative measure.

In reality, it reflects a significant change in judicial philosophy. Every unnecessary appearance consumes scarce court resources. Each adjournment requires judicial time, court staff, security personnel, Crown resources, defence attendance, and often an accused person's presence.

When multiplied across thousands of criminal files each year, the cumulative impact is substantial.

By encouraging meaningful progress at every appearance, the Court hopes to reduce administrative congestion and devote more judicial attention to matters that genuinely require active case management.

Story Continued on Next Page...

IN THE NEWS

What Will Those Three Appearances Look Like?

First Appearance

- The matter enters case management.
- Disclosure is requested or confirmed.
- Counsel identify immediate issues and begin discussions with the Crown.
- Future deadlines are established.

Second Appearance

- Disclosure issues should largely be resolved.
- Instructions are obtained.
- Resolution discussions have occurred.
- If necessary, judicial pre-trials are arranged.
- Counsel begin considering trial scheduling.

Third Appearance

The expectation is that the matter will either:

- resolve;
- be scheduled for trial;
- be scheduled for a preliminary inquiry where available; or
- proceed in another meaningful direction ordered by the Court.

Routine requests for "one more adjournment" are unlikely to satisfy the objectives of the Practice Direction unless supported by legitimate reasons.

The revised case management expectations reflect a clear shift toward efficiency, accountability, and earlier resolution of criminal matters. By the third appearance, counsel are expected to have meaningfully advanced the file, with routine adjournments becoming the exception rather than the norm. From an access to justice perspective, reducing unnecessary delay has obvious benefits for accused persons, complainants, witnesses, and the justice system as a whole.

Whether this approach ultimately complements or conflicts with the principles of restorative justice, however, remains to be seen. Restorative justice often depends on flexibility, meaningful dialogue, community engagement, and the willingness of participants to pursue outcomes that cannot always be achieved within rigid procedural timelines. If the emphasis on expediency comes at the expense of those opportunities, there is a risk that restorative objectives may be undermined. Conversely, if courts and counsel can balance timely case management with appropriate discretion, the new framework may enhance rather than hinder restorative outcomes. Only time—and its practical application in the courtroom—will tell.

Story Continued on Next Page...

IN THE NEWS

Judicial Flexibility Remains

The Practice Direction should not be interpreted as creating an inflexible rule.

The Court expressly provides that additional appearances may occur where a judicial officer orders otherwise. Complex cases, evolving disclosure, changes in counsel, medical issues, or other exceptional circumstances may all justify additional case management appearances. What has changed is the presumption. Repeated administrative adjournments should no longer be considered the default approach.

Judicial Pre-Trials Will Likely Become Even More Important

As administrative appearances decrease, the importance of judicial pre-trials (JPTs) necessarily increases.

The Court continues to emphasize that JPTs should be meaningful, substantive discussions aimed at advancing the litigation.

Among other things, JPTs may address:

- disclosure concerns;
- anticipated Charter applications;
- evidentiary issues;
- admissions;
- estimated trial length;
- witness availability;
- interpreter requirements; and
- realistic prospects for resolution.

The revised scheduling model encourages parties to identify these issues earlier rather than allowing them to emerge shortly before trial.

The Role of Crown Pre-Trials

Equally important are meaningful Crown pre-trials.

The Court expects counsel to engage in genuine discussions regarding:

- disclosure;
- possible resolutions;
- sentencing positions;
- trial estimates;
- anticipated legal issues; and
- scheduling concerns.

These conversations should occur well before the matter returns to court. The objective is not simply to determine whether an accused intends to plead guilty. Rather, it is to ensure that every subsequent appearance advances the file.

Story Continued on Next Page...

IN THE NEWS

Implications for Defence Counsel

For defence counsel, the reforms reinforce several practical realities.

- Client communication becomes even more important.
- Instructions must be obtained promptly.
- Disclosure should be reviewed without delay.
- Potential Charter applications should be identified early.
- Experts, interpreters, and witnesses may need to be retained sooner than under previous practices.

Simply put, counsel who postpone preparation until shortly before trial may find themselves struggling to meet the Court's expectations.

Implications for Crown Counsel

The revised Practice Direction likewise places greater responsibility on Crown counsel.

- Meaningful disclosure must be provided promptly.
- Resolution discussions should occur early.
- Outstanding disclosure issues should be identified proactively.

Where disclosure is delayed or incomplete, the parties are expected to address those issues before they undermine trial scheduling objectives.

What This Means for Licensed Paralegals

Although licensed paralegals have a limited criminal law scope of practice, those appearing on summary conviction matters authorized by the Criminal Code should take careful note of these reforms.

The procedural expectations imposed by the Court apply regardless of professional designation.

Licensed paralegals should therefore ensure that they:

- **review disclosure immediately upon receipt;**
- **communicate with Crown counsel early;**
- **identify potential issues before court appearances;**
- **prepare clients for meaningful decision-making; and**
- **treat every case management appearance as an opportunity to advance the proceeding.**

The Court's expectations regarding preparation and professionalism apply equally to all advocates appearing before it.

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IN THE NEWS

A Cultural Shift More Than Just Procedure

Viewed collectively, the amendments to the Jordan-Compliant Trial Scheduling Practice Direction represent far more than a numerical limit on appearances.

They signal a broader cultural shift.

The Ontario Court of Justice is encouraging practitioners to move away from a reactive model of litigation—one characterized by repeated adjournments and incremental progress—and toward a proactive model in which preparation, communication, and early decision-making drive the process.

Success under this new framework will depend less on mastering new forms than on embracing a new mindset. The Court is asking practitioners to be ready earlier, communicate more effectively, and ensure that every appearance meaningfully advances the administration of justice.

For many experienced criminal practitioners, these expectations may already reflect best practices. For others, they will require significant adjustments to longstanding habits.

One thing, however, is increasingly clear: the future of criminal case management in Ontario will be measured not by the number of appearances a matter requires, but by the progress achieved at each one.

IN THE NEWS

A LASTING LEGACY: THE LAURIE MARSHALL PARALEGAL EDUCATOR OF EXCELLENCE AWARD



Pictured above: Laurie Marshall

The Paralegal TownHall is proud to announce that its annual Paralegal Educator of Excellence Award will henceforth be known as The Laurie Marshall Paralegal Educator of Excellence Award.

This is more than a change in name. It is the formal recognition of a legacy that has shaped Ontario's paralegal profession for more than two decades.

For over 20 years, Laurie Marshall has stood as one of the profession's most respected educators, mentors, and advocates. Her influence extends far beyond the classroom. While she has educated thousands of aspiring paralegals, her contributions have also helped shape the very profession they entered. Through curriculum development, advocacy, mentorship, and an unwavering commitment to excellence, Laurie has dedicated her career to ensuring that paralegals are not only knowledgeable, but ethical, confident, and prepared to serve the public with distinction.

Those who have had the privilege of learning from Laurie know that her lessons have never been confined to legislation or procedure. She has instilled professionalism, integrity, and a deep appreciation for the responsibility that accompanies the privilege of providing legal services. Her passion for education has inspired countless students to become leaders in their own right, creating a ripple effect that continues to strengthen the profession across Ontario.

Her impact reaches well beyond individual graduates. Laurie has been a steadfast advocate for the advancement of paralegal education, helping elevate standards while championing the important role paralegals play in improving access to justice. Her work has earned the respect of colleagues, educators, regulators, and legal professionals alike, making her one of the defining figures in the history of Ontario's independent paralegal profession.

Naming this award in her honour ensures that future generations will come to know not only the recipient of the award, but also the remarkable woman whose dedication made such recognition possible. It is a reminder that excellence in education is not measured solely by years of teaching, but by the lives transformed, the profession strengthened, and the standards elevated along the way.

