HRLSC

Human Rights Legal Support Centre

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

CAJDP

Centre d'assistance juridique en matière de droits de la personne

Ontario

Land Acknowledgement

The Human Rights Legal Support Centre (HRLSC) provides services throughout Ontario and has lawyers located in Toronto, Guelph, Hamilton, London, Thunder Bay, and Windsor.

Accordingly, we acknowledge our presence on the traditional territories of the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg, Attawandaron and Leni-Lunaape, the Métis homeland and particularly the Mississaugas of the Credit.

The place now called Ontario is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work and operate in this land.

The HRLSC also recognizes and acknowledges we are in the territory subject to the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Anishinaabeg and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the land and waters of the Great Lakes region.

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Message from the Chair

Ontarians face the essential challenge of ensuring equity is integrated into their post-pandemic recovery. We must ensure that future crises do not reproduce or magnify the vulnerability of marginalized communities as we have seen during COVID-19.

This unprecedented recovery period is an important opportunity for introspection regarding Ontario's human rights network. This network, which consists of our organization, the Human Rights Legal Support Centre (HRLSC) along with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTO) and the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC), is also referred to as the "Three Pillars" of the Province's human rights system: a vital upholding and advancing equality rights across the province.

Throughout the pandemic, the HRLSC proved itself uniquely positioned to address the urgent needs of people across Ontario experiencing inequities, *in real time*. We provided prompt and accessible summary advice, used early intervention efforts to resolve conflicts before formal complaints would be necessary, helped safeguard rights by promoting public awareness of human rights and launched informed, evidence-based litigation.

We did this work in tandem with our stakeholder communities. Along with our academic partners, these stakeholders included individuals who are Indigenous, racialized, identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, are from faith groups, who have disabilities, are newcomers to Canada, or have identities that intersect between these many communities.

The HRLSC is a shining example of stellar client services and excellent case settlement outcomes. As the Province transitions to full recovery, this moment compels us to explicitly prioritize human rights and imagine future possibilities through innovation and collaboration to augment services for the benefit of the entire system.

We are at a juncture where we can cocreate improved and integrated services to help alleviate pressures felt by the Province's Three Pillars and ensure that the needs of all Ontarians are met. To achieve these goals, we must capitalize on the integral role of the HRLSC in providing high-quality, accessible, efficient, and culturally sensitive legal services.

On behalf of the HRLSC Board of Directors, I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the HRLSC's staff and executive team, who remained motivated and dedicated to advancing human rights despite challenging and fluctuating circumstances. We celebrate your many successes, from the frontlines of handling the thousands upon thousands of calls, to mentoring law students, to resolving and winning cases and, importantly, ensuring that communities feel that their human rights are respected. I would also like to thank Mary Joe Freire for her dedicated leadership last year when she served as Interim Chair providing valuable guidance and steady support to the HRLSC Board and executive team.

The HRLSC is a stalwart enabler and enforcer of human rights, and I am honoured to serve as its Chair.

Ena Chadha, LL.B, LL.M.
Chair of the Board

Message from the Executive Director

The 2021/22 fiscal period continued to be extremely challenging due to COVID-19. Even in the face of the ongoing pandemic, the HRLSC remained prepared to respond and continue the work of protecting Ontarians from discrimination and harassment. During 2021/22 we witnessed ongoing instances, news coverage, and public discourse on hate crimes and systemic discrimination committed against racialized and other marginalized communities.

At the HRLSC, we experienced a notable increase in disability-related cases and alleged discrimination in the areas of services, goods, and facilities.

The HRLSC adapted to the disruptive impact of COVID-19. Hearings and scheduling meetings remained extremely low because of the pandemic. Yet, the social impacts generated by COVID-19 brought a resurging number of intake calls, as well as continued public interest in, and need for, access to justice at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTO). In this environment, and as always, the HRLSC resourcefully pursued justice for clients.

