


THE MIDDLESEX LAW ASSOCIATION **Snail**



Greying of the Bar: What it Means for the Future of Law in Ontario

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July 2025 Issue

Thank you to all the contributors and advertisers for supporting this month's edition of the Snail.

Want to contribute to the next issue?

The deadline is noon on **September 25, 2025**

Send submissions to:
admin@middlaw.on.ca

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President's Message



Our Board of Trustees remains committed to building on the Association's strengths with a renewed focus on advocacy, member engagement, and innovative programming. Whether you're attending an event, volunteering on a committee, or simply reading this newsletter on your lunch break, thank you for being part of what makes the MLA so special.

I hope you have a restful and enjoyable summer, and I look forward to seeing many of you at Opening of the Courts this fall.

Jacqueline Fortner, MLA
President

Contributed by:
Jacqueline Fortner / MLA Board President

Dear Members, as we move into the heart of summer, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible energy our membership continues to bring to the Middlesex Law Association.

It has been a rewarding and fast-paced start to 2025, and I'm so proud of what we've already accomplished together. This spring saw the return of two beloved programs—Straight from

the Bench and the Solo Practitioners' Social—both of which brought our legal community together in meaningful and collegial ways. I've also had the opportunity to represent MLA at the Federation of Ontario Law Associations (FOLA) meetings, where we continue to raise the profile of our region and ensure that Middlesex has a strong voice at the provincial table. One of the initiatives I'm especially proud of is our leadership in responding to

Ontario's proposed Civil Rules reforms. It has been a privilege to work closely with our Civil Rules Committee to advocate for practical, principled, and member-informed feedback. Thank you to everyone who contributed your time and expertise—it truly matters.

Looking ahead, we have an exciting calendar of CPD, social, and community-focused programming taking shape for the fall.

Practice Resource Centre News



Contributed by:
Cynthia Simpson and Shabira Tamachi
library@middlaw.on.ca

Welcome New Articling/ LPP Students!

This is the time of year when we start welcoming the new articling students to firms in Middlesex and this is extended to any Law Practice Program students who may be working with our local firms also. These students enjoy full library privileges and most association privileges during their work term. There is no charge to register with the MLA, and it guarantees students will receive all our communications while working for our members. Please [reach out to us](#) today if you have students about to start at your office. We simply need their names and email addresses, and it is also helpful if we know whether they have been a summer student in the past.

If you are a student, you will know you are in our system if you are receiving our weekly MLA Update email every Wednesday so if you haven't already gotten one of those, we may not know you are working in Middlesex County. Please [reach out to us](#) and we will get you in our system. We can also give you a tour of the practice resource centre, explain our services and resources, and show you what is available both in print and online. Finally, we aren't reporting back to your supervisor so please ask us for help if you can't find something or don't know where to start your search. Let us help you look brilliant!

Great Library Research Guides

Did you know that the staff at the LSO's Great Library have produced some excellent online research guides to get you started in a variety of areas? As the site says, you'll find guides on

conducting primary and secondary legal and law-related research, as well as how to access these materials via resources available at the Great Library and online. For example, the [Wrongful Dismissal guide](#) starts with a topic overview, then covers texts and precedents, CPD resources, journal articles and notice charts. The hyperlinks to the catalogue record for texts takes you to the shared library catalogue of the 47 county and district law associations, and the Great Library, so you can easily find out if the title is available right here in Middlesex. We also have free document delivery between all the libraries (and the Great Library) so, if you can't find your answer in the wealth of materials available here, we can arrange for a scan from an item listed in one of these library guides or borrow the book itself in most cases. Check out all the [Great Library Research Guides](#) and bookmark that page as the list will expand as more guides are added.

CALL Conference 2025

We attended this year's Canadian Association of Law Libraries conference in Calgary and were able to meet with our colleagues from across the country, along with international delegates from Great Britain, the US and Australia, to name a few. The theme of the conference was *Moving Mountains Together* and began with an excellent pre-conference workshop on "Indigenous Truth and Institutional Trust – How Will Canadian Law Libraries Evolve?", presented by Flavio Caron. The conference program was so packed that they had to open two session times on Sunday to cover lectures on the erosion of the rule of

law in the US, and another on Canadian immigration law. The main program included sessions on mental health challenges in the legal profession, comparative law, open education legal resources, the human side of change, access to justice, and teaching research skills to new lawyers, and the popular 'lightning talks,' just to name a few. The conference welcomed Naheed Nenshi as its luncheon speaker, and the program featured leaders in law, librarianship and education sharing their knowledge with delegates. We came back refreshed and rejuvenated, with new contacts from across the profession, and ideas that we can implement here.

New Books

Anderson, Glenn. **Expert evidence, 4th ed.**, LexisNexis, 2025

Houlden, L.W. et al. **2025 annotated Bankruptcy & Insolvency Act**, Thomson Reuters, 2025

Oatley, Roger and Troy Lehman. **Addressing the jury: achieving fair verdicts in personal injury cases, 3rd ed.**, LexisNexis, 2025

Segal, Murray. **Annotated Ontario rules of criminal practice 2025**, Thomson Reuters, 2025

Tolensky, Marni and Stephen Lavender. **2025 annotated Canadian Human Rights Act**, Thomson Reuters, 2025

Tyhurst, John S. **Canadian competition law and policy, updated 1st ed.**, Irwin UTP, 2025

Missing Books

Bourgeois, Donald J. **Charities and not-for-profit administration and governance handbook**, 2nd ed., LexisNexis, 2009

Bullen, Edward et al. **Bullen & Leake & Jacob's precedents of pleadings**, 14th ed., Volume 1, Sweet & Maxwell, 2001

Bullen, Edward et al. **Bullen & Leake & Jacob's Canadian precedents of pleadings**, 3rd ed., Volume 3, Thomson Reuters, 2017

Fridman, G.H.L. **Law of contract in Canada**, 5th ed., Thomson Reuters, 2006

Harris, David. **Law on disability issues in the workplace**, Emond Publications, 2017

Honsberger, John. **Honsberger's bankruptcy in Canada**, 5th ed., Thomson Reuters, 2017

Hull, Ian M. **Macdonell, Sheard and Hull on probate practice**, 5th ed., Thomson Reuters, 2016

Knight, Patricia. **Small Claims Court: procedure and practice**, 5th ed., Emond Law, 2021

LSO. **Accommodating age in the workplace**, 2015

LSO. **Duty to accommodate in the workplace**, 2016

LSO. **Six-minute administrative lawyer 2018**

MacFarlane, Bruce A. **Cannabis law**, Thomson Reuters, 2018

Marseille, Claude, ed. **The law of objections in Canada: a handbook**, LexisNexis, 2019

n/a. **Martin's Annual Criminal Code 2024**, copy 3

Oosterhoff, Albert H. **Oosterhoff on wills**, 8th ed., Thomson Reuters, 2016

Osborne, Philip H. **Law of torts**, 5th ed., Irwin Law, 2015

Samfiru, Lior. **Termination of employment**, Emond, 2018

Sells, Berkley D. **Motions Court practice and procedure**, 2nd ed., LexisNexis, 2017



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What Bill C-27 Means for Your Practice — Canada's Privacy Law Overhaul Is Coming



Contributed by:
Middlesex Law Association

Canada's long-awaited digital privacy reform is finally taking shape. Bill C-27, which includes the Consumer Privacy Protection Act (CPPA) and the Artificial Intelligence and Data Act (AIDA), represents a sweeping shift in how personal information and AI must be handled in both the private and professional sectors.

For MLA members, this bill is more than just IT policy — it will affect how you engage with clients, use digital tools, and document consent across your legal practice.

What's in the Bill? A Quick Primer

Bill C-27 replaces the aging Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) with stronger enforcement, clearer individual rights, and new rules around artificial intelligence.

Key client-facing impacts include:

- Consent must be clear, specific, and separate from other documents (e.g., no burying it in retainer fine print).
- Clients gain new rights to access, correct, and delete their data — and even view an "access log" of who's seen it.
- Mandatory breach notifications will have a lowered threshold, triggering new reporting obligations for even smaller firms.

- AI tools (including those used for legal research, intake triage, or HR recruitment) must be assessed for risk and bias, with some uses subject to registry requirements under AIDA.

Implications for Legal Practice

This isn't just a "tech firm" issue. Lawyers will need to rethink many aspects of daily practice, including:

- Engagement Letters & Intake Forms: Must be updated to reflect clear, active consent — including what information is collected, why, and how long it will be retained.
- Vendor Compliance: If your firm uses cloud-based tools like Clio, Prismafact, Dropbox, or even AI-based assistants, you'll be responsible for ensuring they meet the CPPA's new compliance standards.
- AI Use in Practice: If you're using ChatGPT for research, dictation, document review, or anything client-facing, your firm may need to document its use and explain its purpose to clients — even if it's just an efficiency tool.
- Privacy Policies: Your firm's website, document retention policy, and internal data access rules may all require an overhaul to meet the bill's accountability requirements.

What This Means for the MLA Community

At the Middlesex Law Association, we're preparing resources to help members comply with the new law when it comes into force; pending funding. This may include:

- A possible CPD-accredited webinar on Bill C-27 and legal tech ethics, featuring privacy law experts and IT compliance professionals if there is interest.
- Template language for engagement letters and privacy notices.
- A digital tools checklist to help you evaluate your practice's exposure and responsibilities under C-27.

Helpful Link:

[Full text of Bill C-27](#)
(Parliament of Canada)

Call to Action

If you have experience with privacy law, tech regulation, or AI ethics and would be interested in speaking at our fall CPD, or joining a working group to create sample templates, please email admin@middlaw.on.ca.

Civil Rules Reform - MLA Leads the Conversations

Contributed by:
Middlesex Law Association

Over the past two months, the MLA Civil Rules Response Task Force has taken a leading role in advocating for meaningful, balanced reforms to Ontario's civil litigation process. In response to the *Phase 2 Civil Rules Reform Consultation*, we mobilized local expertise, delivered a powerful submission, and launched a public-facing campaign that sparked province-wide attention.

MLA's Position on Civil Rules Reform

The Middlesex Law Association (MLA) has taken a clear and principled stance on the Phase 2 Civil Rules Reform: while we support modernizing the justice system, efficiency must never come at the cost of fairness.

Our submission emphasized:

- Preserving procedural protections for self-represented litigants and marginalized parties
- Rejecting rigid timelines and automatic dismissals that penalize delay without context
- Championing proportionality-ensuring reforms reflect the complexity and stakes of each case
- Focusing on practical, evidence-informed solutions, including digitization, triaging, and better court resourcing

We believe access to justice cannot be reduced to metrics. The reform conversation must be balanced, community-informed, and rooted in lived legal experience - especially from regions outside of Toronto.