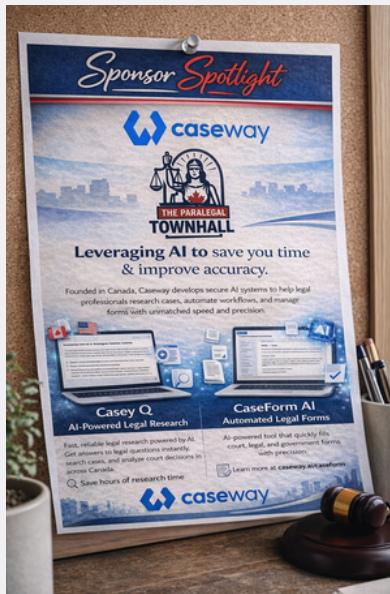
Laurie Marshall's legacy will continue to inspire every educator who strives to prepare the next generation of paralegals with the same passion, integrity, and unwavering commitment that has defined her extraordinary career.

On behalf of The Paralegal TownHall and the broader paralegal community, it is our profound honour to recognize Laurie Marshall in this permanent and meaningful way. May every future presentation of The Laurie Marshall Paralegal Educator of Excellence Award serve as a lasting tribute to a woman whose contributions have helped shape the profession for generations to come.

CONGRATULATIONS LAURIE!!

Sponsor Spotlight

Caseway



Caseway is a Canadian technology and automation company that develops AI systems designed to help professionals work with complex legal information. The company partners with enterprises, universities, and institutions to build secure software that analyzes large legal datasets, automates document workflows, and improves access to legal knowledge while maintaining strict privacy and security standards.

Software Description and Benefits

Caseway's legal research system, Casey, helps lawyers and paralegals quickly find, analyze, and understand Canadian court decisions. The platform indexes millions of court decisions and allows legal professionals to search cases, review summaries, and compare relevant rulings in seconds.

For busy legal teams, Casey reduces the time required to conduct legal research and helps surface relevant authorities faster. By combining large-scale legal data with AI analysis, the system helps lawyers and paralegals prepare memos, understand precedents, and identify key decisions more efficiently.

Casey

AI-Powered Legal Research

Casey's core strength is fast, reliable legal research. Users can ask plain-language legal questions and receive immediate answers supported by real case law. Casey draws from a database of millions of court decisions across the United States and Canada, covering federal and state jurisdictions. Intentionally grounded only in primary legal sources. No random internet content or secondary commentary. If it was not written by a judge, Casey does not use it. Narrow results to specific regions such as provinces or states, reducing noise and increasing relevance for your specific legal context. Whether you are a small-firm lawyer or a solo practitioner trying to work faster and smarter, Casey delivers reliable answers and real legal grounding.

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Skip the manual work while keeping the accuracy. CaseForm AI reads your documents, understands jurisdiction-specific rules, and completes court, legal, and government forms with precision. Upload supporting files like notices or affidavits and let the system auto-fill thousands of forms instantly. File-ready output without the busywork.

<https://caseway.ai/caseform>

THE OPEN RECORD



The Open Record is a dedicated space for paralegals to contribute their voices, perspectives, and lived experiences from within the profession. This section invites thoughtful commentary, practical insight, and principled opinion on the issues shaping legal practice, access to justice, and the evolving role of paralegals in Ontario and beyond.

Contributions may reflect on real-world practice, emerging legal developments, professional challenges, or broader systemic considerations. Whether grounded in advocacy, education, or experience, each piece forms part of a growing professional record, one built by those doing the work every day.

The Open Record is not about speaking the loudest. It is about speaking with purpose, clarity, and integrity.

All submissions are reviewed for relevance, professionalism, and contribution to the ongoing dialogue within the paralegal community.

This is your record. Add to it.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in The Open Record are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Paralegal TownHall, its affiliates, partners, or editorial team.

THE OPEN RECORD



Pictured above: Christian Genova

Christian is a Personal Injury Lawyer | Associate at Howie, Sacks & Henry LLP, and a proud alumnus of the Dual JD program at the University of Windsor and the University of Detroit Mercy. Christian has represented clients in Small Claims Court, the Superior Court of Justice and various administrative tribunals. He has also provided litigation support for matters before the Court of Appeal and the Divisional Court.

What Ontario paralegals must know and must do when accident victims fall through the coverage gap

Effective July 1, 2026, Ontario's Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule undergoes its most significant restructuring in a generation. For Ontario paralegals practising in accident benefits, motor vehicle injury, or personal injury matters, the changes are not merely administrative; they fundamentally alter what clients receive, what alternatives exist, and what you are professionally and ethically obligated to do. This article is a practical primer for every paralegal who may encounter an accident victim after July 1, 2026.

Income Replacement Benefits (IRBs) and Non-Earner Benefits (NEBs) are no longer automatic. If your client didn't purchase them and most people didn't think they had to, they may have no insurer paying their bills while they're off work. Your job, under the LSO's Rules of Conduct, is to know the alternatives, know how to apply for them, and know when not doing so puts your licence at risk.

What did the old SABS guarantee?

Under the pre-July 2026 SABS, Income Replacement Benefits were mandatory; every standard Ontario auto policy included them automatically. An injured person who could not return to work received up to \$400 per week (or up to \$800/week with purchased enhanced coverage), regardless of fault. Non-Earner Benefits covered students and unemployed individuals. Caregiver Benefits covered those who could no longer care for dependents. None of that is going away entirely, but from July 1 onward, it applies only to those who affirmatively purchased it.

Article Continued on Next Page...

THE OPEN RECORD

What does the new SABS mandate?

Under Ontario Regulation 383/24, the only benefits that remain automatically included in every standard auto policy are:

- ☑ Medical & Rehabilitation Benefits - treatment, physiotherapy, assessments
- ☑ Attendant Care Benefits - personal care assistance for serious injuries

Everything else is now opt-in.

The following benefits require the policyholder to have actively selected and paid for them at renewal or purchase:

- ☑ Income Replacement Benefits (IRBs)
- ☑ Non-Earner Benefits
- ☑ Caregiver Benefits
- ☑ Death & Funeral Benefits
- ☑ Visitors' Expenses

Is the SABS Reform Retroactive?

The 2026 reform is not retroactive. If your client's accident occurred before July 1, 2026, the pre-reform SABS governs their claim in full, regardless of when you are reading this. IRBs remain mandatory for those clients. If an insurer attempts to apply post-reform rules to a pre-reform accident, that is improper and must be challenged.

Who is most at risk?

The clients most likely to fall through the gap are those whose policies were renewed after July 1 without adding the optional benefits, either because they weren't advised, didn't understand, or chose to save the modest additional premium.

Particularly vulnerable populations include:

- ☑ Gig and contract workers who lack employer disability coverage
- ☑ Self-employed individuals
- ☑ Part-time workers without group benefits
- ☑ Passengers, pedestrians, and cyclists who are under the new regime may have no access to optional benefits at all if not named on a policy
- ☑ Low-income earners who reduced coverage to lower premiums

A person injured in a collision after July 1, 2026, may receive medical treatment coverage but have no access to income replacement or caregiving support unless those benefits were purchased in advance.

Article Continued on Next Page...

THE OPEN RECORD

The Alternatives - What You Need to Know How to Apply For

When a client comes to you unable to work, in pain, and without IRB coverage, your ethical duty requires that you know what options exist and how to pursue them. Here is the full landscape of income support alternatives, along with what a paralegal can and should do for each.

Employment Insurance (EI) - Sickness Benefits

EI Sickness Benefits are the most immediate option for employed accident victims and should be your first application in most cases.

