

**Daily Phone call check in - Ontario Law Organizations - March 20, 2020
Summary**

Present on call

OBA

FOLA

Advocates' Society

LAO

OTLA

Superior Court of Justice in Ontario

Court of Appeal for Ontario

Ontario Court of Justice

Absent

MAG

NOTE: Today's call was very short (20 minutes) due to a simultaneous "Counter Programming" call. I expect I will have a report about that call either today or Monday which will be included in the next daily summary.

1. Superior Court of Justice Update

The SCJ seems to think that their emergency measures' protocol is, by and large, working. Judges are learning phone and ZOOM protocol. However, there are still some glitches regarding ZOOM connection in some courts.

On Tuesday, they heard between 50-60 cases and that number has been doubling each day with matters moving forward fairly quickly.

The SCJ is considering expanding matters to be heard to include others that are not currently set out in the Notice of Profession. At this point, such matters are unknown and much will depend on the availability of teleconference lines, the ability to record matters that are heard by teleconference, and the ability to receive submissions from parties. There are limits in each of these areas right now and they are in a "wait and see" mode with the current level of service continuing for another week. Any expansion would happen the week of March 30.

Rogers has donated 200 phones for use by Self-Reps with no phones and for child-related cases where clients have no phone access.

2. Known court challenges

Connecting with some detention centers continues to pose challenges

Judges working remotely are having difficulties transmitting signed docs electronically (some documents, due to their size, are not easily scanned. It was recommended the courts look into Vaultie (which is featured on [FOLA's practice Resources page](#) and which is offering services for free right now).

3. Compliance Issues - LSO

The Law Society is updating their [COVID-19 section](#) frequently and strongly encourage lawyers to check that page regularly for updates to all changes to regulations.

4. Judicial Appointments

Courts and MAG are considering allowing the JAAC to do interviews remotely to help fill vacancies quickly.

5. Legal Aid Ontario

LAO is expecting to ease financial requirement testing for legal advice.

They are also requesting to be able to refer clients to the LSO referral list when/if their volunteer list becomes exhausted.

LAO is working on changes to their billing to make it possible/easier to bill, file, and claim for remote servicing electronically.

6. Court of Appeal

The Court of Appeal reports that the bar is adjourning matters remotely and are in the process of expanding their ZOOM accounts.