Two cases we have chosen to profile this year are the:

- enforcement decision of *Robert Cater v. Gestion Claude L'Heureux Inc., o/a Canadian Tire 422*, 2021 HRTO 254; and
- mediation settlement of S.B. v. Scooters Roller Palace.

Details of these and other highlighted cases, are included in the Notable Hearings and Settlements sections of this report.

It was also a time of transition embodied by technological, legal, and organizational changes.

During the period of COVID-19 related disruptions at the HRTO, we continued to provide our services in anticipation of, and alignment with, Ontario's reopening plan. A key achievement of this effort was our continued work virtually with minimal disruption to services. While still working remotely in 2021/22, we conducted public legal education across the province, provided in-depth legal services, and expanded the development of our digital tools.

Through this work, we ensured that communities and individuals at risk experiencing discrimination and harassment better knew and understood their rights under Ontario's *Human Rights Code* (the *Code*). We also assisted clients with early resolution of their cases and prepared for the eventual return of merit hearings at the HRTO.

Also, during this fiscal period, consistent with our commitment to digital modernization, the HRLSC built on the initial successes of its online telephone system. In 2021/22, work commenced to redesign our website and develop a new client portal system. These initiatives aim to increase the reach of our online resources and augment client support.

Another high mark for the HRLSC this past fiscal period was celebrating ten years of partnership with Osgoode Hall Law School in the Anti-Discrimination Intensive Program (ADIP). ADIP provides experiential learning for law students working with mentors at the HRLSC. This milestone provided the occasion to reflect on the partnership as well as ADIP’s impact across Ontario’s human rights system and beyond.

On this note, we continue looking towards the future of the Three Pillars of the *Code* in Ontario. The HRLSC continues to prepare itself for the full renewal of operations at the HRTO, the corresponding increase in scheduled hearings, and the resumption of proceedings.

Sharmaine Hall,
Executive Director

What We Do: Mandate and Services

Mandate and Services

The HRLSC is an independent agency funded by the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General to provide human rights advice and legal support services throughout the Province.

Legislative Mandate

Pursuant to the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (*Code*), the HRLSC provides advice, assistance, and legal services to individuals whose rights may have been infringed under the *Code*. The HRLSC is required to “establish and administer a cost effective and efficient system” to provide services throughout Ontario “using such methods of delivering the services as it believes are appropriate” (*Code*, ss. 45.12, 45.13).

Vision

The HRLSC strives to be a leader in advancing equality, in protecting human rights, and in supporting every person’s right to live and work with dignity and respect.

Mission

The HRLSC advances equality and protects human rights by providing a range of accessible, high quality legal and support services to those who have faced discrimination contrary to the *Code*.

What is Discrimination?

Discrimination means treating someone differently and unfairly because of a personal characteristic such as race, disability, age and/or gender.

There are 17 personal characteristics upon which discrimination is prohibited under the *Code*. These grounds are protected in five distinct areas of society, known as social areas, which are also included in the *Code*.

Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination

- Age
- Ancestry
- Citizenship
- Colour
- Creed (religion)
- Disability
- Ethnic origin
- Family status
- Gender expression
- Gender identity
- Marital status
- Pardoned criminal record (employment)
- Place of origin
- Race
- Sex (including pregnancy and sexual harassment)
- Sexual orientation
- Receipt of social assistance (housing)

Social Areas of Activities for Discrimination

- Employment
- Housing
- Contracts
- Services, goods and facilities
- Unions or occupational and professional associations

> "Services were amazing! Helpful every step." **- HRLSC client**

HRLSC Services

The HRLSC provides free legal advice and support services to individuals across Ontario who may have experienced discrimination on the basis of one or more of the grounds prohibited under the *Code* in relation to one or more of the five protected social areas.