Feature	Details
Who qualifies	Employed persons (including some self-employed who opted in) with 600 insurable hours in the prior 52 weeks
Benefit amount	55% of average weekly insurable earnings, up to the annual maximum (approximately \$668/week in 2026)
Duration	Up to 26 weeks (extended from 15 in 2022)
How to apply	Online Application - requires ROE from employer and medical certificate
Processing time	Typically, 2 to 4 weeks after filing; advise clients to apply immediately
Paralegal role	Assist with documentation gathering; advise on timing; EI itself is a federal process (no legal representation required, but guidance is valuable)

What You Need From Your Client for EI

- ☑ Record of Employment (ROE) - employer must issue within 5 days of the last day worked
- ☑ Medical certificate from treating physician confirming inability to work
- ☑ Social Insurance Number and direct deposit banking information
- ☑ Dates of accident and last day worked

Article Continued on Next Page...

THE OPEN RECORD

Canada Pension Plan - Disability Benefits (CPP-D)

CPP-D provides monthly income support for those whose injuries result in a disability that is both severe and prolonged - meaning it is expected to last indefinitely or result in death. This is a higher bar than EI and not appropriate for short-term injuries, but critical for catastrophic or permanently disabling accidents.

Feature	Details
Who qualifies	Persons under 65 with sufficient CPP contributions; disability must be "severe and prolonged"
Benefit amount	Flat-rate plus earnings-related component (approximately \$1,600 to \$1,700/month in 2026)
Application form	Service Canada Form ISP-1151 ; requires physician's report (ISP-2519)
Processing time	3 to 6 months - clients must apply early and pursue EI in parallel
Paralegal role	Assist with completing forms; help gather medical documentation; advise on appeals to the Social Security Tribunal if denied

Ontario Works (OW)

Ontario Works is a last-resort income assistance program for individuals in financial need. Benefits are minimal (approximately \$733/month for a single person in 2026) but available quickly when a client has exhausted other options or is waiting for EI/CPP-D to process. Eligibility is means-tested; assets and other income are assessed. Clients should not be discouraged from applying because they feel it is & welfare"; it is a legal entitlement when other support is unavailable. Applications are made through the client's local municipality or [online](#).

Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

ODSP is appropriate for clients whose injuries result in a substantial, continuous, and recurring disability lasting at least one year. Benefit amounts are higher than OW (approximately \$1,228/month for a single person in 2026). [ODSP applications](#) are made through Ontario's Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and require medical documentation of disability.

Article Continued on Next Page...

THE OPEN RECORD

Employer Group Benefits | Short-Term and Long-Term Disability

Many employed clients have Short-Term Disability (STD) or Long-Term Disability (LTD) coverage through their employer's group benefits plan. This is entirely separate from auto insurance and should always be investigated early.

Paralegals should:

- ☑ Ask every new client about their employment and benefits plan
- ☑ Review plan documents or direct clients to their HR department immediately
- ☑ Note that STD/LTD plans often have strict notice periods - delay can constitute a waiver of benefits
- ☑ Be aware that LTD benefits are commonly denied on first application and may require appeal or litigation (outside paralegal scope - refer to a lawyer)

The Tort System and Suing the At-Fault Driver

For clients injured by a negligent driver, a tort claim for lost income remains fully intact after July 1, 2026. The SABS reform does not affect the right to sue. However, tort litigation is often slow, taking years to resolve and is not a source of immediate income support. Counsel should pursue both the alternatives above and a tort referral simultaneously.

Tort claim lawsuits against at-fault drivers for lost income, pain and suffering, and other damages are outside the authorized scope of paralegal practice in Ontario. Under the Law Society Act, paralegals cannot represent clients in Superior Court personal injury actions. If your client has a viable tort claim, you have a professional duty to refer them to a licensed lawyer promptly. Failing to identify and communicate this option may constitute a breach of your duty of competence.

Your Intake Checklist Every Motor Vehicle Accident Client After July 1, 2026
Adopt this as your standard intake protocol for any client injured in a motor vehicle
accident where income loss is a concern:

New Client Intake | Income Protection Checklist

1. Obtain and review the client's full auto insurance policy - confirm whether IRB optional coverage was purchased
2. Determine the date of the accident - if pre-July 1, 2026, pre-reform mandatory IRB rules apply
3. Ask about employment status - employee, self-employed, gig worker, student, unemployed

Article Continued on Next Page...

THE OPEN RECORD

New Client Intake | Income Protection Checklist

4. Ask whether the client has employer group benefits including STD or LTD coverage
5. Determine whether the client has sufficient EI insurable hours (600 in prior 52 weeks) - advise immediate EI Sickness Benefit application if so
6. Assess whether the injury may qualify for CPP Disability - for serious or prolonged impairment
7. Identify if Ontario Works or ODSP is needed as an immediate bridge while other applications process
8. Assess whether there is a viable tort claim against an at-fault driver - if so, refer to a personal injury lawyer promptly and document the referral
9. Advise the client clearly, in writing, of all options pursued and any options outside your scope

A New Standard of Practice

The 2026 SABS reforms transfer significant financial risk from auto insurers onto injured people. For many clients, especially workers without group benefits, self-employed individuals, and those who choose not to purchase optional coverage, you may be the only professional who explains what support exists and helps them access it. That is not a small responsibility. The EI application filed in week one versus week six could be worth thousands of dollars. The CPP-D application initiated promptly, rather

than months later, could mean the difference between financial stability and crisis. The tort referral that occurs at intake, rather than after a year of delay, protects the client's limitation period. The Rules of Conduct have always required competence, quality, and diligence. In the post-July 2026 environment, those requirements have a new and very specific meaning for accident benefits practitioners.

Know the system. Know the alternatives. Know your obligations. Your clients are counting on it.

Key Resources:

1. [LSO Paralegal Rules of Conduct](#)
2. [Ontario Regulation 383/24](#) - the 2026 SABS reform regulation
3. [FSRA SABS Guidance](#)
4. [EI Sickness Benefits Application](#)
5. [CPP Disability Application \(ISP-1151\)](#)
6. [Ontario Works Application](#)
7. [ODSP Application](#)
8. [LAT \(Licence Appeal Tribunal\)](#) - for accident benefits disputes

Sponsor Spotlight

Howie, Sacks & Henry



A Top Personal Injury Law Firm in Canada

For more than 25 years, Howie, Sacks & Henry LLP has been recognized as one of Canada's leading personal injury law firms. Founded in 2000 by James Howie, Neil Sacks, and Michael Henry, our lawyers have stood by clients during the most difficult times of their lives.

Unlike many firms, you won't see HSH ads on television, radio, billboards, or buses. Instead, our reputation has been built on results: high-quality legal work, compassionate service, and referrals from doctors, rehabilitation specialists, insurers, fellow lawyers, and satisfied clients. Word-of-mouth has been our strongest endorsement.

THE OPEN RECORD



Pictured above: Sehmani KingSun-Leo

Sehmani KingSun-Leo is a Licensed Paralegal and entrepreneur with over 18 years of experience in the legal space. Sehmani has worked in the Toronto and Central East regions in the Ontario & Superior Courts as a Court Clerk/Registrar, which makes her very knowledgeable about court practices. Sehmani holds a paralegal diploma, an alternative dispute resolution certificate and court support certification.

LESSONS BEYOND THE PARALEGAL CLASSROOM THE REAL-LIFE LESSONS

The Journey: Single Motherhood and Legal Education

I was 19, unsure of the future and what my education would look like. I dropped out of high school and entered college as a mature student. After about 15 years of working in the courts, private law offices, making the difficult decision of dropping out of college several times during the process because I couldn't make ends meet - I knew I had to make a drastic change.

It was September 2021 when I began my paralegal diploma journey, and law school was in my tunnel vision. In June 2023, I graduated and decided to attend law school that following September in Leicester, UK.

I was beyond scared to be away from my daughter, who was 16 at the time, but I had the unwavering support of my parents and friends, not to mention my mentors Justice Shauna Pemberton (Brampton) and Justice Jack Leblanc (Central East), who would not hear of me giving up or quitting. When I entered law school while simultaneously working toward building a firm as a licensed paralegal, I was not walking in alone. I carried the title of student—but I also carried the title of mother.