Our voice is now part of a growing provincial coalition demanding more thoughtful, transparent reform. Thank you to everyone who supported this advocacy. Stay tuned for next steps as we continue to make our concerns heard - loudly and constructively.

What We Produced

- A Media Release sent to all Ontario MPPs and Local Governments and news agencies advocating for proper stakeholder engagement. [Link](#)
- Policy Submission -A 28-page, solutions-focused brief filed with the Attorney General on June 17, grounded in both legal principle and the realities of practice in London and the Southwest Region. [Link](#)
- Strategic Media Release -Shared across MLA channels to amplify our position and strengthen credibility with policymakers.

This release received widespread praise from legal professionals across the province - including multiple law associations requesting to use it as a template for their own outreach. Internally and externally, we were told the message was principled, clear, and compelling - a reflection of the credibility MLA brings to justice reform advocacy.

- Direct Government Engagement -President Jacqueline Fortner, and Bar & Bench CoChairs Rasha El-Tawil and John Nicholson met directly with MPPs Kristyn Wong-Tam and Terence Kernaghan, leading to an invitation to coordinate a non-partisan press conference at Queen's Park with support from FOLA.

Social Media Campaign: Results Worth Noting

Our Civil Rules campaign on LinkedIn saw outstanding reach:

- 11,000+ impressions in under three weeks
- 60+ new LinkedIn followers
- Meaningful engagement from lawyers, judges, legal academics, and media observers

It reaffirmed that the MLA's voice resonates beyond our region - and that strong, fact-driven messaging has real impact.

Huge Thanks to the Task Force

Adrien Cameron • James Boyd • Rasha El-Tawil • David Thomson • Nicole Rogers • Sandra Drozd • Jake Aitcheson • Andrew Camman • John Nicholson • Jacqueline Fortner • William Woodward • Jayashree Sivakumar • Joshua Laplante • Eric Grigg • Nicholas Harris • Pamela Lee

Your insight, time, and teamwork made this possible. You've not only helped shape provincial policy - you've set a new standard for what regional advocacy can achieve.

What's Next

- Press Conference Planning: FOLA because of our great efforts, will be leading and hosting a province-wide media event.
- Continued Advocacy: Follow us, share the campaign, and stay engaged - your voice helps keep the pressure on.

The Right to Disconnect



Contributed by:
Dominika Zwerello

With the recent news of a seventh Working for Workers Seven Act on the horizon, now seems a fitting time to look back on a key feature introduced to the Employment Standards Act that promised to reshape work-life balance in Ontario—the right to disconnect, or “the Daily Rest Requirement” and more specifically, “Hours Free from Work”.

Introduced in Working for Workers Act, 2021 (Bill 27), the legislation required many employers to implement written disconnect-from-work policies. But three years later and questions remain about whether this policy has had any real impact, particularly in high-demand professions like law. This article explores how the legislation has played out in practice, and what remains missing for legal professionals striving for sustainable boundaries.

To begin with, the amended Employment Standards Act introduced a definition of what “disconnecting from work” means: not engaging in work-related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls or the sending or reviewing of other messages, so as to be free from the performance of work (2021, c. 35, Sched. 2, s. 3).

While taking work home and working from home did exist pre-covid, remote work became the norm for most people during this era, and it highlighted that the law was missing a clear, operational definition of what disconnecting truly meant. While it may have always been broadly understood that emails, calls, and messages were part of work, there remained a grey area, especially for

those in senior roles or in fields like law, where clients may reach out at all hours and there are no universally accepted “closing times.” By codifying what counts as work-related communication, the legislation provided a foundation for professionals to assert boundaries and offered legal backing for something as simple as turning off email notifications after hours.

In the legal world, many associates choose to work from home a few days a week. But when your home becomes your office, the lines between work and rest blur—raising a difficult question: when is it justified to stop working? And how do you know when it’s okay to fully disconnect?

In my experience, even when I’m physically in the office, I find myself drifting into short moments of distraction—a glimpse out the window on a beautiful day, a non-billable phone call or email from a potential client, or the occasional overheard hallway conversations. These moments, though brief, often leave me feeling guilty for leaving right at 5:00 p.m. I end up wanting to stay later to “make up” for time spent on non-billable tasks, even if they’re part of a healthy, normal workday.

To my employer’s credit, the message is clear: we are encouraged to leave when the clock strikes five. But I’ve heard many testimonials from fellow associates whose firms take a different approach. For some, while the official policy allows for an eight-hour day, there’s an unspoken expectation to go above and beyond—especially for those with ambitions of becoming

partner or advancing in their role. Staying late, replying to emails after hours, and demonstrating constant availability often become silent signals of dedication.

For those who are operating solo practices, face a different kind of challenge. With no employer setting work hours or encouraging them to log off, the pressure to remain constantly available—for clients, courts, and last-minute filings—can be even more intense. The desire to grow a practice, maintain client satisfaction, or simply stay afloat financially can make disconnecting feel almost irresponsible.

In my short time in this field, I’m already beginning to understand how fragmented a lawyer’s workday can become. Take, for instance, those who appear regularly in court. When you’re tied up in hearings from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., it’s easy to fall behind on all the other responsibilities sitting in your inbox or at your desk. Add filing deadlines to the mix, and what initially looks like a 30-day window can quickly vanish—especially when half of those days are filled with court commitments that rarely end early.

In this context, the ability to “disconnect” isn’t just about policy. It’s about culture, expectations, and the nature of the work itself. And for many legal professionals, finding that off switch remains one of the most elusive goals of all.

How might we aim to change this? Well, ironically, it may need to go deeper than the law. While legislation like the Working for Workers Act is a necessary starting point, true change requires a cultural shift within firms, within the profession, and even within individual mindsets. Speaking from personal experience, I’ve found that when I’m well-rested and have had the space

► to step away from my work, both mentally and physically, I'm far more productive. The same tasks that take me hours to finish when I'm tired often take much less time when I'm rested and focused.

One idea for encouraging a healthier work-life balance in the legal profession could be to reconsider the traditional billable hour model. This wouldn't necessarily mean eliminating billable hours altogether, but exploring alternative performance indicators, which could help shift the focus from time spent to value delivered.

A new system, that normalizes fix-fee billing or project-based pricing, the scope of work would be clearly defined in the retainer agreement, and any work beyond that scope would be billed separately. This would give clients more control and clarity around their demands, including excessive communication or scope creep, and encourages more efficient legal service. This approach could also help improve access to justice by making legal fees more predictable and giving clients a clearer understanding of the work their lawyer is doing.

Implementation could start with small, practical steps—like developing pricing templates or testing this model on simpler matters or with select clients. At the same time, firms could begin to shift their internal performance metrics: instead of focusing so heavily

on "hours billed," they could emphasize "value delivered." This could include client feedback, error rates, first-draft approval rates, or proactive risk prevention efforts. These indicators are more aligned with quality, performance, and client outcomes—and they help move the profession away from a

culture that still too often glorifies exhaustion.

Until we can move toward a culture that truly values balance and sustainability, the right to disconnect will remain just that—a right, but not yet a reality.

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Part Time Office Manager Opportunity

Due to a pending retirement, our office could use a part time office manager.

This would be perfect for someone who wants to semi retire and has experience with PC law entering time dockets and generating accounts, including trust transfers and receiving payments and paying suppliers etc and ensuring the governments, LSO and LAW PRO get their payments and forms on a timely basis.

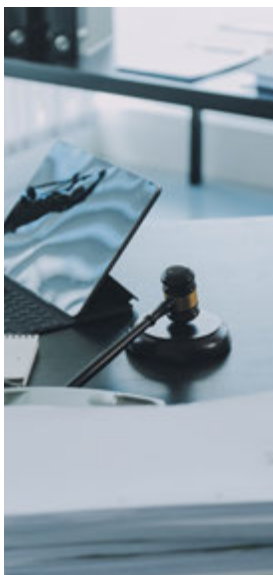
Twenty eight dollars an hour- probably 15 hours a week- schedule is flexible. Start time sometime this autumn. The person would have to pass a vulnerable sector check.

Please contact Jonathan Pitblado at:

P: 519.435.9220

E: clerk@pitblado.ca (Law Clerk: Sylvia Szabo)

**Please copy my law clerk on all emails*



Criminal Law Primer

R. v. Attard, 2024 ONCA 616: Lower your Expectations



Contributed by:
Carolynn Conron

Overview

In *R. v. Attard*, 2024 ONCA 616, the Ontario Court of Appeal addressed pivotal issues concerning the admissibility of data from a vehicle's Event Data Recorder (EDR) in criminal proceedings. The case arose from a serious motor vehicle collision in Brampton, Ontario, where the accused, Wendel Attard, was charged with dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing bodily harm. At the scene, police seized Attard's vehicle and extracted its EDR data without obtaining a warrant or his consent. The trial judge ruled that this warrantless seizure and data extraction violated section 8 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which protects against unreasonable search and seizure, leading to the exclusion of the EDR evidence and Attard's acquittal.

Upon appeal, the Ontario Court of Appeal overturned the trial decision, holding that the seizure of the vehicle was lawful under section 489(2) of the Criminal Code. The Court further determined that, following the lawful seizure, there was no reasonable expectation of privacy in the EDR data, as the EDR was considered an integral component of the vehicle, akin to its engine or brakes. Consequently, the Court found no Charter breach and ordered a new trial.

This decision has significant implications for the interpretation of privacy rights concerning digital data stored in vehicles and the scope of lawful search and seizure in the context of criminal investigations.

Background Facts & Relevant Jurisprudence

An Event Data Recorder "EDR" is an airbag deployment device that records up to five

seconds of vehicle data before a crash. Its main purpose is airbag activation on a "deployment event" – that is, on a collision. It captures limited data with respect to the speed, throttle, and braking of the vehicle in the five seconds before an event or near-deployment event. Data cannot be manually inputted into the EDR or changed.

This particular accident occurred in Brampton on Highway 50 near the Queen Street East intersection. Highway 50 is a six-lane highway which has dedicated left-hand turn lanes. One of the vehicles involved in the crash was waiting to turn left and as the driver was completing that left turn, Wendal Attard's vehicle sped through the intersection at a high speed and struck the turning vehicle. Three of the wheels of the turning vehicle came off the ground, it spun 540 degrees and Mr. Attard's vehicle slid across the road, over a median, across a sidewalk and flipped on its roof as it rolled into a ditch. Both drivers were injured and taken to hospital.

When police attended, Officer Jeff Ball, the OIC who had 14 years of experience as a police officer, suspected the crash was due to excessive speed. During the investigation, police spoke to witnesses including a witness with a dashcam that showed Mr. Attard's vehicle travelling faster than other vehicles in the same direction.