The HRLSC also helps people who have human rights concerns by:

- providing legal advice in 140 languages including French, American Sign Language, Cree, Oji-Cree, Mohawk, and Ojibway;
- offering a toll-free telephone advice service that helps callers: identify if they have experienced discrimination, harassment or reprisal; understand their options; and decide if they should take legal action;
- assisting clients with:
  - advice and representation;
  - early resolution of situations involving discrimination, harassment or reprisal;
  - filing human rights applications, motions, and submissions at the HRTO;
  - negotiating settlements;
  - attending HRTO mediations and hearings; and
  - enforcing HRTO orders.
- providing a pathway to Ontario's human rights legal system through up-to-date and user-friendly online resources available on the HRLSC website and social media platforms;
- conducting educational outreach to community and service organizations to increase understanding of prohibited discrimination and harassment, the rights and responsibilities set out in the *Code*, and Ontarians' legal options; and
- ensuring Indigenous people can receive legal advice and support from an Indigenous staff person. The HRLSC provides Indigenous peoples with culturally appropriate, safe, and accessible services.

A 2021 Milestone: ADIP's 10th Anniversary!

The Anti-Discrimination Intensive Program (ADIP) celebrated a decade of operations in 2021/22.

Each year, in partnership with Osgoode Law School, the HRLSC's ADIP provides up to 12 second-year and third-year law students with intensive training in anti-discrimination and administrative law. While working at the HRLSC, ADIP students are assigned a mentor lawyer. ADIP also offers Indigenous law students meaningful experiences working with Indigenous clients within Ontario's provincial human rights framework.

In addition to their clinical placement, students participate in an academic seminar and ongoing skills development sessions, including:

- learning how to understand, critically assess, and think constructively about prohibitions on discrimination and their impact on society, as well as the challenges of ensuring access to remedies for individuals and disadvantaged communities;
- gaining specialized knowledge of human rights, anti-discrimination, and administrative law; and
- applying their skills in legal research and drafting, interviewing, advising clients, dispute resolution, litigation, and enforcing decisions and settlements.

On the occasion of this program's milestone anniversary, the HRLSC brought together ADIP alumni, mentors, administrative staff, and faculty from Osgoode Hall Law School. The celebration began in June 2021 when the HRLSC's summer cohort of ADIP students and HRLSC staff honoured the contributions of ADIP's Academic Director Bruce Ryder. Professor Ryder was ADIP's first director.

In September, the HRLSC launched a social media campaign celebrating ADIP's 10-year journey. This campaign included a new celebratory ADIP video capturing the perspectives of the current and former students, mentors, and professors who have played an important role in this experiential learning and contribution to human rights at the HRLSC.

> **I see one big benefit of being part of ADIP as a law student is that it shows you pretty quickly that practicing in this area of law is a choice you can make... Ten years in, our experiences with the Osgoode partnership affirm that ADIP is integral to training the next generation of human rights lawyers.**
>
> **- Janina Fogels, former HRLSC counsel and ADIP Coordinator**

Organizational Activities

HRLSC's Community Engagement Activities

The Chair of the HRLSC:

- provided insights as a panelist at "Can Tougher Hate Speech Laws Stem the Tide of Hate: Examining Bill C-36" hosted by Toronto Metropolitan University's Centre for Free Expression;
- gave the keynote address at the Ontario Bar Association's public service careers event; discussed the impact of the *Eldridge* case on disability and human rights law as part of a speakers' series at the University of Saskatchewan College of Law; and
- participated in a forum on "Colonialism in Modern Times: A Canadian Law School Conference, Human Rights for Some; Modern Colonialism in Ontario and Beyond" convened by Queen's University and the Canadian Bar Association.

The HRLSC's Executive Director:

- presented on the "Duty to Accommodate" at an Osgoode Hall professional development event; and
- informed strategies for managing delays in administrative proceedings at the Law Society of Ontario's "Six Minute Administrative Law and Practice 2022" professional development program.