Single motherhood is not a chapter in the paralegal process textbook. There is no course outline for balancing being a present parent with exams. There is no midterm that prepares you for studying for licensing requirements while making sure homework is done, dinner is cooked, and emotional needs are met. Not to mention, I was now abroad in law school and had to pivot virtually to be present as a mother and business owner.

There were nights when I studied after having beautiful and organic conversations with my daughter, and because of the time difference, when my business hat came off, my student hat was put on. Surrounded by casebooks and statutes, fueled not by caffeine but by commitment.

Article Continued on Next Page...

THE OPEN RECORD

My first case was a human rights matter cited as *Clarke v. Mohamed Elsabakhawi Drugs Ltd., 2024 HRTO 1733 (CanLII)*

I was scared.

I was nervous.

However, I knew that my client needed me. With solid preparation, mentorship and confidence - I won.

It was a feeling I will never be able to replicate, but it was an honourable win. Not perfect, but an honourable one against my very senior opposition.

Believing in our abilities is just half the battle. I had to silence the noise in my head:

“You’re just a paralegal.”

We are more than “just” paralegals; we are growing cornerstones of the justice system and abundantly providing further access to justice.

What we seemingly seem to forget is that clients hire “us” for our individual skills and for how we make them feel. If you want to measure how well you are doing in your practice - ask your client.

The Initiative to Seek Mentorship

One of the greatest misconceptions about entering the legal field is that someone will guide you step-by-step once you graduate.

They won’t.

Unless you seek mentorship intentionally, you may step into practice with minimal guidance.

Licensing is not apprenticeship. Passing an exam does not guarantee preparedness. A diploma does not eliminate uncertainty.

Mentorship is not automatic—it is pursued. Early in my career, I realized that waiting for someone to “take me under their wing” would delay my growth. So I began reaching out. I observed seasoned practitioners. I asked questions. I listened more than I spoke. I accepted the correction.

Because here is the truth:

If you do not actively build your professional support system, you may find yourself navigating complex files alone.

And while independence is powerful, isolation is dangerous. To every paralegal student reading this: Start building your network before you need it.

Article Continued on Next Page...

THE OPEN RECORD

The Privilege of Being a Licensed Paralegal in Ontario

We often underestimate the magnitude of what we hold in our hands when we receive that license.

Ontario is the only province in the world where paralegals are independently regulated and licensed to provide legal services in defined areas of law. This regulatory legal framework, overseen by the Law Society of Ontario, is globally unique. That is not just a credential. That is a privilege. As licensed paralegals in Ontario, we have the authority to provide services and advice within our scope.

We are not assistants.

We are not “almost lawyers.”

We are regulated legal professionals.

And with that privilege comes responsibility. Responsibility to uphold ethics. Responsibility to remain competent. Responsibility to serve access to justice. When I received my license, I understood that it represented more than personal achievement. It represented access—for clients who may otherwise go unrepresented.

Motherhood as Motivation, Not Limitation

Being a single mother did not weaken my journey—it refined it. It taught me to prioritize. It taught me empathy for clients juggling their own hardships. It taught me that building a legal career is not about prestige—it is about impact. When my child watched me study, attend classes, and pursue licensing, I was not just building a career.

I was building an example.

An example that education can be pursued at any stage.

An example that challenges do not disqualify you.

An example that professional titles can coexist with parenthood.

The Real Lesson

The real lesson beyond the paralegal classroom is this: Your circumstances do not determine your ceiling. Your preparation does. Your discipline does. Your initiative does. Becoming a licensed paralegal in Ontario is a remarkable accomplishment. Doing so while navigating single motherhood is a testament to strength. But more than anything, it is proof that the legal profession is accessible to those who are willing to endure the process.

To every aspiring paralegal reading this: Take your education seriously. Seek mentorship intentionally. Respect the privilege of your license. And never underestimate the power of your lived experience. Because sometimes, the greatest lessons in law are not found in legislation— They are found in the life you live while pursuing it.

Article Continued on Next Page...

THE OPEN RECORD

There were mornings when exhaustion whispered, “You can slow down,” but purpose answered, “Not yet.”

What I learned during that season was this:

Success in the legal profession is not only about intelligence. It is about endurance.

I wanted to push no matter what and follow my dreams, with self-care at the forefront. I made the choice to return home to Toronto, Canada after one year of law school and pivot to part-time studies with the University of London.

My educational journey is slow and steady and will be fulfilled one day soon. I rewrite my bio yearly, and it will end with “a seasoned practitioner in Caribbean Sea defence.”

The Reality Beyond the Classroom

Inside the classroom, we learn the mechanics of drafting pleadings, understanding rules of evidence, interpreting legislation and navigating tribunal procedures. We study statutes like the Rules of the Small Claims Court, prepare for licensing examinations, and memorize professional obligations.

But the classroom rarely prepares you for:

- The client who is crying in your office
- The small business owner who cannot afford full legal representation
- The accused person who feels misunderstood by the system
- The self-represented litigant relying on you to translate complexity into clarity

Real life demands more than legal knowledge. It demands emotional intelligence. It demands boundaries.

It demands confidence in rooms where you may be underestimated.

And if you are a woman.

If you are a mother.

If you are navigating this profession without generational legal connections— You quickly learn that competence must be paired with courage.

Sponsor Spotlight

JC Paralegal Services



Jolanta Chrzaszcz is the Founder of JC Paralegal Services, representing landlords and businesses across the Greater Toronto Area at the Landlord and Tenant Board and in Small Claims Court.

Jolanta defends landlords and businesses at the Landlord and Tenant Board and in Small Claims Court, building each case on structured legal analysis and organized evidence.

Jolanta serves Ontario, Mississauga, Oakville, Burlington, Hamilton, Halton Region, Toronto (GTA), Vaughan, Markham, Oshawa, Guelph Kitchener, Niagara Region, Durham Region and more...

The JC Paralegal Services team specializes in:

- Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) representation for landlords and property managers
- Eviction applications (L1, L2) and rent arrears recovery proceedings
- Defence of tenant applications (T2, T6, bad faith allegations)
- Small Claims Court to the monetary jurisdiction limit of \$50k
- Contract disputes, debt recovery, and enforcement of judgments
- Motion materials, settlement conferences, and trial preparation
- Structured evidence briefs and written legal submissions

THE OPEN RECORD



Pictured above: [Charlene Crews](#)

In addition to her clinical work, Charlene is a social housing adjudicator and Psychiatric Patient Advocate with the Ministry of Health. She is also a Mental Health First Aid Trainer and holds licenses as a Paralegal, Private Investigator, and Regulatory Investigator. Her extensive credentials include certificates in advanced adjudication, regulatory investigations, interpersonal mediation, family therapy, dialectical behavioural therapy, and health service management. Charlene is currently pursuing a master's degree in health administration at Toronto Metropolitan University, underscoring her commitment to advancing her expertise in health law, privacy, and ethics.

WHAT SITTING AS AN ADJUDICATOR TAUGHT ME ABOUT REGULATION — AND WHY IT MATTERS TO PARALEGALS

When paralegals think about career paths in regulation, they often picture advocacy: representing clients, appearing before tribunals, arguing a position. Adjudication asks something different of you. It asks you to sit still, listen fully, and rule fairly — even when the pressure runs in the opposite direction. That discipline has shaped nearly a decade of my professional life, and I think it's a perspective more paralegals should understand, because it's exactly the perspective our profession needs at the governance table.

I've served as an adjudicator in professional regulation since 2017. In that time, I've chaired the Discipline and Fitness to Practise Committees at OCSWSSW, sat as a social housing adjudicator with the City of Toronto since 2018, and earned certification through SOAR at Osgoode Hall. I'm also a licensed private investigator and certified regulatory investigator — roles that, on the surface, seem far removed from a hearing room, but that actually sharpen the same muscle: the ability to weigh evidence dispassionately and reach a conclusion you can defend on the record.