The investigating officer testified that at the time the vehicles were seized, he was investigating the offence of dangerous driving and believed the cars contained evidence of the offence, and as well relied on a decision of the British Columbia Court of Appeal (*R. v. Fedan*, 2016 BCCA 26) which held that there was no reasonable expectation of privacy (REP). At the time

there was also a Saskatchewan Court of Appeal case with the same finding (*R. v. Major*, 2022 SKCA 80). In Ontario though, the caselaw was divided on whether there was a REP in the data contained in the EDR, with some jurisprudence suggesting there was REP and police were required to obtain a warrant to search and seize the data.

At the scene of the accident, the police seized the respondent's car and the car that it hit. Both were inoperable. The police extracted the EDRs from both cars and downloaded the data they contained. The police did not obtain the respondent's consent or judicial authorization to seize his car or to extract the EDR and its data.

s. 489(2) of the [Criminal Code](#) deals with the lawfulness of a seizure and provides that every officer who is lawfully present in a place may, without a warrant, seize any thing that the officer believes on reasonable grounds

(a) has been obtained by the commission of an offence ...;

(b) has been used in the commission of an offence...; or

(c) will afford evidence in respect of an offence...

In this case, the police believed the vehicle itself, including the data contained within the EDR would afford evidence in respect of an offence.

That data showed, for the five seconds prior to the collision, the vehicles' speed, engine RPM, motor RPM, brake pattern, brake oil pressure, steering input, shift position, drive mode, cruise control, and longitudinal/latitudinal acceleration. The data from the EDR revealed Mr. Attard's car was going 120 km/h 4.75 seconds before the crash, accelerated to 130 km/h 0.75 seconds before the crash, and was going 113 km/h at the time of impact. The posted speed limit was 80 km/h.

- The potential offences could be either careless driving under s. 136 of the [Highway Traffic Act](#) or dangerous driving under the [Criminal Code](#).²

In terms of the elements of the offence of dangerous driving causing bodily harm or death, the consequences themselves are not taken as a consideration when assessing the manner of driving.

For both offences, it is the manner of driving which is at issue. The question is whether there was a departure from the standard of care of a reasonably prudent driver. Mr. Attard was charged with dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing bodily harm.

At trial, the issue was whether Mr. Attard's driving was a marked departure from what a reasonable and prudent driver would have done in the same circumstances.

Legal Proceedings

Before trial, the respondent challenged the admissibility of the EDR evidence. He argued that his car had not been lawfully seized pursuant to s. 489(2) of the Criminal Code and, even if it had been, the warrantless seizure of the EDR and search of its data violated his s. 8 Charter right to be secure against unreasonable search and seizure.³

The trial judge excluded the EDR evidence pursuant to s. 24(2) of the Charter because it was obtained without a warrant and the remaining evidence was the dashcam footage and an expert interpretation of that footage. Without the evidence of Mr. Attard's speed relative to the other vehicles and a determination of whether he was accelerating into the intersection, there was a reasonable doubt and Mr. Attard was acquitted on the charge of dangerous driving.⁴

The Crown appealed the exclusion of the EDR data. The Ontario Court of Appeal agreed with the Crown and found there was a lawful seizure under section 489(2) which lawfully permitted the seizure of the vehicles and furthermore, that there was no reasonable expectation of privacy in EDR data.⁵

The ONCA confirmed that a lawful seizure of a vehicle extinguishes privacy interests in the vehicle and its component parts.⁶ The EDR is a component of a car just as much as the engine, steering wheel and brakes.

The trial judge had characterized the vehicle as a "place" with a reduced expectation of privacy, which took it outside of the ambit of s. 489(2)(c) which permits the warrantless seizure of "any thing". The ONCA further held that within the meaning of s. 489(2)(c) the vehicle was a "thing" so there was legal authority for seizing the vehicle, including the EDR component.

When considering the lawfulness of the EDR data extraction, the question was whether that act by the police violated Mr. Attard's s. 8 Charter-protected interests. To answer that question, the trial judge had to determine whether there was a reasonable expectation of privacy in the EDR data.

The applicant bears the onus of establishing the breach. There are three broad categories of privacy interests: territorial, personal and informational.⁸ Whatever form of privacy is at issue the legal framework begins with an inquiry into whether someone has a reasonable expectation of privacy. That determination necessitates both a factual and a normative inquiry. The factual inquiry involves the circumstances of the case, the normative inquiry is broader, seeking protection for that which we ought to expect protection from a privacy perspective in a free and democratic society.⁹

At issue in this case was Mr. Attard's informational privacy. The test for determining whether someone has a REP asks the following:

1. What is the subject matter of the search?
In this case the EDR
2. Does the accused have a direct interest in the subject matter? He did, as the driver.
3. Does the accused have a subjective expectation of privacy in the subject matter? The crown conceded Mr. Attard had a subjective expectation of privacy; and

4. Would an expectation of privacy be objectively reasonable in the circumstances of the case?¹⁰ This was the issue the ONCA had to grapple with.

The trial judge analogized the EDR data with a computer. The Court of Appeal found this characterization ill-fitting, as the EDR "contains no information going to the driver's biological core, lifestyle, or personal choices, nor information that could be said to directly compromise his "dignity, integrity and autonomy"¹¹ There is no data on driving patterns, driving history, or average driving speed. There is no data on location or GPS coordinates. EDRs are not reprogrammable and cannot be reinstalled once removed. The EDR data is limited to five seconds of information regarding the operations of the car. It has no link to any location or person. It does not identify the driver. It does not broadcast or receive data. The data provides no independent insight into the behaviours of anyone in the car.

Since the EDR data provides no personal identifiers that could link the driver to its captured data, the respondent had no reasonable expectation of informational privacy in the data after the vehicle had been lawfully seized.¹²

The court found this decision was reinforced by the fact that this data relates to the manner of driving, a public, highly regulated activity.¹³

The trial judge's errors in law on these issues had a material bearing on Mr. Attard's acquittal because the evidentiary gap would have been filled by the EDR data. Although the ONCA did not have to conduct a review of the trial judge's 24(2) analysis, they found legal errors in that too.¹⁴

Consequently, the EDR evidence was determined to be admissible, and a new trial was ordered with a direction that the EDR data was admissible.¹⁵

TLDR

There is not a reasonable expectation of privacy in your vehicle's EDR. Police can seize and extract the data from a vehicle's EDR without a warrant if an officer believes on reasonable grounds it will afford evidence of an offence.

PETER D. EBERLIE is one of London's most experienced and successful Family Law Trial lawyers. He has been litigating cases for 50 years now and is retiring from Family Law Litigation. Most of his cases have resolved through successful negotiation – out of court.

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Peter's knowledge and expertise in Family Law is widely recognized in the legal community and is reflected in his peers voting for his inclusion in Best Lawyers® for the area of Family Law since 2008.

Greying of the Bar: What It Means for the Future of Law in Ontario

Contributed by:
Middlesex Law Association

At the recent FOLA Plenary, MLA representatives attended an eye-opening presentation, "Greying of the Bar," created by Ivey Business School students for the Federation of Ontario Law Associations. The session underscored a growing challenge: fewer young lawyers are choosing - and staying in - rural and mid-sized communities like ours. [Learn more](#)

Key findings

- 82.6% of newly called lawyers head to large urban centres such as Toronto.
- The average Ontario lawyer is 48, with many approaching retirement.
- Student debt, lower rural pay and thin mentorship pipelines are major barriers.
- Ontario needs structured rural-placement pathways to protect access to justice.

The report also offered solutions: coordinated rural recruiting, stronger mentorship, and targeted incentives to attract and retain early-career lawyers.

What We're Doing at the MLA

Below is a snapshot of concrete steps - many already under way - to keep talent rooted in London and Middlesex County.

1. Mentorship That Matters

This fall, we're proud to host our Annual Mentorship Dinner on August 28 at Abruzzi - an evening designed to foster connection, support, and resilience among early-career lawyers and

seasoned practitioners. Participants will engage in small-group, guided conversations on professionalism, ethical challenges, and coping with adversity in practice.

[Event details & registration](#)

We see mentorship as a cornerstone of a healthy legal community. While we're currently exploring funding options to revitalize a year-round mentorship program, events like this dinner provide an immediate opportunity for meaningful relationship-building across generations of practice.

Why it's critical: Mentorship is a proven factor in retention and career satisfaction - especially in mid-sized regions like ours.

2. Robust CPD - In-Person, Hybrid & CPD Online Past 2025 highlights

Past 2025 Highlights

Straight From the Bench 2025: A Day of Critical Insight, Candid Reflection & Cutting-Edge Law

On May 5, 2025, the Middlesex Law Association brought together legal professionals, judges, and advocates for the much-anticipated *Straight From the Bench* 2025 conference. This year's agenda didn't just keep pace with legal evolution-it set the tone.

We kicked off with a powerful EDI panel on Trauma-Informed Lawyering, where The Honourable Justice Barbara Macfarlane, Teresa Donnelly, and Anna Matas, under the thoughtful

moderation of Rasha El-Tawil, reminded us that effective advocacy begins with empathy and understanding the lived experiences of our clients.

From there, attendees moved through a high-impact morning: updates on Canadian tobacco litigation, nuanced discussions on guardianship and infant settlements, and timely case comments including the closely-watched *Burjoski v. WRDSB* (anti-SLAPP) and *Jackson v. Rosenberg*.

The afternoon featured practical gems: Debbie Boswell's guidance on "Appeal-Proofing Your Trial" offered actionable takeaways, while a candid fireside chat on courtroom advocacy with Justices Carnegie and ten Cate gave us rare judicial perspective on what works-and what doesn't-inside the courtroom.

And just when we thought it couldn't get more current, Carolyn Conron delivered a compelling Criminal Evidence Primer dissecting evolving expectations of privacy postAttard, followed by sharp insights into AI for Lawyers by Andrew Murray and an Employment Law update from Jaime Rivera-Campos.

We closed with a bang: a HOT TOPIC session on the Civil Rules Review (Phase 2), where Jacob Damstra provided transparency into the reform process and engaged the crowd in a thoughtful Q&A. From start to finish, SFTB 2025 affirmed why this event is a cornerstone of professional development for our legal community.

Big thanks to our organizing committee-Rasha El-Tawil, Leslie Jack, Dara Lambe, and John Nicholson-for their leadership in curating a day that was as rich in learning as it was grounded in collegiality. ►

With Gratitude to Our Sponsors

SFTB 2025 would not have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors. Special thanks to:

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- Henderson Structured Settlements LP

Their commitment to continuing legal education and community engagement helps ensure events like SFTB thrive.