The HRLSC's legal counsel:

- outlined notable human rights decisions at the Ontario Bar Association's 2021 "Human Rights Update" event;
- provided information about the mandate and work of the HRLSC at a University of Windsor session on advocacy before the HRTO;
- participated in the Law Society of Ontario's "10th Human Rights Summit."; and presented to the Association of Human Rights Lawyers on the subject of Notices of Intent to Dismiss at the HRTO.

A Director of the HRLSC Board presented on "Addressing Anti-Black Racism in the Post-Secondary Environment, Moving from Theory to Practice" at the University of Guelph-Humber's Equity and Inclusion Dialogue Series.

A member of the Indigenous Service Outreach Committee (ISOC)'s legal staff conducted outreach by providing human rights training at the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre.

The HRLSC's staff participated in "Connaissez vos Droits en Matière d'Emploi"; a conference focusing on human rights in the workplace hosted by Connecture Canada.

Partnerships and Programs

Indigenous Services and Outreach Committee (ISOC)

As part of the HRLSC's ongoing commitment to Canada's journey of reconciliation, ISOC was founded to focus on engaging Indigenous communities across the province. In addition to legal services, ISOC provides outreach to agencies and Indigenous groups, offering free public education sessions on the *Code*.

During the 2021/22 fiscal period, ISOC assessed the HRLSC's progress using the Canadian Bar Association's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Toolkit for law firms. The Toolkit provides a basis to evaluate law firms' efforts to reduce barriers for Indigenous people to access colonial processes like the HRTO. ISOC's report found that the HRLSC's work on reconciliation aligned with the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In addition to drafting this report, ISOC staff provided feedback on the Jurisdiction Primer developed by the Indigenous Human Rights Program (IRHP) with partners Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC) and the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC). The Jurisdiction Primer was created as a resource for service providers in Friendship Centres and legal clinics. The Primer navigates the complexities of federal and provincial jurisdictions when pursuing human rights complaints.

The HRLSC highly values providing culturally appropriate services to Indigenous people. The HRLSC: employs Indigenous staff at all levels of service; ensures mandatory cultural awareness and safety education for all new employees and ADIP students; observes significant events including the Summer Solstice in June and National Day of Truth and Reconciliation in September; incorporates appropriate Indigenous ceremony into legal practices; and strives to maintain Indigenous representation on the Board of Directors. The HRLSC will be developing a Reconciliation Action Plan to enhance the accountability and transparency of HRLSC's reconciliation journey with Indigenous peoples.

During the past fiscal period, further ISOC staff activities included:

- attending the OHRC's IRAG meeting which included a review of the Commission's *Right to Read* report focusing on its section on Indigenous students;

- conducting a public legal education session on the *Code* in collaboration with PBSC and the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre to prepare for the launch of the IHRP clinic;
- participating in a virtual Winter Solstice ceremony/feast with Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic in Thunder Bay; and
- holding a Spring Equinox feast for ISOC members.

Sexual Harassment and Assault Resource Exchange (SHARE)

The HRLSC's partnership with the federal Department of Justice entered its third year in 2021/22. SHARE supports workers who have experienced sexual harassment and/or assault in the workplace. The SHARE team continued its work providing culturally responsive and accessible legal information to diverse workers.

In 2021, 3,618 people participated in SHARE outreach programming and legal services: an increase of 47% from 2020.

SHARE's outreach and education activities were conducted through community organizations, postsecondary institutions, and other service agencies across Ontario. Outreach was directed towards youth, international students, and Indigenous workers primarily through virtual presentations. These presentations addressed topics related to sexual harassment in the workplace and provided legal education.

In 2021/22, SHARE successfully underwent its second program evaluation. The evaluation noted continued positive progress and encouraged SHARE to:

- leverage the success of its outreach to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth;
- conduct increased in-person research, and develop strategies to assist clients retain legal information; and
- continue to enhance program capacity via staff development.

Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic

The Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic offers legal services and representation, trauma-informed counselling and multilingual interpretation to diverse women (self-identified), non-binary, intersex, and Two-Spirit people who have experienced violence. The Schlifer Clinic continues to be an important partner for the HRLSC's SHARE team.

The HRLSC and the Clinic continued co-referrals in 2021/2022. For services including family law and immigration legal advice, support through the family court process, and counselling services the HRLSC referred clients to the Clinic. The Clinic referred clients with human rights complaints to the HRLSC. These mutual referrals reduced client intake time and increased efficiencies for staff and clients in accessing remedies.

Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC)

Community Advisory Group (CAG)

The HRLSC continued to serve as an active member of the OHRC's Community Advisory Group (CAG) in 2021/22.

CAG represents diverse constituencies including community service providers, representatives of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, individuals with lived experiences relating to discrimination prohibited under the *Code*, social justice organizations in Ontario, and the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

The role of CAG is to advise on the OHRC's strategic priorities using feedback from members of the community, service providers, and community organizations.

As an important member of CAG, the HRLSC provided information, insights, and analysis from its 2021/22 cases in support of the OHRC's ongoing work.

Indigenous Reconciliation Advisory Group (IRAG)

Members of ISOC continued to sit as members of the OHRC's Indigenous Reconciliation Advisory Group (IRAG) in 2021/22.

The IRAG includes members of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities from across Ontario and provides information, advice, and feedback on the OHRC's ongoing projects on Indigenous reconciliation.

During 2021/22, the IRAG continued to assist the OHRC to create a strategy based on the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* to address systemic racism, discrimination, and inequality experienced by Indigenous peoples and communities.

Indigenous Human Rights Program (IHRP)

In 2021/22, members of ISOC continued to work closely with PBSC as part of its Indigenous Human Rights Program (IHRP) with the OFIFC. ISOC staff provided human rights training to the lawyers and staff delivering IRHP services. A member of ISOC, along with other Indigenous representatives, serve on the IHRP's Advisory Council.

The purpose of the IHRP is to combat anti-Indigenous racism and discrimination by working with Friendship Centres to increase knowledge and understanding of human rights among urban Indigenous communities, and to empower individuals to make decisions about their rights. The IHRP achieves this goal by providing free human rights legal clinics located directly within Friendship Centres in Ontario.

The IHRP has launched legal clinics within the Odawa and Kinna-aweya Native Friendship Centres in Ottawa and Thunder Bay.

Educational Posters for Ministry of the Solicitor General's Facilities

In 2021/22, the HRLSC engaged the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Ontario (SOLGEN) regarding the human rights under the *Code* of inmates in correctional facilities.

The HRLSC and SOLGEN entered into an agreement for the HRLSC to design and distribute posters throughout SOLGEN facilities that include information about human rights and how to contact the HRLSC for free legal advice on matters relating to the *Code*. The HRLSC presented draft poster for approval within each of SOLGEN's administrative regions.

Initial arrangements were made to supply English, French, and bilingual posters to SOLGEN facilities. Upon request by SOLGEN the HRLSC provided posters in Oji-Cree, Anishinaabemowin, Mohawk, and Inuktitut.

The HRLSC seeks to continue its partnership with SOLGEN to assist with the promotion of human right and its services to inmates moving forward.

Notable Hearings

Cater v. Gestion Claude L'Heureux Inc., o/a Canadian Tire 422, 2021 HTRO 254

The HRLSC represented an employee of a Canadian Tire franchise store who was fired after the store allegedly failed to accommodate the employee's mental health and addiction-related disabilities.

With the assistance of the HRLSC, a settlement agreement was reached which required the store to deliver human rights training for its management and employees and develop an internal human rights policy for the store focused on accommodating workers with mental health and addiction-related disabilities. The training and new policy were to be developed by an expert consultant.

However, the employee alleged that the store had failed to provide proper disability accommodation training or implement a new internal policy as required under the agreement by hiring a consultant who lacked expertise in the *Code*.