Adjudication is not advocacy in reverse. It's a distinct skill set — one built on procedural fairness, natural justice, and the willingness to make an unpopular decision because it's the correct one. Every file that crosses an adjudicator's desk carries real consequences: a professional's livelihood, a tenant's housing stability, the public's trust in a regulator's integrity. You learn quickly that the quality of a decision is measured not by how it's received, but by how it's reasoned.

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For paralegals, this matters more than it might first appear. Our profession sits inside a regulatory framework that governs how we practise and how we're held accountable. Understanding adjudication from the inside — knowing what fairness actually requires, knowing how a tribunal weighs credibility, knowing the difference between due process and delay — is exactly the kind of grounded, practical insight that makes for better, more informed practitioners. I've also spent three consecutive terms as an elected professional member of the OCSWSSW Council, which has given me a parallel education: not just how decisions get made in a hearing room, but how standards get set and policy gets built in the first place.

Being an adjudicator has taught me to separate personal conviction from principled judgment. Being a Council member has taught me how policy translates into practice. Both have convinced me that ethics, integrity, and transparency aren't abstract values — they're daily disciplines you either practise or you don't.

That's the lens I bring to my work, and it's shaped how I think about our profession more broadly what fairness looks like, what public protection actually requires, and what it means to hold a decision-making role responsibly. Most people never see the inside of a hearing room — but the habits it builds show up everywhere else: in how you argue a file, how you read a client, how you hold a line when it would be easier not to. That's the part of this work I'd encourage every paralegal to sit with, even from the outside looking in.

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OCTOBER 1	Take up Questions about Professional Responsibilities
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THE OPEN RECORD



Pictured above: Naomi Carrera-McKail

Naomi Carrera-McKail is a senior law clerk, licensed paralegal, and legal industry leader with over a decade of experience in litigation, specializing in administrative and commercial matters. Her practice experience spans Labour & Employment, Real Estate Litigation, Estates Litigation, and Commercial Litigation, supported by deep expertise in civil litigation drafting, discovery processes, and complex file management.

TECH AND AI IN ONTARIO: OPPORTUNITIES AND INNOVATION FOR LICENSED PARALEGALS

Technology and artificial intelligence (“AI”) are reshaping Ontario’s legal services sector, creating new opportunities for licensed paralegals to enhance their practices and expand their careers. As courts, tribunals, and legal service providers increasingly adopt digital tools, paralegals who embrace technology will be well-positioned to meet evolving client expectations and remain competitive in a changing marketplace.

AI-powered tools can assist with a range of tasks, including legal research, document drafting, file organization, scheduling, and client communication. By automating routine administrative work, paralegals can improve efficiency, reduce costs, and dedicate more time to advocacy, case strategy, and client service. Cloud-based case management systems also support remote work, secure document sharing, and improved collaboration with clients and colleagues.

Beyond improving day-to-day practice, technology is creating entirely new opportunities for paralegals. Many legal technology companies are seeking professionals with legal knowledge to help develop, test, and implement software solutions. Paralegals can contribute as legal technology specialists, compliance analysts, implementation consultants, product trainers, or customer success advisors for legal software providers. Their practical understanding of legal procedures makes them valuable contributors to the design of tools that serve legal professionals and the public.

However, AI should be viewed as a tool rather than a replacement for professional judgment. Licensed paralegals remain responsible for ensuring the accuracy of their work and complying with the Rules of Professional Conduct established by the Law Society of Ontario. AI-generated content should always be reviewed carefully, as errors, inaccuracies, and outdated information may occur.

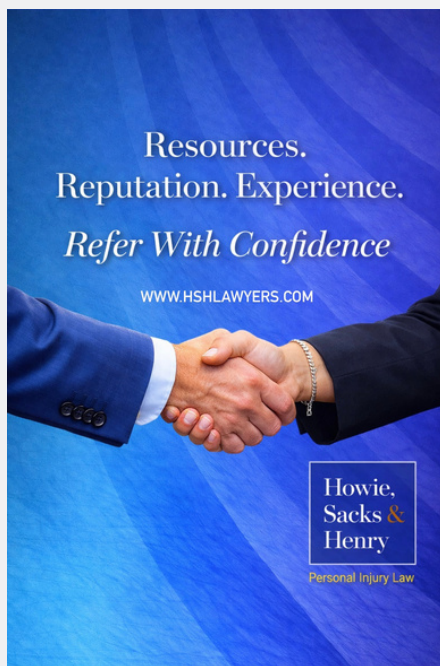
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Protecting client confidentiality is equally important. Before adopting AI or cloud-based technologies, paralegals should understand how information is collected, stored, and safeguarded. Strong cybersecurity practices and responsible data management are essential to maintaining public trust and meeting professional obligations.

Continuous learning will be critical as technology continues to evolve. Paralegals who develop skills in AI, legal technology, cybersecurity, and digital workflows will have access to a growing range of career and business opportunities.

The future of legal services in Ontario will likely combine human expertise with technological innovation, creating a profession that is both more efficient and more accessible. By embracing technology responsibly, licensed paralegals can not only improve their current practices but also position themselves for exciting new roles within the rapidly expanding legal technology sector.



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Pictured above: Leon Presner

Currently, Leon is currently licensed as a paralegal with the Law Society of Ontario and the owner and founder of Defend-it Legal Services Professional Corporation. His legal services include defending, representing, advocating, and providing legal advice for clients in small claims court, employment law, human rights issues, landlord and tenant issues, disciplinary hearings and other provincial and federal tribunal matters, minor criminal matters (summary conviction) and statutes under the Provincial Offences Act (including traffic offences) and immigration law defence.

BEING A SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR AS AN ONTARIO PARALEGAL

The path to becoming a paralegal in Ontario is demanding enough on its own. Choosing to step out on your own, put your name on the door, and build a thriving legal practice from nothing is where the real test begins. That takes something extra. This is a blend of legal competence, business acumen, and a relentless drive that doesn't clock out at 5:00 PM. If you are early in your career and considering building your own practice, these are the principles that separate the paralegals who thrive from those who simply just survive.

Working Hard - Very, Very Hard

There is absolutely no shortcut here, especially if you are a true entrepreneur who has the drive to succeed. Anyone who tells you otherwise is selling you something that is not accurate or true. Building a paralegal practice from the ground up means working long before clients arrive and long after they leave. In the early years, you are simultaneously the legal representative, the receptionist, the bookkeeper, and the marketing department. You will draft documents late at night, return calls on weekends, and spend hours preparing for a Small Claims Court matter that pays a modest fee because your reputation is built one file at a time. The hallmark of a truly successful paralegal is the commitment to give every client, regardless of the value or complexity of their matter, the same standard of diligent, professional representation. That consistency is what builds a reputation worth having.

Diversification of Your Skill Set

Ontario paralegals are licensed to practice in some of the most active and impactful areas of law, including the Small Claims Court, the Landlord and Tenant Board, Highway Traffic Act offences, other provincial offences, criminal summary conviction offences, and other federal and provincial tribunal proceedings. The smartest practitioners do not limit themselves to one corner of that sandbox. By developing competency across multiple practice areas, you insulate your practice against seasonal slowdowns, regulatory shifts, and market changes and fluctuations. For example, a paralegal who handles landlord-tenant disputes, accident benefits claims, and provincial offences is never dependent on any single source of work. That independence is what keeps a practice healthy through any market. Diversification is not merely smart business. This is the foundation of a sustainable career.

Article Continued on Next Page...

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Expand Your Reach with Complementary Licensing

One of the most powerful ways to differentiate yourself in a crowded market is to stack complementary credentials alongside your paralegal licence. These additional designations open new revenue streams, attract new client demographics, and position you as a multi-dimensional legal services provider rather than a generalist paralegal.

