



FEDERATION OF ONTARIO
LAW ASSOCIATIONS
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DU BARREAU DE L'ONTARIO

This e-mail deals with matters in the SCJ.

There are two recent developments you should know about:

1. On Friday, March 27, Chief Justice Morawetz sent out a letter to the profession announcing that effective April 6, the scope of matters that could be dealt with remotely would be expanded. It was anticipated that the Court's plan to expand virtual operations would be released on April 2. To liaise with the SCO, a bench and bar committee is being struck, with the members of that committee coming from various justice stakeholders, including FOLA. I will be acting as FOLA's representative on this bench and bar committee. We are having our first Zoom meeting tomorrow afternoon and I will report further following that meeting.
2. A task force has been struck to try to locate a suitable vendor who could provide a platform for electronic hearings. This task force is being chaired by Maria-Andre Vermette, member of the Advocates Society. FOLA's representative on the task force is east region representative Kristin Muszynski. That task force is in contact with MAG and the Executive Legal Officer from the SCO. We will report on the task force as its work progresses.

One of the challenges faced in the SCO, as was referenced in Justice Morawetz's letter last week, is the court's limited ability to receive materials in electronic format and the support required to run a virtual court. Additionally, the ability of the court to provide electronic services is not uniform throughout the province.

FOLA will continue to keep you as current as we can on all the developments that are happening in all aspects of providing legal services to the public. I do thank you for your patience in receiving what must seem like a never ending stream of e-mails. I hope you are all keeping well.

Mike Winward
FOLA Chair