Go to our [LinkedIn](#) for Photos. We extend our thanks to all who attended and made SFTB 2025 a powerful day of shared learning.

3. Why London? - Showcasing Our Members

This fall we're launching a new #WhyLondonLaw social-media series profiling one MLA member each week (or month, depending on engagement).

Goal: spotlight career stories, lifestyle perks and community impact that make London a place to build both practice and life.

- First feature goes live: Oct 1. Want to be profiled? Email admin@middlaw.on.ca with a photo and 150-word bio.

4. Strategic Partnerships

In a changing legal landscape, strategic partnerships are more than optics - they're infrastructure. They connect our local bar to law schools, institutions, government, and emerging areas of practice. The MLA has proudly strengthened ties this year through initiatives with:

- Western Law - including an upcoming panel event this fall (supported by Christina McCreery and faculty partners), where practitioners will share real-world insights on articling, practice pivots, work-life balance, and imposter syndrome.
- Western Law Induction Ceremony on September 3, where we'll welcome the newest cohort into our legal community.
- Dean-Designate Mohamed Khimji, incoming at Western Law July 1 - a new ally in our shared goal of supporting legal education and local practice pathways.
- Future women partnerships pending - with hopes of partnering on our July 24 Lawn Bowling event for women in law.

Why do these partnerships matter? Because they build visibility, open doors for students, enrich CPD content, and create a sense of place and belonging for lawyers choosing to practise in London.

- A gentle nudge: Whether you're 2 years into practice or 22 - if you haven't attended a local event lately, now's the time to reconnect. Your presence can be the difference between a new lawyer feeling welcomed ... or walking away.

Interested in supporting MLA programming through sponsorship? We're actively seeking partners for upcoming events including:

Health Law Conference

September 18

Real Estate & Wills-Estates CPD Day

October 29

Opening of the Courts

September 23

And more...

Sponsorships help us keep costs down, content strong, and the local bar vibrant. Reach out to admin@middlaw.on.ca to learn more - and thank you to those who already support our work.

5. Professional & Social Belonging

In a mid-sized legal community like ours, belonging doesn't happen by accident- it happens through invitation, intention, and inclusion. That's why the MLA continues to prioritize initiatives that help our members feel seen, supported, and part of something larger than their own practice.

New Member Welcome Package

Every new MLA member now receives a digital orientation kit that includes:

- A virtual or in-person tour pass for our courthouse library and Practice Resource Centre
- Invitations to practice-area groups and networking opportunities
- A quick guide to our CPD calendar, CPDOnline portal, library perks, and yes ... directions to the candy bowl
- This helps new members hit the ground running, access resources faster, and understand that support is just a few steps away. ►

► Solo Practitioners Social Brings Out Strong Crowd Vents That Build Real Connection

On June 16, the Middlesex Law Association welcomed 18 solo and small firm practitioners for an evening of conversation, connection, and community at Toboggan Brewery. The relaxed atmosphere offered the perfect setting for attendees to share resources, discuss common challenges, and build relationships across practice areas.

We'd like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who joined us -your presence and participation made the evening a great success. Events like these remind us how valuable it is to create space for solo practitioners to connect, collaborate, and recharge.

As the legal landscape evolves, opportunities for peer support and professional networking are more important than ever -especially for those practicing independently. We look forward to growing this series with the support of sponsors and community partners.

Thank you Leslie Jack for coordinating and spearheading the event.

The Why

- When members feel connected, they stay. They invest. They refer. They lead. So if you haven't attended an MLA event in a while -this is your invitation. Whether it's to sip, bowl, chat, or learn, you belong here.

6. Practice-Management Support via the MLA Library & Resource Centre

Whether you're juggling disclosure deadlines, writing a last-minute factum, or just need a quiet space to regroup between court appearances -your MLA Library is more than a bookshelf. It's a hub of support, resources, and calm.

Meet Your Legal Research Team

Behind the desk, you'll find Cynthia Simpson and Shabira Tamachi, our experienced legal research professionals who are not only warm and approachable - they are indispensable partners in your practice. From deep case law dives to "can you help me find that one regulation from 2007?", they've got you covered.

"They've saved me hours of research time -and usually with a better result than I could've managed myself."

- MLA Member

What's Available in Your Library

Located inside the London courthouse, the MLA Practice Resource Centre is open to all members -and it's loaded with amenities to support your day-to-day practice:

Workspace & Tech:

- Kube privacy booths and sound-dampening phone pods for confidential calls and focused work
- Free high-speed Wi-Fi, secure laptop plug-in stations, scanners, and charging kits
- Booking access to our fully equipped meeting room for client discussions or virtual hearings
- Robe rentals for emergencies or out-of-town counsel

Research Tools:

- Full access to vLex, Rangefindr, Irwin Law e-books, and more
- Print and digital materials curated to support litigation, real estate, wills & estates, family law, criminal law, and more
- One-on-one support from Cynthia and Shabira for legal research, citation help, or locating obscure sources

And yes ... the legendary bottomless coffee is always on.

Coming Soon: Templates and Practice Tools

We're working behind the scenes to build a library of practice-management templates, including:

- Retainer agreements
- Closing checklists
- Sample client letters
- File opening/closing procedures

While still funding-dependent, we've applied for grants to make this vision a reality - and we'll keep members updated as that develops.

Why This Matters

Whether you're a solo, in-house, junior associate or seasoned litigator, practice management doesn't have to mean going it alone. The MLA Library exists to remove friction, save you time, and give you space to breathe - right inside the courthouse.

If it's been a while since you visited, consider this your official invitation back. Shabira and Cynthia would love to see you - and show you how much easier your day can be when you have the right tools (and people) in your corner.



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Why Lawyers Need to Care About Legal Aid Cuts in 2025 and What It Means for Middlesex Region

Contributed by:
Middlesex Law Association

The 2025–26 Ontario provincial budget offers no real-dollar increase to Legal Aid Ontario (LAO), effectively reducing its purchasing power due to inflation, increased demand, and stagnant eligibility thresholds. While not framed as a “cut,” the impact will be deeply felt—especially in communities like ours.

What’s Changing?

- No inflation adjustment: LAO’s core budget remains flat, despite rising legal fees, caseloads, and operational costs.
- Eligibility caps remain outdated: As the cost of living soars, more Ontarians fall through the cracks—too “wealthy” for LAO, too poor for private representation.
- Limited certificate coverage: Particularly in family and immigration law, certificate coverage is being tightened to urgent matters only.
- Reduced duty counsel resources: Courts may see longer wait times, unrepresented litigants, and increased pressure on volunteers.

See LAO’s 2025/26 Service Plan [here](#).

What It Means for MLA Members

1. Pressure on Criminal and Family Bar

Lawyers working in these areas will face:

- More clients requesting pro bono, limited-scope, or payment-plan arrangements.

- Emotional strain dealing with unrepresented or misinformed parties.

- Greater trial complexity as more litigants self-represent through motions and disclosure.

2. Higher Administrative Burden for Roster Lawyers

LAO lawyers in Middlesex County report:

- Delayed approvals for authorizations and discretionary billing.
- Increased paperwork for case management conferences and service limits.
- Reduced discretion for nuanced client needs (e.g., mental health or trauma-informed accommodations).

3. Strained Court Resources

Judges and clerks will likely:

- Face adjournments and delays due to lack of representation.
- Rely more heavily on amici curiae, law association volunteers, and duty counsel lawyers.

4. Equity & Access to Justice Risks

Communities already underserved—rural, racialized, immigrant, and survivors of abuse—may be disproportionately impacted. This weakens confidence in the justice system and increases systemic risk.

What Local Lawyers are Saying:

“I’m seeing more people walk into court with no idea what to do—terrified, frustrated, and sometimes retraumatized.”

— **Family lawyer, London, ON**

“The gaps are growing faster than we can patch them.”

— **LAO criminal roster lawyer, Middlesex**

What We Can Do as MLA

Administer a survey to the membership to obtain data about LAO. If warranted, possibility to host a fall roundtable with LAO regional leads, judges, and roster lawyers to discuss practical triage strategies.

Highlight local pro bono clinics and ways members can donate hours (e.g., Eviction Help Hub, Family Law Limited Scope Project).

Advocate for eligibility reform through the Federation of Ontario Law Associations (FOLA) and MLA’s formal channels.

Include Legal Aid navigation tools and client handouts on the MLA website.

Call to Action

Would you like to contribute to our fall coverage on Legal Aid realities in Middlesex? Reach out to share stories, insights, or clinic connections—we’re building a stronger justice ecosystem, together.

Love Me, Love My Dog



Contributed by:
James Zegers

This week, LMLMD, features John Brennan and Docket. John practices commercial litigation and provides a range of legal services, assisting clients with business, contractual and property disputes. He represents clients at all levels of court throughout Ontario as well as in the Human Rights Tribunal, the License Appeal Tribunal and other administrative adjudicative bodies.

He is the proud father of Docket, a 13-week-old French Bulldog. He is also the proud father of Jack, a 2.5-year old human.

The following interview was conducted at the Old South Village Pub, in Wortley Village, the dog epicentre of London.

How did Docket come into your life? Why did you decide to get a dog? Was the process thoughtful and deliberate, or unplanned and spontaneous?

I've always wanted a dog—someone loyal, charming, and mildly judgmental to match my own temperament. But between work and hesitation, I kept putting it off. Getting a dog felt like a big commitment, and as a lawyer, I tend to overanalyze commitments.

Then I saw Docket. I wasn't planning to bring a puppy home that day—I didn't even have treats on me—but something about him just clicked. He looked like trouble, but the good kind. The kind you take home despite every spreadsheet and schedule saying "*not now*."

So no, it wasn't planned. It was impulsive, completely against my usual approach—and so far I have not regretted the decision at all.

How much did you pay for him?

Let's just say the price was confidential—but reasonable. Negotiating and deal hunting is second nature to me, and I walked away

feeling like both parties got a good deal. Docket may have cost a bit up front, but the return on affection is already off the charts.

How did you come up with the name Docket? Does it have anything to do with you being a lawyer?

I spend most of my time buried in dockets—so I figured, why not bring one home that always makes me smile?

Plus, "Docket" always sounds important, like he's got somewhere to be. And honestly, he does—usually the couch, the treat jar, or whatever spot in the house or office he's decided is now his courtroom.

Why a French Bulldog? What's wrong with an English Bulldog?

Nothing's wrong with English Bulldogs—very distinguished. But I was looking for something with a little more drama, a little more flair, and slightly less drool.

Frenchies are like the espresso shot of the bulldog world: compact, intense, and just a little bit extra. Docket struts like he owns the place, snores like a freight train, and somehow still has the charm to get away with it. He's basically the Napoleon of nap time.