Consider the following:

- **Private Investigator Licence (Ontario PSISA)** - Licensed under the Private Security and Investigative Services Act, a PI licence allows you to conduct witness investigations, asset searches, process serving, skip tracing and surveillance work that directly feeds into your litigation files. It is a natural fit for paralegals practicing in civil litigation, insurance defence, or landlord-tenant matters.
- **Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC)** - Authorized by the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC), this designation allows you to assist clients with immigration applications, work permits, and refugee claims. This is a rapidly growing and underserved market in Ontario.
- **Family Law Service Provider (FLSP)** - Licensed by the LSO, an FLSP designation authorizes you to provide legal services in specific family law matters, including simple divorces, child support motions, and domestic contracts. Family law is one of the most consistently in-demand practice areas. Additionally, most clients just cannot afford a lawyer.
- **Commissioner of Oaths / Notary Public** - A low-barrier credential that adds a billable, high-volume service to your office with minimal overhead. Clients often bundle this with other services, increasing your average transaction value. The goal is not to collect credentials for their own sake, but to build an ecosystem of services for your clients that your competitors simply cannot match.

Build an Online Legal Services Business

Your paralegal licence does not confine you to a physical office or a local client base. The digital economy has created genuine opportunities for paralegals to build scalable online businesses around their expertise. Consider a document preparation service that offers standardized LTB N-forms, demand letters, or Small Claims Court pleadings through a clean, user-friendly website. Clients pay a flat fee, and you deliver a professionally prepared document. Or develop a subscription-based resource platform for landlords or small business owners, providing template packages, compliance checklists, and educational content. Some paralegals have built thriving practices that offer virtual representation across Ontario, appearing at the LTB and Small Claims proceedings via video without ever meeting a client in person. The overhead is low; the reach is wide and provincial. Creating the right niche product can generate consistent, high-margin recurring revenue.

Always Learning, Always Improving

The law does not sit still, and neither can you. New case law, amended regulations, updated tribunal rules, and evolving court procedures mean that what worked two years ago may not be best practice today. Commit to continuing education not because the Law Society of Ontario requires it, but because your clients deserve a representative who knows the current landscape. Read recent decisions from the Divisional Court and the LTB. Follow LAO updates and FSRA bulletins. Take advocacy courses. Watch how experienced counsel conduct examinations and adapt what you learn. The paralegals who plateau are often the ones who stopped being curious.

Article Continued on Next Page...

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Network, Network, Network

Your referral network is one of your most valuable business assets, and it does not build itself. Attend Law Society events, local and regional peer mixers, and Paralegal Association meetings. Introduce yourself to other lawyers and paralegals, real estate agents, property managers, insurance brokers, insolvency trustees and social workers. These are professionals whose clients regularly need the exact services you provide. Join LinkedIn groups and engage genuinely, not just to promote. When you refer a client to someone outside your scope of practice, you are investing in a relationship that often comes back tenfold. In a competitive market like Ontario, the paralegal with the strongest network rarely struggles for business.

Having Trusted Mentorship and Friendship Within the Profession

The paralegal profession can be very isolating, particularly when you are a sole practitioner grinding through difficult files and complex clients. Having one or two trusted colleagues you can call to talk through a procedural question, vent about a frustrating opponent, or simply share the experience of building a practice is invaluable. Refrain from asking your peers questions as a legal representative on social media. This completely affirms and diminishes your legal knowledge and credibility of your competency within the profession for all to see and judge. Seek out mentors who have walked the road ahead of you and are willing to be honest with you. Offer mentorship in return as you gain experience. These relationships are not just professionally enriching; they sustain you through the hard stretches that every entrepreneur inevitably faces.

Always Learning, Always Improving

The law does not sit still, and neither can you. New case law, amended regulations, updated tribunal rules, and evolving court procedures mean that what worked two years ago may not be best practice today. Commit to continuing education not because the Law Society of Ontario requires it, but because your clients deserve a representative who knows the current landscape. Read recent decisions from the Divisional Court and the LTB. Follow LAO updates and FSRA bulletins. Take advocacy courses. Watch how experienced counsel conduct examinations and adapt what you learn. The paralegals who plateau are often the ones who stopped being curious.

Building Your Brand and Online Presence

In 2026, your digital presence is your storefront. A clean, professional website with clear practice area descriptions, a Google Business profile with genuine client reviews, and an active presence on business social media platforms like LinkedIn can be the difference between a ringing phone and one that doesn't. Today, new clients search online before they call. Make sure what they find reflects the calibre of the representation you provide. Brand consistency involves actively promoting your business name, your personal name, your logo, and your overall tone in your advertising endeavours. This is very important as it builds recognition and trust over time. If your potential clients and colleagues do not know who you are, they are not going to call or refer you.

Knowing Your Numbers

You can be the most talented and smartest advocate in the room and still run a failing business if you do not understand your finances. Track your billable hours, monitor your accounts receivable, set a budget, and price your services competitively but sustainably. Know your worth! Understand the difference between revenue and profit. Consider working with an accountant who understands professional services. Financial literacy is not optional for the paralegal entrepreneur. It is the foundation on which everything else is built.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the profession needs more practitioners who take entrepreneurship seriously. Build something you are proud of. Show up every day prepared, never grow too confident to keep sharpening your skills, and be generous enough to lift others as you rise. Work hard, be a true leader, and leave this profession better than you found it.

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Pictured above: Adu Asare

Adu is a dedicated paralegal student with a passion for access to justice and hands-on experience in legal research, document preparation, and tribunal procedures. My areas of interest include Criminal Law, Landlord and Tenant Law, Employment Law, Personal Injury Law, and Administrative Tribunals.

THE GROWING THREAT OF GHOST IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS IN CANADA: LEGAL RISKS AND REGULATORY CHALLENGES

Abstract

Ghost immigration consultants unlicensed individuals who provide paid immigration advice pose a growing threat to the integrity of Canada's immigration system. This article examines the legal framework governing immigration representation, relevant jurisprudence, practical risks to applicants, and ongoing enforcement challenges. It concludes with policy considerations aimed at strengthening regulatory compliance and public protection.

Introduction

Canada's immigration system relies on regulated, competent, and accountable representation to ensure fairness and legal compliance. However, the rise of "ghost consultants" has become a persistent concern. These individuals operate without authorization, often through online platforms or informal networks, misleading vulnerable applicants with promises of guaranteed immigration success.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

The regulation of immigration representation is primarily governed by section 91 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), which prohibits any person from providing immigration advice or representation for consideration unless they are an authorized representative.

This framework is strengthened by the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants Act (S.C. 2019, c. 29, s. 292), which established the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC) as the national regulatory body. The CICC is responsible for licensing immigration consultants, maintaining professional standards, and enforcing disciplinary measures against misconduct.

Authorized representatives under this system include members in good standing of the CICC, lawyers, and certain paralegals regulated by provincial law societies. Despite this structured framework, unauthorized individuals continue to provide services outside the legal system, particularly through digital platforms and international networks.

Article Continued on Next Page...

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Jurisprudence on Misrepresentation

Canadian courts have consistently reinforced the strict consequences of misrepresentation in immigration matters. In *Koo v. Canada (Citizenship and Immigration)*, 2008 FC 931, the Federal Court confirmed that misrepresentation, whether intentional or indirect, can justify application refusal and render an applicant inadmissible under IRPA. Where ghost consultants submit false or misleading information, the legal consequences fall on the applicant, not the unlicensed advisor.

Practical Impact: Illustrative Scenario

A common scenario involves an international student who engages an unlicensed consultant advertising “guaranteed permanent residency.” The consultant submits an application containing fabricated employment records. The application is refused for misrepresentation, resulting in a multi-year ban on reapplication. The consultant disappears without accountability, leaving the applicant with financial loss and long-term immigration consequences.

