

## A Message from Our President, Mark Jacula

March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Good evening members,

As I am sure you are all aware, we are in the midst of a pandemic due to COVID-19. Information regarding COVID-19 can be found on the Ministry of Health's website - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus>.

We have been monitoring the situation at our Courthouse and have been holding off on sending out an email as the situation is changing by the minute. However, at this time we want to share what we know so far.

Due to the concern about the potential spreading of the virus both the Superior Court of Justice (SCJ) and the Ontario Court of Justice (OCJ) have recently put out notices regarding the operations of each respective court.

- The SCJ Advisory Notice can be found here - <https://www.ontariocourts.ca/scj/covid-19/>.
- The OCJ Notices can be found here - <https://www.ontariocourts.ca/ocj/>.
- The joint Notice can be found here - <https://www.ontariocourts.ca/en/covid.htm>.
- Just recently the SCJ has announced that they will be suspending all operations as of Tuesday - [https://twitter.com/SCJOntario\\_en/status/1239303792677531650?s=20](https://twitter.com/SCJOntario_en/status/1239303792677531650?s=20).
- The OCJ pandemic response plan is attached. To again illustrate the ever-changing nature of the reaction of the Courts, the OCJ sent out a Scheduling Notice that was sent as I was drafting this email. It is attached.

We strongly encourage everyone to repeatedly check on the respective websites and social media for the most current updates. As of right now it appears that the mechanics of how all of this will transpire is still being worked out. We do not want to inundate your inbox with emails, but you may see some coming as we want to keep our members informed as to the updates as they happen.

Regarding DRLA, we can advise that as of tomorrow the library will not be staffed in person. Both Jennie and Lee will be working remotely and can be contacted at [drlalaw@bellnet.ca](mailto:drlalaw@bellnet.ca). Any CLE's that were to be shown in the library will now only be offered online. No CLE's or events will be taking place in the library or lounge. The upcoming AGM is cancelled, and we will endeavour to reschedule when we are able to. DRLA Board meetings will be cancelled for the time being. Any urgent issues that arise will be handled by the Executive. The golf tournament is not cancelled at this stage, but that will be the subject of ongoing discussion.

I will be attending a meeting on Monday morning to address the implementation of the directive regarding the OCJ. Following that I will be attending a Court-based Emergency Management Team

(CEMT) meeting at 9:00am. It is my understanding that there will be twice daily conference calls to keep communication lines open. I will send updates to the membership as information becomes available.

The health and safety of our members, staff and clients are paramount. We strongly encourage all members to take special care and precaution during this time.

Mark

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**Mark A. Jacula**

President of the Durham Region Law Association