Why a small dog? Do you prefer small dogs to big dogs?

With a toddler at home, logistics matter. I needed a dog that could come along for the ride—literally. Whether it's a trip to the park or time away, it's a lot easier to pack a Frenchie into the car than a 90-pound retriever and still have room for a diaper bag, snacks and an arsenal of toys. I always thought I would end up with a big dog but I'm happy in the medium category.

Is Docket good with children?

Are children good with Docket?

Docket and my son Jack are best



► buds—like a toddler and his shadow, if the shadow had paws and an attitude. They wrestle, nap, and frequently team up to test the limits of household rules.

Docket's incredibly gentle with Jack, and Jack's learning what it means to care for someone smaller (just barely smaller). Watching the two of them grow up together has been one of the unexpected joys of getting a dog—it's like having a sibling with fur and a better snore.

Would you consider training Docket to be a therapy dog?

Honestly, he already is—just without the credentials. I talk, he listens (or snores), and somehow I feel better. It's like living with a tiny, judgment-free psychiatrist in a fur coat.

If there's a formal path to certification, I'd consider it. He's got the temperament, the empathy, and the ability to stare into your soul just long enough to make you rethink your choices. That's therapeutic, right?

How old is Docket? Is it fun having a puppy? How is (toilet) training going?

Docket's 13 weeks old, which means we're in the thick of the "adorable chaos" phase. Having a puppy is a blast—equal parts cuddles, comedy, and crisis management. Potty training, though? Brutal.¹

¹ Docket peed on me during this interview

Honestly, it's been tougher than it was with my son Jack. At least Jack wore diapers. Docket just gives me a look like, "What mess?" and struts off like nothing happened. We're getting there, but let's just say I now understand the value of a good mop and an even better sense of humour.

In what ways do you feel your dog resembles you? What personality traits do you and docket share?

Docket and I are both compact, expressive, and carry ourselves like busy beings. He's got a serious face but a playful side, and so do I—though only one of us gets away with chewing on furniture.

We both value loyalty, routine, and the importance of a good nap after a long day. He may not practice law, but he definitely knows how to read a room—and he's not afraid to make his opinion known, silently or otherwise. Let's just say if he could file motions, he probably would.

And, oh yeah, we snore at the same or similar interval which allows both of us to escape easy detection when sleeping in the same room.

Are you concerned that one day you will look like Docket? Or that docket will look like you?

Concerned? I'm counting on it. Docket's got a chiseled face, perfect ears, and walks like he owns the block—if I start



channeling even half of that energy, I'll be unstoppable.

Now, if he starts developing frown lines, carrying legal pads in his mouth, and stress-eating kibble at midnight, we might need to talk. But until then, I'm proud to share a mirror with him. He's the better-looking one, and frankly, we both know it.



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Tribunal Access & Procedural Justice: What We Learned at FOLA

Contributed by:
Middlesex Law Association

At the 2025 FOLA Spring Plenary, serious concerns were raised around procedural fairness and access to justice at Ontario's administrative tribunals – particularly the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRT) and the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB). The MLA continues to monitor these developments closely as they impact both practitioners and the public relying on timely, fair adjudication. [Read more](#)

Human Rights Tribunal: A Crisis of Delay

The HRT continues to face a staggering backlog despite significant investments:

- Over 8,400 active backlog cases, with most merit decisions being made on files from 2019 or earlier
- A troubling 75% of final decisions in 2023-24 were dismissed without an oral hearing, often due to abandonment after years-long administrative delays
- Dismissals are increasingly based on rigid procedural technicalities – e.g., formatting issues or filing forms incorrectly – rather than substantive review
- Even with 70 adjudicators now in place, applicants are frequently asked to submit complex jurisdictional responses years after their initial filing, only to be dismissed for noncompliance with short timelines

These trends point to a growing systemic risk: vulnerable applicants seeking human rights protections are being denied their day in court – not for lack of merit, but due to structural bottlenecks and shifting evidentiary burdens.

LTB: Delays, Dismissals & the Fragility of Housing Security

The LTB, too, is grappling with serious challenges:

- Cases continue to be dismissed due to minor errors, such as incorrect unit numbers or misunderstandings around hearing dates
- Decisions have been overturned by Divisional Court in multiple cases, including *Wright v. Lillian* (2024) and *Ali v. Capreit* (2025), for failing to ensure tenants were “reasonably able to participate”
- Bill 227 has introduced a “substantial compliance” standard for LTB filings – a welcome step – but implementation remains uneven
- The courts have reaffirmed that natural justice must be broadly interpreted, especially when vulnerable tenants face eviction

The MLA encourages members to familiarize themselves with these cases and recent legislative amendments, as they may signal important advocacy opportunities.

Tribunal Trends: What the 2024 inHEALTH Analysis Means for You

At the recent FOLA Plenary, we reviewed compelling data from the *inHEALTH 2024 Statistical Analysis* – a comprehensive report that examined nearly a decade of decisions at the License Appeal Tribunal (LAT) related to accident benefits claims. The findings reveal a clear and troubling pattern: success rates for injured applicants continue to decline year-over-year, with insurance companies winning 71 % of the time in 2023, compared to only 10% full wins for applicants.

Particularly concerning are:

- Poor applicant outcomes across key issues such as Medical/Rehab claims (only 18% success rate) and Income Replacement Benefits (20-25% depending on stage).
- Significant disadvantage for self-represented litigants, with just 15% achieving favourable outcomes.
- Reconsiderations rarely lead to overturned decisions – only 7% of total cases saw meaningful reversal or variation.
- Wide variability among adjudicators, with some showing stark differences in how they rule on specific issues.

Why This Matters to You

Whether you're representing applicants, insurers, or navigating the system yourself, this data underscores the need to be strategic, well-resourced, and up-to-date in LAT advocacy. It also highlights the urgent need for systemic fairness and accessible legal guidance – especially for those appearing self-represented. ►

► **What's Next at the MLA**

To better support our members and ensure our services reflect evolving legal realities, we will be launching our first Annual Membership Survey in August. This initiative aims to capture your current challenges, practice trends, and resource needs so that we can translate your feedback into

real, operational improvements – from advocacy tools to research support and training.

We also recognize that beyond data, connection matters. Whether it's through our Practice Resource Library or our professional networking events, we remain committed to creating a

stronger, smarter legal community in Middlesex.

If you have thoughts on how the MLA can better support members practicing before tribunals, let us know – or watch for the survey and help shape the future.



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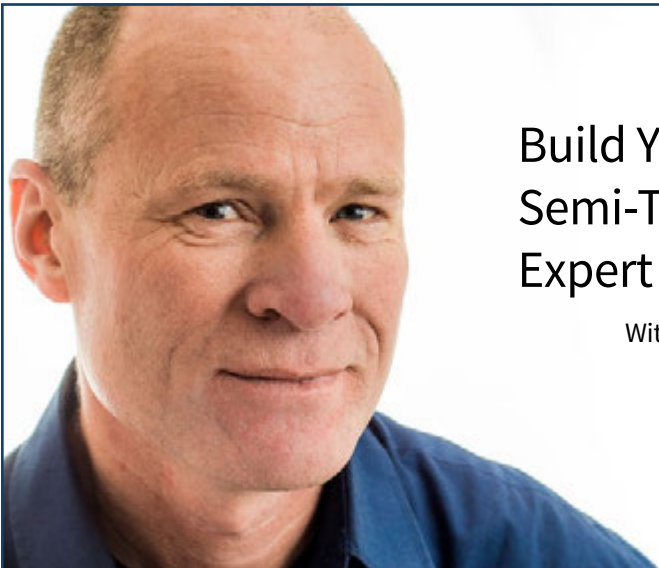


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Mock Tournament

2025 OJEN-OBA Competitive Mock Trial Tournament



Contributed by:
Jason Hatch

The 2025 OJEN-OBA Competitive Mock Trial Tournament was held on Thursday May 8 at the London Courthouse. Approximately 75 students on teams representing five schools from London, Stratford, and Strathroy competed against one another in a criminal harassment case. Round-robin trials were presided over by Jon Barnett, Leslie Jack, Stephanie

Marentette, Megan Linaric, Bassel Sabalbal, and Marcus Johnson, with the final round being judged by retired Justice Duncan Grace. Strathroy District Collegiate Institute beat Mother Teresa in the final round in what was an incredibly exciting tournament. Teams were coached by local lawyers who provided their expertise and guidance to students over several months.

Strathroy's Gwen Auld was named Outstanding Lawyer of the tournament and Central's Tyson Richardson won Outstanding Witness.

The tournament was generously sponsored by Lerner's, McKenzie Lake, the MLA, and the OJEN-OBA Mock Trial Fund.

A very big thank you to everyone who helped to make this tournament a success and the London-OOCMT Committee looks forward to next year's tournament.

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Many of you already know Jennifer Costin, who has been providing trusted support to clients across Ontario for over 20 years as both a workplace investigator and employment lawyer. With her deep experience and practical approach, Jennifer helps clients navigate all stages of the employment relationship—from recruitment through to exits.

Her practice has a particular focus on workplace investigations, which she conducts locally and nationally across a wide range of sectors including education, healthcare, government, tech, manufacturing, not-for-profit, and retail. Known for her timely, professional, and thorough approach, Jennifer also offers advice and coaching to internal investigators.



JULIA FERREIRA
jferreira@scottpetrie.com

We are pleased to share that Julia Ferreira is working in association with Scott Petrie LLP, in offering both workplace investigation services as well as both employer-side and employee-side representation. Julia brings a wealth of experience in employment law, having practiced at one of Canada's leading boutique employment firms.

Her work spans a broad range of workplace issues, including wrongful dismissal, workplace harassment, compliance matters, and investigations. Julia is excited to bring her expertise to our growing practice and to continue supporting both employers and employees.

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Municipalities Can Control 5G Antennas ... For Now



Contributed by:
David Canton / Lawyer and Trademark Agent

There has been a huge amount of chatter over the last couple of weeks about DeepSeek, a new AI product from China. We have waded through some of that, so you don't have to. Here is what you need to know.

How does new and changing technology fit into existing laws? It depends. This was the issue in a case regarding CRTC jurisdiction over 5G cell phone antennas installed on municipal property that went all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada.

The question was whether the CRTC has the ability to determine communication company terms of access to municipal property to install 5G antennas if the company and municipality can't agree.

The Dispute: Who Controls 5G Antenna Access?

The case of [Telus Communications Inc. v. Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#) involved 12 parties, including cell companies, governments, and other interested parties.

To grossly simplify the decision, the SCC said to read the legislation and apply its plain meaning. The fact that 2 of the 9 judges dissented and reached an opposite conclusion shows this isn't always easy in practice.