Enforcement Challenges

Although the CICC provides regulatory oversight, enforcement remains limited. Ghost consultants frequently operate anonymously, offshore, or through encrypted online channels, making investigation difficult. Additionally, social media platforms enable widespread advertising without adequate verification of licensing status, creating significant regulatory blind spots.

Policy Considerations

Addressing this issue requires strengthened enforcement mechanisms, including increased penalties for unauthorized representation and enhanced cooperation with digital platforms to verify licensed practitioners. Cross-border regulatory collaboration is also essential. Equally important is targeted public education, particularly for international students and newcomers who are most vulnerable to fraud.

Conclusion

Ghost immigration consultants continue to undermine Canada’s immigration integrity and expose applicants to serious legal risks. While statutory safeguards under IRPA and the CICC framework exist, enforcement gaps and limited public awareness allow this problem to persist. Strengthening oversight, improving digital regulation, and expanding education initiatives are essential to protecting both applicants and the integrity of the immigration system.

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Pictured above: [Hesham Elgamal](#)

Hesham Elgamal is a licensed paralegal and medically trained professional, holding an MD, MRCP (UK), FRCP (Glasgow), and MBA. He also earned his Paralegal Diploma (Distinction) from triOS College. With over a decade of experience in healthcare regulation, medical liability investigations, and professional conduct oversight, he has developed deep expertise in analyzing clinical evidence within legal and regulatory frameworks. His work with a tribunal-level Medical Liability Committee involved investigating cases, drafting decisions, monitoring physician compliance, and supporting disciplinary and remediation processes.

BRIDGING MEDICINE AND LAW: THE ROLE OF PARALEGALS IN MANAGING MEDICAL EXPERT EVIDENCE REPORTS IN WSIB, PERSONAL INJURY, AND MEDICAL MALPRACTICE CASES

Introduction: Where Medical Evidence Meets Legal Judgment

Legal disputes involving injury or death, whether in medical malpractice, workplace accidents under WSIB, or general personal injury claims, are fundamentally shaped by medical evidence but decided by legal principles.

At the center of this intersection lies the medical expert report, which translates complex clinical findings into opinions that courts and tribunals can assess. For paralegals, the ability to manage, interpret, and challenge medical evidence is not optional; it is essential. Whether appearing before civil courts or administrative tribunals like WSIB, paralegals must operate within defined legal frameworks while navigating the gap between medical issues and the law.

The Legal Framework Governing Expert Evidence

Expert evidence in Ontario is governed primarily by the Rules of Civil Procedure, especially Rule 53.03, which outlines strict requirements for expert reports in civil litigation. Experts must provide fair, objective, and impartial opinions, with a clearly stated duty to the court.

In contrast, WSIB proceedings are governed by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA) and internal tribunal procedures. While formal Rule 53.03 compliance may not strictly apply, decision-makers at WSIB and the

Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal (WSIAT) still expect medical opinions to be:

- Clear and well-reasoned
- Supported by clinical evidence
- Relevant to statutory tests

This creates a dual procedural landscape where paralegals must adapt their handling of medical evidence depending on the forum.

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Medical Standards vs. Legal Standards Across Case Types

A critical issue across medical malpractice, WSIB claims, and personal injury cases is the distinction between medical standards and legal standards. Medical standards reflect accepted clinical practices and professional judgment. Despite clear medical standards and guidelines in most medical specialties, there may be some flexibility between different healthcare professionals.

Legal standards, however, are stricter and context-driven:

- In medical malpractice: the court determines whether a physician met the standard of a reasonably prudent practitioner.
- In personal injury claims: the focus is on negligence, causation, and damages.
- In WSIB matters: the issue is whether the injury arose out of and in the course of employment, and the extent of impairment or entitlement.

Importantly, medical opinions often discuss possibility or likelihood, while legal tests require proof on a balance of probabilities. This distinction is frequently decisive.

Medical Evidence in WSIB and Personal Injury Contexts

Unlike traditional malpractice litigation, WSIB claims are no-fault systems.

This means:

- The focus is not on proving negligence
- Instead, the emphasis is on causation and entitlement
- Medical documentation must establish a clear link between the workplace and the injury

In personal injury cases (e.g., motor vehicle accidents), medical reports are crucial in:

- Assessing the severity of injuries
- Establishing causation
- Quantifying damages, including future care needs and income loss

Paralegals must ensure that medical evidence aligns with the legal test applicable to each matter, something that requires both legal and practical understanding of medical terminology and documentation in these cases

Article Continued on Next Page...

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Building Effective Medical Expert Witness Reports

A strong medical or expert report must do more than clinical findings.

It must:

- Clearly outline the practitioner's medical training and qualifications
- Accurately summarize relevant facts and records
- Address the applicable legal test (negligence, causation, or entitlement)
- Provide logical, well-supported conclusions

In WSIB matters, this often includes:

- Functional limitations
- Work restrictions
- Assessment of the permanency of impairment

In personal injury cases, reports must connect injuries to damages in a structured and persuasive manner.

Challenging Medical and Expert Evidence

Paralegals must also be skilled in evaluating and challenging opposing medical evidence.

This includes:

- Identifying inconsistencies or gaps in medical reasoning
- Assessing whether opinions are speculative or unsupported
- Comparing expert conclusions with current medical records

In WSIB proceedings, this may involve:

- Challenging internal medical consultants' opinions
- Submitting rebuttal reports from treating physicians or independent experts

In civil litigation, it may include preparing for cross-examination or identifying admissibility issues.

Article Continued on Next Page...

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The Strategic Value of Paralegals in Personal Injury and WSIB Cases

Paralegals play a central and often underestimated role in these cases.

Their responsibilities include:

1. Medical Record Management

- Organizing large volumes of clinical records
- Identifying key timelines and events
- Highlighting inconsistencies or missing information

2. Expert Coordination

- Retaining appropriate experts (where permitted)
- Ensuring reports meet procedural and evidentiary standards
- Managing communication while maintaining compliance

3. Case Strategy Support

- Aligning medical evidence with legal tests
- Assisting in preparing submissions and arguments
- Identifying weaknesses in opposing evidence

4. Representation in WSIB Matters

- Advocating for clients at hearings
- Interpreting medical reports in light of WSIB policy
- Ensuring procedural fairness and completeness of evidence

Paralegals with medical or clinical backgrounds bring additional value by translating complex healthcare information into legally relevant arguments.

Conclusion: Integrating Law, Medicine, and Advocacy

Whether in medical malpractice, personal injury, or WSIB claims, success depends on effectively integrating medical evidence within a legal framework. The distinction between medical and legal standards remains central across all case types. Paralegals, operating within clearly defined professional rules, are uniquely positioned to manage this intersection.

THE OPEN RECORD



Pictured above: Maegan O'Connor

Maegan O'Connor is a Licensed Paralegal and Notary Public practicing in the Ottawa and Rockland areas. She pursued her passion for law, earning her Paralegal diploma from La Cité in 2020 and becoming licensed in 2021. Maegan focuses primarily on Landlord and Tenant Board matters, Notary services, and commissioning. With over 6,000 hours of LTB hearing exposure, she brings extensive practical experience to her work. She also assists lawyers with estate planning, estate disputes, and Superior Court matters. Fully bilingual in French and English, Maegan combines a compassionate, client-centered approach with practical, results-oriented strategies to help clients navigate legal challenges with confidence.

THE DAY-TO-DAY REALITY OF BEING A PARALEGAL IN 2026

The role of a paralegal in 2026 is both demanding and fast-paced. While many people still imagine courtroom appearances as the primary focus of legal work, the reality is that most paralegals spend a significant portion of their time managing clients, reviewing documents, responding to urgent communications, and balancing competing deadlines.

