



COVID-19 & THE PRACTICE OF LAW

WEEKLY UPDATE

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COVID-19 - WEEKLY CHECK IN LOG #19

July 29, 2020

Summary

Invited participants: Sector calls

OBA, FOLA, LSO, LAO, the Advocates' Society, & OTLA

Superior Court of Justices in Ontario, Court of Appeal for Ontario, & Ontario Court of Justice

MAG - Political and Department staff

Issues discussed:

1. Courts

- ❖ The OCJ issued a Notice today (July 29) about criminal case management appearances, including the virtual case management court pilot which will begin in Kitchener and Ottawa on Monday August 10. Starting Monday August 10, 2020, criminal case management appearances in Kitchener and Ottawa will be conducted by videoconference or audioconference with expansion to other court locations later in August. In the meantime, the automatic adjournment of criminal case management appearances at locations other than Kitchener and Ottawa has been extended to August 21, 2020. Further details about the virtual criminal case management courts in Kitchener and Ottawa will be posted next week and you can read the Notice [here](#).
- ❖ In late June, under the leadership of the OBA and with the other Associations on our calls, FOLA, submitted a letter to Chief Justice Lise Maisonneuve in an effort to assist the Court in identifying which matters ought to be prioritized as remote operations continue to be expanded in both Family and Criminal Law. You can read her response [here](#). And if you want a reminder of our suggestions, you can read our Family Law letter [here](#) and our Criminal Law letter [here](#).
- ❖ The SCJ is expected to issue an update to a past Toronto Notice later today or tomorrow so if this of interest, please keep an eye on the [SCJ's Regional Notices](#) section of their COVID page.

2. MAG

- ❖ MAG has procured CaseLines for the Ontario Superior Court of Justice and will launch a two-week test phase in Toronto beginning on August 10, 2020 for select civil motions and pre-trial conferences. The pilot will then expand to all Toronto civil, Divisional Court, Commercial and Estate List, and bankruptcy matters commencing on August 24, 2020. Further communications about the expansion of CaseLines to other court locations and practice areas will be provided in August. You can read today's announcement [here](#).
- ❖ MAG's Recovery Secretariat will be joining our calls every other week starting next week.

3. FOLA

- ❖ **RE-OPENING OF THE COURTS:**

Wondering what to expect when visiting a courthouse? Visit our [Courts](#) page on our website to access a link to get pre-screened, a video, and a guidebook.

❖ **RECENT SUBMISSIONS:**

1. **LIBEL & SLANDER ACT CONSULTATIONS:** Ontario's Court of Appeal currently has a Call for Submissions on the Report of the Discount rate Sub-committee of the Civil Rules Committee. FOLA's submission can read [here](#).
2. **DISCOUNT RATE CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS** In an effort to update the Libel and Slander Act, MAG is currently seeking comments on the Law Commission of Ontario's report entitled "Defamation Law in the Internet Age". Earlier today, FOLA presented MAG with our submission, which you can read [here](#).

❖ **RECENT SUBMISSIONS:**

1. **FAMILY LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDER (FLSP) LICENSING MODEL CALL FOR COMMENT:** The Law Society's Access to Justice Committee is inviting lawyers to provide comments on a FLSP Licensing model. The proposed scope of permissible activities, required competencies, and outline of the training program are detailed in the Access to Justice Committee's FLSP Licence Consultation Paper. FOLA is preparing a submission and if you would like to offer input for our Submission, please email Katie.Robinette@fola.ca and put "FLSP" in the subject line by October 15, 2020. [See more](#).
2. **REMOTE HEARINGS:** The e-Hearings Task Force (of which FOLA is a member) has drafted some documents that have been designed to help you prepare for Remote Hearings (which you can find on our Courts page [here](#)). If you have participated in a remote hearing and have some additional suggestions, FOLA would love to hear them! Please email Katie Robinette at katie.robinette@fola.ca and put "REMOTE HEARINGS" in the subject line.

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS?

Law Association members are welcome to send any issues/concerns related to the practice of law caused by the COVID-19 epidemic to FOLA at katie.robinette@fola.ca and we will continue to address them in as timely a manner as possible. Please also note that FOLA cannot assist in issues related to a specific case and the Courts will NOT provide clarification on any Notice to the Profession. If your concerns are related to issues surrounding health and safety measures as the Courts expand in person operations, please indicate the name of the Courthouse and the steps you have already taken to address your concerns to MAGrecoverysecretariat@ontario.ca.