What The Law Says About Telecom Access

The Telecommunications Act has an "access regime" where "... telecommunications carriers have a qualified right of access to construct, maintain and operate their

transmission lines situated on public property, and the CRTC is empowered to determine the applicable terms of access where the carrier cannot obtain consent to access its transmission lines from the relevant public authority on terms that are acceptable to it."

The question was whether the language in the act that talks in terms of transmission lines was broad enough to apply to 5G antennas attached to those lines.

What the Supreme Court Decided

The court decided that the provisions of the act were not broad enough to include 5G antennas under the definition of transmission line.

The court distinguished between static and dynamic statutes. Static legislation uses language specific to circumstances and technology at the time. Dynamic legislation uses language that is more generic and adaptable to new circumstances.

The court said:

"The term 'transmission line' only refers to wireline infrastructure. It would be inconsistent with the text, context and purpose of ss. 43 and 44 of the Act to say that Parliament intended the term to extend to antennas. The ordinary meaning of "transmission line" and the text of ss. 43 and 44 have a strong physical and linear connotation that readily applies to wireline infrastructure like wires or cables, but not to antennas. Likewise, the broader context of the Act, including other defined terms and the Act's legislative history, supports the

narrower interpretation."

It is noteworthy that the act had a definition of "transmission facility" that included radio systems, while the definition of "transmission line" relevant to the issue at hand is narrower and does not include that.

A Closer Look at the Dissenting Opinion

The dissent took the position that "transmission line" does include 5G antennas.

It says:

"Indeed, it is noteworthy that wireless facilities such as 5G small cells are mounted on structures like telephone poles, lamp posts, and buildings and are "hard-wired", usually with fibre-optic cables, into carriers' existing wireline transport networks as a part of a single, integrated telecommunications network. In this sense, 5G small cells attach to and extend existing transmission lines."

The dissent quoted a guide prepared by one of the parties to the action, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, which says:

"Small cells rely on a number of physical connections to function. In order for the data to flow into or from the Internet, each small cell antenna must be hard-wired into the carrier's underground fibre-optic network. Each antenna is also accompanied by various support or control equipment and requires its own power source. Therefore, a fiber optic cable conduit and a power supply conduit might need to be constructed where the cables are located underground. These might be "wireless" as far as the end user is concerned, but for the technology to function, each small cell antenna requires a power source and must usually be physically connected, by a cable, ►

► to the rest of the carrier's Internet network."

Why this Matters for Municipalities and Taxpayers

The decision means that the CRTC has jurisdiction over communication cables on municipal property, but not 5G antennas on municipal property. The

decision is noteworthy from a statutory interpretation perspective and will be required reading for any lawyers trying to determine if or how existing legislation applies to new technology.

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Legal Landscape Update

What Ontario Lawyers Need to Know (June 2025)

Contributed by:
Middlesex Law Association

Ontario's legal framework continues to evolve rapidly. Here's your mid-year briefing on crucial updates impacting lawyers.

Civil Procedure Overhaul (O. Reg. 50/25)

Effective June 16, 2025

Major amendments to the Rules of Civil Procedure, including:

- New protections for parties under disability (Rule 7.08) such as redaction, table of contents, and court approval.
- Clarified partial settlements (Rule 49.14 & Form 49E).
- Offers involving vulnerable parties require court approval to be binding.

Learn more: [O. Reg. 50/25 – Rules of Civil Procedure](#)

Small Claims Court Modernization

As part of Ontario's ongoing access to justice reforms, significant updates to the Small Claims Court rules are taking effect in 2025, streamlining procedures and expanding protections for self-represented litigants.

Procedural rule changes take effect June 1 2025; money-limit & appeal-limit increases start October 1 2025

- Claim limit increasing from \$35k to \$50k.
- Introduction of trial management conferences.
- Awards for self-represented litigants tripling to \$1,500.
- Appeal threshold raised to \$5,000.

Learn more: [O. Reg. 258/98 – Small Claims Court](#)

Platform Workers Protections (Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act)

Statute enacted in Bill 88 (Working for Workers Act, 2022). Effective July 1, 2025

Platform operators must:

- Ensure minimum wage per assignment.
- Provide transparent pay details.
- Prevent unfair removals.

Learn more: [Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022](#)

Employment & Labour Reform (Bill 30: Working for Workers Seven Act)

- Introduces 3 days unpaid job-search leave after mass layoffs.
- Targets fraudulent job ads.
- Strengthens WSIB enforcement.

Learn more: [Bill 30: Working for Workers Seven Act](#)

Bill 5: Special Economic Zones & Environmental Reforms

Passed June 5, 2025. Note that SEZA regulations are expected by September 2025 and that the Act also amends the Endangered Species Act. Enables suspension of local regulations in designated zones—fast-tracking development (e.g., Ontario Place) with environmental oversight concerns.

Learn more: [Bill 5: Special Economic Zones & Environmental Reforms](#)

LSO Governance Reform

The Law Society is reviewing a shift toward more appointed Benchers, a potential shift in self-regulatory governance. Learn more: [LSO Governance Review](#)

Action Step:

Have questions about these legal updates? Join our next MLA Bench & Bar session or contact us to propose tailored CPD content.

Here's your compact mid-year briefing on essential legislative, regulatory, and case-law developments impacting practice in Middlesex—and how you can stay ahead.

1. Pre-Employment Disclosure Rule – Why It Matters to MLA Members Effective July 1 2025 — O. Reg. 477/24 (ESA)

Newsworthy – Ontario's new "Day-One Disclosure" rule compels every employer with 25+ employees to hand new hires a written fact sheet *before* they start. Details must include: employer name, contact info, first work location, hours of work, pay schedule, starting wage, and any deductions.

Actionable

MLA Firms: If your office (or affiliated legal clinic/library) has 25+ staff, revise offer-letter templates and onboarding checklists now.

Client Advisory: Corporate and HR clients will rely on you for compliant language; non-delivery can trigger ESA penalties.

Litigation Prep: Expect wrongful-dismissal files to cite missing disclosures as an aggravating factor in damages.

Interesting: This is Ontario's first mandatory pre-hire information package. It aims to curb "ghost-shifts" and surprise wage rates in gig-style work—but its reach includes professional offices, law firms, and public-sector boards.

Local: London-area employers in health care, tech, and manufacturing (key MLA client sectors) will cross the 25-employee threshold quickly; early compliance advice is a competitive edge.

Read the regulation: [O. Reg. 477/24 – When Work Deemed to be Performed](#)

2. Mathur v Ontario – Climate Action & the Charter

In *Mathur v. Ontario*, 2024 ONCA 762, the Court of Appeal ruled that Ontario's weakened emission targets may violate youth rights under ss. 7 and 15 of the Charter. On May 1, 2025, the

Supreme Court refused to hear the province's appeal, allowing the Charter challenge to proceed.

Why it matters: This is Canada's first appellate-level climate case where young plaintiffs were allowed to argue that weak climate action violates constitutional rights. The case reframes environmental statutes as enforceable legal promises—not just policy choices. If successful, it could force governments to adopt stronger, court-supervised climate plans. [Read the decision](#)

3. OCJ Rulings to Watch (June 2025)

OCJ Rulings to Watch — June 2025 (Why they're SNAIL-worthy for MLA)

- D.E.S.A. v N.B., 2025 ONCJ 335 (May 18) – *Shared-parenting costs clarified*: Justice Boswell confirms that equal parenting time does not mean an automatic 50/50 split of s. 7 "special" expenses; courts must look at who actually pays and the child's best interests. Family-law counsel should update parenting-plan precedents, gather receipts up-front, and tailor offers to reflect the new cost-sharing formula—advice London judges will expect immediately. [CanLII link](#).
- R. v Mohammed, 2025 ONCJ 331 (June 16) – *Conditional sentence for accessory-after-fact manslaughter*: The Court applies post-Sharma reasoning to grant a 592-day conditional sentence for an accessory-after-the-fact to manslaughter. For criminal practitioners, this opens new room to argue CSOs in accessory cases; Crowns must recalibrate plea positions. Expect this precedent to surface in every Southwestern Ontario plea negotiation where the principal charge is manslaughter. [CanLII link](#).
- R. v Foran, 2025 ONCJ 332 (June 16) – *Second ASD test without new demand upheld*: The Court holds that police may perform a second roadside Approved Screening Device test

without issuing a fresh demand when the first device malfunctions—no Charter breach found. DUI-defence files should now focus on machine-maintenance records and officer notes rather than the wording of a renewed demand; police-law advisors should ensure officers fully document device failures. [CanLII Link](#).

4. Family Law Case Highlights

Ontario's appellate courts have issued a string of family-law decisions that immediately affect day-to-day advice on parenting, support and separation-date disputes. Each one fills a practical gap left by earlier precedent, so MLA members will want them on their radar — and clients will want to know you're ahead of the curve.

- Kohli v Thom, 2025 ONCA 200 – *Family violence & imputing income*: The Court of Appeal set aside a trial order that imputed income to a spouse without weighing how family violence limited her earning capacity. The ruling ties violence findings directly to support calculations and relocation analysis, giving advocates a new lever when arguing underemployment. [CanLII Link](#).
- D.F. v R.W.F., 2025 ONCA 129 – *Parenting orders for adult children with disabilities*: The Court faulted a restrictive, indefinite supervised-access order for an adult child and stressed that such orders must include a built-in review mechanism. For family-law counsel this is fresh authority to press for periodic reviews whenever an adult child's autonomy is at stake. [CanLII Link](#).
- Kassabian v Marcarian, 2025 ONCA 239 – *Separation-date playbook clarified*: The Court consolidated the factors for fixing a separation date and confirmed that judges are not bound to choose one of the parties' proposed dates. Expect this case to be cited whenever documentary or third-party evidence contradicts a client's "story" about when the relationship actually ended. [CanLII Link](#).

- • *Mehralian v Dunmore*, 2025 ONSC 649 (Div Ct) – *Foreign divorce & Charter challenge dismissed*: A bid to reopen spousal-support rights after a foreign religious divorce was struck as a collateral attack; the judge also found no prima facie Charter breach. The takeaway: clients must exhaust appeal routes before repackaging old issues as constitutional claims. [CanLII Link](#).

Why MLA members should care: these cases give fresh ammunition for motions, settlement talks and precedent drafting. They also signal where courts are leaning on family-violence economics, disability-focused parenting, and evidentiary standards for key dates and foreign orders—topics that routinely appear on Middlesex dockets.