The employee filed a new application with the HRTO, alleging the store had breached the settlement agreement.

The HRTO found that:

- the store's internal human rights policy contained language and information contrary to the *Code*;
- the training and new policy failed to follow the terms of the settlement agreement by possibly further stigmatizing and marginalizing individuals with addiction-related disabilities; and
- the consultant hired was not knowledgeable of the *Code*.

The HRTO ordered the store to develop the new training and policies using a consultant with recognized expertise; and pay $2,500 to the employee for the further injury to dignity, feelings, and self-worth.

Armitage v Ottawa Carleton District School Board, 2022 HRTO 252

The applicant, a secondary school student, was harassed and assaulted by a fellow student who engaged in anti-Semitic remarks and symbols against applicant. The fellow student was ultimately suspended and later charged under the *Youth*

Criminal Justice Act. However, the respondent school board informed the applicant that the fellow student would be returning to school immediately following his suspension. The applicant withdrew from in-school learning to attend school virtually.

The HRTO agreed that while the student was not of the targeted creed, the fellow student's remarks and actions engaged discrimination based on creed prohibited under the *Code* and created a poisoned environment for the applicant.

The HRTO found that the school acted appropriately based on the information available at that time and responded promptly and effectively, but that the school did not fully assess the options relating to the fellow student's return or consider the impact on the applicant in permitting the fellow student to return to school.

The HRTO awarded the applicant $4,500 in general damages.

***CA v Thunder Bay Gymnastics Association*, 2021 HRTO 1075**

The applicant was a child who had been involved in a gymnastics club for several years. The applicant's mother disclosed to the club that her child was autistic when considering applying for a more intensive try-out program. The head coach expressed unfounded concerns regarding the applicant's ability to focus and take direction. The coach proposed a personal assessment followed by a two-week trial period to determine if the applicant would be the "right fit" for the program. When the applicant's mother asked about available accommodations, the head coach stated he did not wish to discuss "special treatment."

The HRTO found that the gymnastics club had breached the *Code* by:

- relying on negative stereotypes of autism instead of conducting an individualized assessment of the applicant's needs;
- the insistence by the coach on a trial period and ending further discussions when individualized accommodation was raised; and
- failing to investigate the allegation of discrimination.

Considering the applicant's vulnerability as a young child with a disability and the important role that gymnastics had played in the child's life, the HRTO awarded the applicant $3,500 to compensate for the violation of his rights under the *Code*.

Asim v Cybersecurity Umbrella Corporation, 2022 HRTO 321

The parties agreed to settle an application before the HRTO a in which the employee alleged sexual harassment in the workplace. The settlement agreement required the employer to pay the employee $16,000, sign a letter of regret, and undertake anti-sexual harassment training.

Shortly after the deadline for payment of the first installment, the company sent an email noting that it was having financial difficulties and would need more time to pay. HRLSC counsel advised that the employer could comply with the other terms of the settlement agreement at no cost. The employee filed an application alleging that the settlement agreement had been contravened.

The HRTO found that the respondent had breached the settlement agreement; and ordered payment of an additional $5,000 in general damages.

Notable Settlements

Many clients choose to settle their applications rather than go through a hearing at the HRTO. The HRLSC helps clients negotiate settlements directly between the parties or at HRTO mediations. The terms of settlement are usually confidential and may include individual remedies such as financial compensation and/or public interest remedies such as revised workplace policies on discrimination and harassment or on accommodation of disabilities.

In the summaries below, we have changed some of the identifying details and anonymized the personal and corporate identities of the parties. We present the facts as alleged in settlement agreements: the applicants do not withdraw their allegations and the respondents do not acknowledge any of the facts as alleged.

Young Girl's Wheelchair Deemed Unsafe at Roller-Rink

A teenage girl represented by the HRLSC reached a settlement with a roller-skating business in Mississauga after she was prevented from roller skating in her wheelchair.