Technology has dramatically changed daily legal practice. Virtual hearings are now common across many tribunals and courts, requiring paralegals to adapt to digital advocacy and remote client management. Electronic filing systems, cloud-based file management, AI-assisted drafting tools, and online scheduling platforms have become standard in many offices. While these systems improve efficiency, they also create expectations for faster responses and constant availability.

A typical day for a paralegal may begin with reviewing overnight emails, checking upcoming deadlines, and preparing for hearings or client meetings. Files often involve urgent developments requiring immediate attention. A tenant may receive an unexpected notice, a client may forward new evidence hours before a hearing, or opposing counsel may propose last-minute settlement discussions.

Client communication remains one of the largest parts of the profession. Many clients contact paralegals during stressful moments in their lives involving housing issues, financial concerns, employment disputes, or provincial offences. As a result, strong interpersonal skills are just as important as legal knowledge. Paralegals must balance empathy with professionalism while managing client expectations realistically.

Administrative responsibilities are another major component of daily practice. Drafting forms, preparing disclosure packages, organizing evidence, issuing invoices, scheduling meetings, and maintaining file records all require careful attention. Even highly skilled advocates cannot succeed without strong organization behind the scenes.

Article Continued on Next Page...

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The profession in 2026 also requires adaptability. Legal procedures continue to evolve, particularly at administrative tribunals such as the Landlord and Tenant Board. Delays, procedural updates, and technological changes mean paralegals must remain informed and flexible. Continuing professional development is no longer optional in practice; it is necessary to remain competitive and competent.

Work-life balance can also be challenging. Because many legal issues are time-sensitive, paralegals often deal with urgent calls and emails outside traditional business hours. Smaller firms and sole practitioners may carry additional responsibilities involving business operations, marketing, bookkeeping, and client intake. The reality is that being a paralegal frequently involves wearing multiple hats at once.

Despite the challenges, many paralegals find the profession rewarding. Helping clients navigate difficult situations, achieving successful outcomes, advocating for access to justice, and giving clients peace of mind can provide a strong sense of purpose. Every file presents unique factual and legal issues, making the work intellectually engaging.

Networking and professional relationships have also become increasingly important. Referrals, mentorship, and reputation significantly impact career growth within the legal industry. Many newer paralegals benefit from connecting with experienced licensees who can offer guidance on advocacy, practice management, and ethical considerations.

Ultimately, the day-to-day reality of being a paralegal in 2026 is far more dynamic than many people expect. It is a profession that demands organization, resilience, communication skills, and continuous learning. While the workload can be intense, it also offers meaningful opportunities to assist clients and build a respected professional career.

THE TOWNHALL BULLETIN



Designed to demystify the legal profession, this series will focus on paralegals sharing career insights and real-life practice tips, to meaningful conversations about the paralegal profession, showing that we are #StrongerTogether.

Whether you're a paralegal student, new licensee, seasoned professional, or a member of the public, the Phenomenal Paralegals Podcast will keep you informed and inspired, in raising public awareness of phenomenal paralegals in Ontario and what they can do for you!

Tune in now on Spotify and join the conversation.

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TOWNHALL**

**RYAN
SWALM**

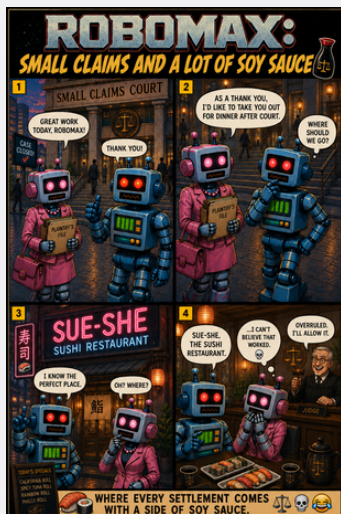
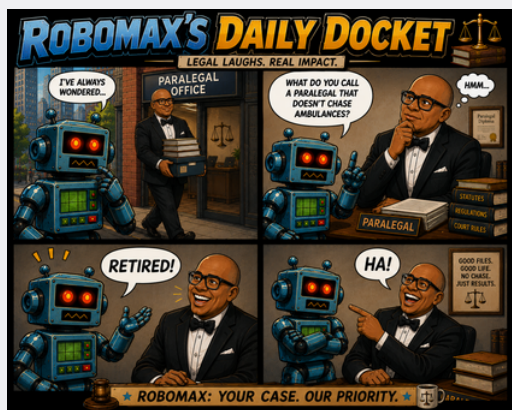
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OBJECTION! FUN SUSTAINED

All comics are created by Max Rodrigues



OBJECTION! FUN SUSTAINED



THE LEGAL JUMPLE



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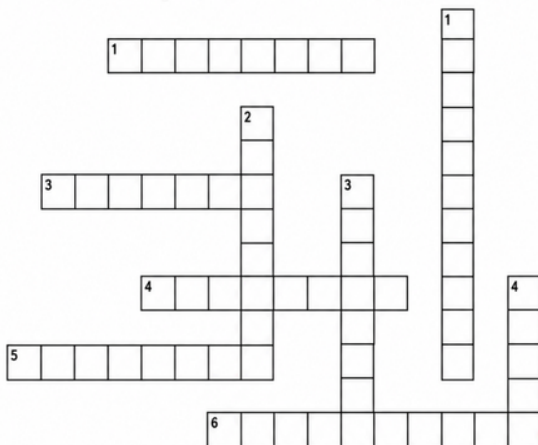
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OBJECTION! FUN SUSTAINED

crossword

Legal Words For You To Solve!!



ACROSS

- 1** Licensed legal professional regulated by the LSO (10)
- 3** Person charged with an offence (7)
- 4** Material provided by the Crown before trial (10)
- 5** Hearing where evidence is presented (5)
- 6** Legal decision made by a judge (6)

DOWN

- 1** Formal request asking a court for an order (6)
- 2** Legal representative's customer (6)
- 3** Standard requiring proof beyond a reasonable _____ (5)
- 4** Body of evidence or documents in a case (4)
- 5** Written submissions to assist the court in decision-making (6)



Down

- 1. Paralegal
- 2. Accused
- 3. Disclosure
- 4. Trial
- 5. Ruling

Across

- 1. Motion
- 2. Client
- 3. Doubt
- 4. File
- 5. Factum

OBJECTION! FUN SUSTAINED

SUDOKU

6				8			5	
5	8		6	7		4		
		2			1	8		3
1		9			4			2
				6	7		3	4
	4	6		9		5		
8			9					6
4		5		3	6	1		
		1		2			9	5

ANSWER KEY

٧	٤	٥	٩	٨	٤	٦	١	٣
٩	١	٦	٥	٧	٣	٨	٨	٢
٤	٩	٨	١	٦	٢	٥	٧	٩
٥	٧	٩	٦	٢	٨	٩	٤	١
٦	٤	٩	٧	٩	١	٨	٤	٥
١	٨	٢	٩	٤	٥	٣	٦	٧
٣	٦	١	٢	٩	٧	٤	٥	٨
٨	٥	١	٨	٤	٧	٢	٩	٦
٢	٩	٧	٨	٥	٦	١	٩	٤

OBJECTION! FUN SUSTAINED

OBJECTION!



FUN SUSTAINED

WORD SEARCH



LEGAL WORDS FOR YOU TO FIND!



D	P	A	R	A	L	E	G	A	L
L	I	H	Q	E	Z	I	F	G	P
P	A	S	A	W	T	E	A	P	L
G	F	A	C	T	U	M	C	V	E
R	O	P	A	L	Y	R	C	D	A
W	U	K	S	V	O	C	U	X	D
C	L	I	E	N	T	S	S	O	I
G	U	I	L	T	Y	E	E	P	N
F	A	C	T	S	T	S	D	D	G



DISCLOSED



ACCUSED



CLIENTS



FACTS



PARALEGAL



GUILTY



PLEADING



CASE



FACTUM