5. *De Castro v Arista Homes*, 2025 ONCA 260 — *Employer Caution!*

On April 3 2025 the Ontario Court of Appeal struck down Arista Homes' "for-cause" termination clause, holding that its broad wording could authorize dismissal without notice in situations narrower than the "wilful misconduct" standard in the Employment Standards Act (ESA). Because any ambiguity that can breach the ESA taints the entire provision, the Court invalidated the whole termination clause and awarded the employee eight months' common-law notice. [bennettjones.com](#)

What You Should Do

- Update HR practices: Ensure your onboarding docs comply with ESA Reg 477/24 before July 1.

- Watch Mathur closely: Potential implications for administrative law, environmental litigation, and Charter challenges.
- Use OCJ rulings: Incorporate D.E.S.A., Mohammed, and Foran into practice guides and CPD materials.
- Review templates: Audit termination clauses for clarity, compliance, and drafting precision.

Next Steps

Interested in hosting a CPD session on any of these updates? Contact us!

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Faculty Research Spotlight: Western University

Contributed by:
Middlesex Law Association

Mindfulness & Generative-AI Teaching Fellows, plus a familiar face at the helm.

1. Mindfulness in Legal Education

Professor Thomas Telfer's for-credit mindfulness course at Western Law continues to post statistically significant drops in student stress and boosts in resilience, according to internal 2025 follow-up data. The curriculum—breath work, mindful listening, reflection journals—offers a plug-and-play model MLA firms can adapt for CPD or onboarding.

2. Innovation Spotlight: Dr. Bassem Awad (Western Law)

Assistant Professor & Director of the Intellectual Property, Information & Technology (IPIT) concentration, Dr. Awad also leads the Western Intellectual Property & Innovation Legal Clinic (WIPLC)—Ontario's only TMOB-approved IP clinic providing pro-bono advice to inventors, start-ups, and creatives in Southwestern Ontario. His research tackles frontier questions such as AI-generated inventions, green-tech patenting, and data-governance models for the "machine learning era." Through WIPLC, law students work on live trademark, patent, and commercialization files, giving local innovators affordable IP support while producing practice-ready graduates. Why this matters to MLA members: firms advising tech entrepreneurs or cleantech ventures gain a ready referral pipeline, potential CPD partners, and early access to scholarship shaping Canada's next IP framework.

Learn more: Dr. Awad's profile and WIPLC overview: law.uwo.ca

3. Generative-AI Teaching Fellows: What They're Doing

Starting July 1, 2025, three new Generative-AI Teaching Fellows are advancing cutting-edge AI initiatives at Western:

Guneet Kaur Nagpal (Ivey Business School) is developing an AI-powered platform that simulates crowdfunding pitches, helping students explore autonomous agent behavior in finance and marketing contexts.

Andrews Tawiah (Health Sciences) is designing an adaptive case-based AI simulation for clinical training in physical therapy, with long-term plans to scale across health disciplines.

William Turkel (Social Science) is creating five open-access modules for teaching AI literacy and ethical decision-making in complex interdisciplinary problem-solving scenarios.

Each Fellow will run campus-wide workshops, mentor faculty, and share their work publicly—offering great opportunities for lawyers and educators to collaborate on ethics-first AI pedagogy.

4. Welcome Back: Dean Mohamed Khimji

Western Law's incoming Dean, Mohamed Khimji, returns to familiar ground—he previously taught corporate finance and business law at Western, where he left a strong

impression on many current MLA members. Most recently the David Allgood Professor at Queen's Law, Dean Khimji is known for his inclusive leadership, clear communication, and innovative teaching methods (including famously using Taylor Swift case studies in IP lectures). His upcoming 'first 100 days' will include outreach to alumni and local bar associations—we look forward to welcoming him back to the Middlesex community.

5. Western Law Leadership Transition: MLA in Attendance

The Middlesex Law Association was pleased to attend a recent Faculty of Law Reception at Western University, where we had the opportunity to hear directly from both the outgoing Dean Erika Chamberlain and incoming Dean Mohamed Khimji. The event marked a moment of continuity and renewal—Dean Chamberlain reflected on the school's remarkable growth during her tenure, while Dean Khimji shared his vision for a forward-looking, inclusive, and innovation-driven law school. As many MLA members are proud alumni, the event was a meaningful reconnection with the institution's leadership.

6. JD Induction Ceremony – September 3, 2025

The MLA has also been invited to participate in Western Law's JD Class of 2027 Induction Ceremony, scheduled for September 3, 2025. This annual milestone marks the official welcome of incoming law students to the Western legal community. The ceremony typically includes formal remarks from the Dean, faculty, student leaders, and special guests. We are honoured that the MLA will be delivering remarks at the ceremony, helping to inspire the next generation ►

- of legal professionals and reaffirm our commitment to mentorship, professional excellence, and local engagement.

7. Backpack to Briefcase: Navigating 5 Areas of Law

Connecting Students to the Profession — Fall 2025

This fall, the Middlesex Law Association is proud to support the return of *Backpack to Briefcase: Navigating 5 Areas of Law*, a dynamic career-building event designed exclusively for Western Law students.

Organized in partnership with Christina McCreery (Legal Counsel, City of London) and Shawna Ferguson (Director of Development, Western Law), this engaging session features a moderated panel discussion followed by a catered networking mixer.

Students will hear directly from five local practitioners whose careers span criminal law, real estate law, in-house counsel, government law, and small firm/general practice—offering a broad but practical glimpse into day-to-day legal work across sectors.

More than a recruitment event, *Backpack to Briefcase* aims to demystify the early years of legal practice by providing candid insights into:

- Transitioning from academic learning to applied legal work
- Navigating articling, mentorship, and career pivots
- Building confidence and resilience in varied legal environments
- Understanding pathways beyond Bay Street

MLA's role in this initiative is twofold:

Support & Sponsorship – We are proud to contribute resources and help create a welcoming, professional environment for student networking.

Bridge-Building – We see this as a key opportunity to connect students with the Middlesex bar—to help the next generation see that successful, fulfilling legal careers are possible right here in our region.

This fall's launch is anticipated to be a flagship event in MLA's student engagement efforts. If you're interested in participating as a future panelist or mentor, or in attending the event as a guest, let us know!



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Jacques and the Flames of Redemption



Contributed by:
James Zegers

In the heart of the bustling city of Riverton, life moved with a rhythm all its own, a symphony of daily hustle and constant motion. Among its many inhabitants, Jacques, a spirited Brussels Griffon with a scruffy, endearing face and eyes that sparkled with intelligence, was well-known and loved by all—except for one. Officer Harold Grimes, a gruff and stern policeman, had a reputation for his no-nonsense demeanor and a heart seemingly as hard as the pavement he patrolled.

Jacques belonged to a kind-hearted librarian named Lily, who often took him to the Riverton Courthouse, where she volunteered on weekends. The courthouse was a grand old building, its towering columns and intricate stonework standing as a testament to justice and order. Inside, the echo of footsteps and the rustle of paperwork intermingled with the scent of polished wood and old books.

Officer Grimes, known for his strict adherence to rules, had little patience for Jacques. Despite the dog's friendly nature, Grimes dismissed him as a mere distraction. Jacques, however, was undeterred by the officer's gruff exterior, greeting him with an enthusiastic wag of his tail and an inquisitive tilt of his head every time they crossed paths.

One fateful autumn afternoon, the courthouse buzzed with activity as usual. The sun cast a warm glow through the ornate windows,

illuminating the bustling corridors. Lily was busy organizing books in the small courthouse library while Jacques lounged contentedly by her side, his wiry coat a cozy blanket against the cool marble floor.

Suddenly, the shrill blare of a fire alarm pierced the air, sending a jolt of panic through the building. Smoke began to curl ominously from the far end of the hallway, signaling a fire that was quickly spiraling out of control. People scrambled to evacuate, their hurried footsteps echoing off the walls as they made for the exits.

In the midst of the chaos, Officer Grimes took charge, ensuring everyone was accounted for and safely evacuated. But as the smoke thickened, obscuring vision and choking the air, he realized that someone was missing—Lily was still inside.

Grimes hesitated for a brief moment, weighing the risks. Jacques, sensing the urgency, sprang to his feet, his instincts guiding him through the smoke-filled corridors. With a sharp bark, he alerted Grimes to follow him, their shared urgency forging an unspoken bond.

Despite his small stature, Jacques navigated the labyrinthine hallways with remarkable agility, his compact frame allowing him to move swiftly beneath the cloud of smoke. The smoke was stifling, making it difficult to see and breathe, but Jacques pressed on, driven by an unwavering loyalty.

Finally, they found Lily in the library, disoriented and struggling to find her way out. Grimes quickly took charge, guiding her to the safety of the exit.

As they emerged into the crisp autumn air, the courthouse behind them a silhouette against the flames, relief washed over them.

The fire was soon contained, but the experience left an indelible mark on Officer Grimes. Standing outside the courthouse, watching the firefighters work, he glanced down at Jacques, who sat by his side, tongue lolling and eyes bright with satisfaction.

"Thank you, Jacques," Grimes muttered, his voice gruff but genuine. The words were simple, yet they carried a weight of gratitude and newfound respect.

From that day forward, Officer Grimes was a changed man. His stern facade softened, and he became a fixture at the park, where he would often be seen tossing a frisbee to Jacques, the two of them enjoying the simple pleasures of life.

Jacques had not only saved a life that day; he had ignited a fire of change in the heart of a man who had long been hardened by the world. In doing so, he reminded everyone in

Riverton of the power of loyalty, courage, and the ability to touch even the most guarded hearts with the warmth of friendship.

Human Minds & Machine Learning

Contributed by:
Middlesex Law Association

Will AI Take a Lawyer's Job? A Clear-Eyed Look at the Promise and the Peril

Artificial intelligence isn't a distant threat or an optional add-on—it's already woven into how law is practiced, how clients think, and how firms operate. A 2025 LexisNexis Canada survey found that 93% of Canadian lawyers are now aware of generative AI tools, and over half have already used them in their legal work. Tools like Lexis+ AI, Harvey, and ChatGPT are now assisting with everything from legal research and contract analysis to summarizing discovery and drafting first-pass memos.

And yet, most law firms are still playing catch-up. According to the American Bar Association's 2024 Tech Survey, fewer than 30% of firms have formal AI usage policies, even as junior lawyers increasingly rely on these tools to manage rising client expectations and shrinking timelines.

So, is AI coming for legal jobs? The answer is complicated—and urgent.

Why AI Could Be Good News

The case for AI is compelling: automation offers real, measurable gains in efficiency. Routine tasks—like generating contracts, reviewing documents, or drafting research memos—can now be done in minutes instead of hours. This "productivity windfall" doesn't just benefit law firms—it also reduces the cost of legal services for clients and may even help improve access to justice for underserved populations.

Some lawyers are already carving out entirely new practice areas that didn't exist five years ago—offering services like AI policy development, algorithm auditing, and regulatory compliance consulting. And for many, AI presents an opportunity to refocus on what matters most: strategic thinking, client relationships, negotiation, and courtroom advocacy—the human elements of lawyering that machines can't replicate.

Why You Should Still Be Cautious

But AI is far from risk-free. Across Canada and the U.S., courts have already sanctioned lawyers who filed AI-drafted pleadings riddled with "hallucinated" case law. Without proper oversight, generative AI can introduce errors, bias, or confidentiality breaches—especially when tools are used without clear understanding or without strong internal controls.

There's also growing concern about the effect of AI on legal training and job progression. If first drafts are being handled by machines, how will articling students and young associates learn the ropes? There's a real risk that the entry-level pyramid will flatten, and the next generation of lawyers will lose essential development opportunities.

And while AI may speed up production, it also adds new pressures: digital fatigue, heightened expectations, and an always-on workflow that threatens the mental health of already-overburdened professionals.

The Verdict: AI Won't Replace Lawyers—But It Will Replace Some Legal Work

Experts agree: AI isn't about replacing lawyers entirely—it's about replacing specific tasks within the legal workflow. McKinsey & Company estimates that up to 60% of a lawyer's daily tasks—especially those involving document-heavy analysis—could eventually be automated. That doesn't mean mass unemployment. But it does mean that lawyers will need new skills: the ability to verify AI output, critically evaluate sources, and guide clients through complex ethical terrain shaped by algorithms.

In short: AI won't replace lawyers—but lawyers who embrace AI will replace those who don't.

Join the Conversation: MLA's AI & Law Summit – Fall 2025

To help our members prepare, the Middlesex Law Association is hosting a major AI & Law Summit this fall. This half-day event will bring together lawyers, technologists, educators, and regulators to unpack the real-world impact of AI on legal practice—both the promise and the pressure.

Speakers and full agenda will be announced later this summer. In the meantime, we're inviting members to help shape the event:

Tried a tool that worked—or didn't? Tell us. Have a great speaker, product, or case study to recommend? Let us know.

Interested in joining the planning group? Reach out to cle@middlaw.on.ca

Let's build a legal future that's smart, ethical, resilient, and unmistakably human. Watch your inbox and the MLA website for early-bird registration.

Law Society of Ontario

Bencher Update June 2025



Contributed by:
Karen Hulan and Kevin Ross

In this summer edition of the Snail, we are highlighting just some of the recent and upcoming events at the Law Society. Please visit the Law Society website to learn more about these and other issues.

On June 18, 2025, Peter Wardle was re-elected as Treasurer of the Law Society of Ontario. We thank Peter for his leadership over the last year and in the year ahead.

Law Society Awards

The annual Law Society Awards ceremony was held on May 28. It is always an inspiring evening to hear from those who are making significant contributions to our profession. We again offer our congratulations to all award recipients. Two of the 13 recipients may be well known to the local bar. Yola Ventresca (Managing Partner, Lerner London) received the Laura Legge Award in recognition of her leadership in law, and Dr. Christopher Waters (Faculty of Law, University of Windsor) was awarded the Law Society Medal for his significant contribution to the profession.

You can read more about the awards and the recipients [here](#). The link also provides information about the nomination process. We encourage you to nominate a colleague. The Call for Nominations for the 2026 Awards is now open and the deadline is December 12, 2025.

Law Society Tribunal Update

The Law Society Tribunal is an independent adjudicative body that hears and decides regulatory matters

between the Law Society and Ontario's lawyers and paralegals. The Tribunal reports to Convocation through the Law Society's Tribunal Committee in an annual report. The report provides an overview of the types of cases and penalties the Tribunal decided over the previous year. You can read the 2024 report [here](#). The Law Society Tribunal also releases an annual report on its website to provide information to the public about the scope of its work. That report was released in June and can be found [here](#).

Governance Review Task Force Update

The work of the Governance Review Task Force continues as outlined in a three-stage Action Plan which includes implementation of the recommendations of the Honourable Dennis O'Connor and broader governance review to improve transparency and accountability. The Law Society has retained a Convocation approved governance expert, Dr. LeBlanc to assist in drafting key governance documents. The Task Force presented a detailed status report at the June 25 Convocation and it is now posted on the [website](#).

Professional Regulation Update

In May 2025, Convocation approved the report of the Professional Regulation Committee recommending additional information to be reported by licensees and to be added to the lawyer and paralegal directories. The report can be found [here](#). The amendments were approved in principal and the Professional Regulation Committee will return to Convocation with by-law

amendments to enact the changes and provide further information regarding implementation.

Other reports posted in recent months include those from the Futures Committee, the Paralegal Standing Committee, and the Audit and Finance Committee. You can always find reports posted on the [website](#).

Upcoming Events

The Law Society's 2025 Equity Summit will be held on September 19, 2025. It will showcase the work of those who received research grants to address issues of equity and reconciliation with the profession, and will include a keynote panel discussion on the Rule of Law, Equity and Reconciliation. You can read more about the recipients and their areas of research on the [website](#).

Become Involved

The Law Society's Coach and Advisor Network (CAN) is seeking applications from licensees interested in becoming a coach or advisor. As a coach and advisor, you can help colleagues and earn CPD credits. Time commitments can range from one 30-minute phone call for advisors or four hours over a three-month term for coaches. You can learn more about how to become a coach or advisor and submit your application [online](#).

Ways to Stay Informed

There are several ways for you to stay informed about issues facing the LSO. You may attend Convocation by accessing links on the [website](#). The agenda is available online and the Law Society also circulates a Licensee Update following each Convocation. You can also follow the LSO on LinkedIn, X and Facebook.

We wish you a safe and happy summer.

Upcoming Events

MLA Event Calendar: Summer & Fall 2025

As the legal landscape evolves, so does our events calendar. The Middlesex Law Association invites you to connect, learn, and celebrate through a dynamic lineup of professional and social gatherings. Mark your calendars and join us!

July 24 – Women’s Networking Evening

**Elmwood Lawn Bowling Club,
5:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

An inspiring evening of connection and mentorship across generations of women in law. Featuring keynote remarks from Associate Chief Justice Jeanine LeRoy. Come ready for lawn bowling, laughter, and leadership. Flat, closed-toe shoes required.

[Register here](#)

August 13 – MLA Golf Tournament

FireRock Golf Course

Tee off with colleagues, judges, and friends for a day of sport, sunshine, and strategic small talk. Prizes, laughter, and long drives guaranteed. Great for networking across practice areas.

[Register here](#)

August 29 – Mentorship Dinner

Abruzzi

A cross-generational dinner pairing seasoned legal professionals with newer calls and students. An evening focused on dialogue, candid insight, and fostering meaningful mentorship in the Middlesex legal community.

[Register here](#)

September 18 – Health Law Conference

London Club

This half-day CPD dives into pressing issues in health law: capacity, consent, privacy, MAiD, mental health, and emerging ethical dilemmas. Ideal for practitioners in health, estates, litigation, and policy. Registration details to follow.

September 23 – Opening of the Courts

Museum London

The ceremonial launch of the 2025–26 court year. Join judiciary, crown, and counsel to reflect, reconnect, and recognize excellence. Reception and awards follow. Formal attire recommended. Registration details to follow.

October 6 – AI & the Law Conference

London Club

A first-of-its-kind MLA event exploring AI’s disruptive (and promising) role in legal practice. Topics include ChatGPT ethics, algorithmic bias, and AI in document review. Get ahead of the curve before it rewrites the rules. Registration details to follow.

October 29 – Real Estate & Wills & Estates Conference

London Club

A dual-track CPD covering evolving trends in property law, estate planning, probate challenges, and digital wills. Featuring local experts and practice-ready materials. Registration details to follow.

December 11 – MLA Holiday Social

London Club

Celebrate the close of a landmark year with good cheer, good food, and great company. A seasonal favourite filled with laughs, gratitude, and a bit of year-end magic. Registration details to follow.

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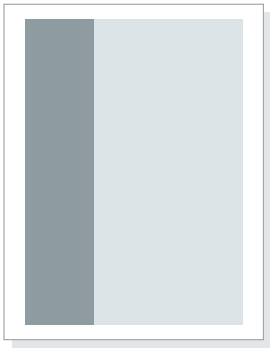
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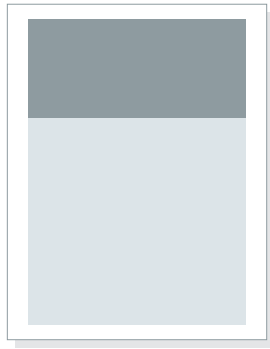
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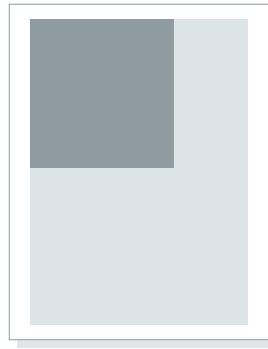
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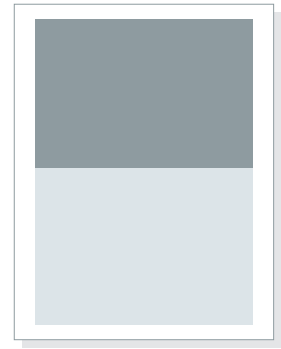
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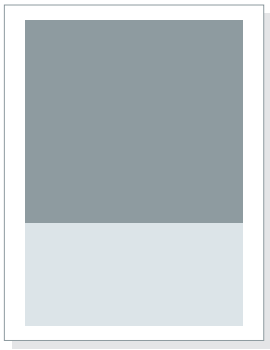
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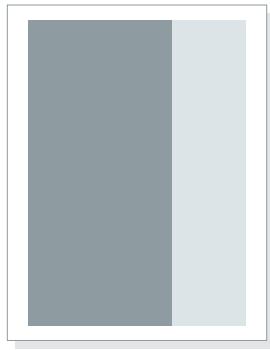
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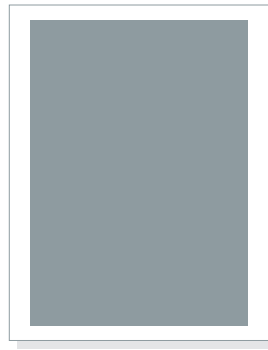
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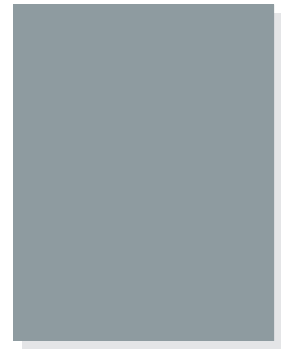
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