The applicant's mother was planning an outing for the applicant and her friends. She was told by the roller-skating business's staff that the applicant would not be allowed on the rink due to alleged safety issues.

The roller-skating business settled with the applicant the day before the HRTO hearing. The parties filed a confirmation of settlement with the HRTO and requested that the tribunal issue a consent order.

The settlement agreement included:

- a new accessibility policy for the roller-skating business;
- a plan for enhanced human rights training for all management, current, and future employees; and
- cards posted at the business with information on the *Code*.

Tenant with Mobility Issues Evicted After Hospital Stay

The HRLSC client has mobility issues and uses a wheelchair. She was hospitalized for several months and advised the property manager of her apartment building of her extended stay in hospital.

When the client returned to her apartment, she discovered that all her possessions had been removed including medical supplies essential for independent living. The building manager stated a belief that the client had abandoned her apartment despite the fact that her rent had been paid to the end of the month. The HRLSC sent a demand letter on the client's behalf seeking full reimbursement for the possessions.

The landlord agreed to fully reimburse the client for her losses, which amounted to $19,509.

Support for Tenant Forced to Cancel Medical Appointments due to Elevator Breakdown

The HRLCS client lived in an apartment building. She had mobility issues and when the elevator broke down, she was unable to leave her home. The client had to cancel medical appointments and pay extra fees to have groceries delivered.

The HRLSC negotiated for the landlord to pay the costs of the client's interim accommodations including hotel, meals, and transportation. The landlord also agreed to cover the costs of moving out two weeks early.

Sharing Client Stories:

“The Legal Support Centre has your back!”

Robert did what any of us would do when his mother’s health had a turn for the worse: he took time off to be with her.

Robert’s employer fired him.

The combination of his mother’s medical condition and his employer’s decision was a major setback. “It hit the biggest sore spot,” Robert recalls. “I loved my mom. She put up with so much.”

Robert had previous struggles with addiction and his mental wellness. His mother’s worsening health and his dismissal from work led Robert to fear relapse. Robert’s workplace knew of his health history and concerns about his addiction-related disability but fired him anyway. “They had no respect. They added insult to injury. It was painful.”

The failure of his workplace to accommodate him was a decision that put Robert on a journey for justice to ensure that no one experienced what he had gone through.

Robert called the Ministry of Labour for assistance. He was told that his case sounded like a human rights issue. The Ministry referred Robert to the HRLSC.

When discussing his goals for a resolution, Robert indicated he wanted an expert to provide training to staff and managers at his former workplace about the *Code*. Based on his past experiences with government organizations, Robert was not optimistic. About calling the HRLSC, Robert says: “I was jaded. I didn’t have anyone in authority help me. I wasn’t feeling relief.”

Robert sees things differently today: “I have way deeper respect now.”

Robert explains that the work of the HRLSC staff and counsel made him feel like his legal interests were being looked after. “It felt good to have that sorted out,” he remembers. “It was a long process.”

However, there were still issues at Robert’s workplace including that his employer had failed to hire a qualified expert as required for the settlement of his case. After this failure to uphold their settlement agreement, Robert took his employer to the HRTO.

Robert’s HRLSC counsel successfully ensured that his initial settlement was enforced, with the HRTO ordering the store to hire an individual with bona fide expertise in the *Code* to conduct

I couldn't do it on my own," says Robert. "The moral and emotional support [provided by the HRLSC's staff and lawyer] helped. It would really be difficult on my own."

A year after his case, Robert has begun a new chapter professionally. He also runs a men's support group for addictions. From his experience with his case, Robert has become an avid reader on human rights law and is eager to share his story to empower others to confront discrimination and harassment.

"More people should know about it," Robert agrees.

To encourage anyone who is experiencing discrimination or harassment and is unsure about calling the HRLSC, Robert observes: "A lot of people think, 'Oh my God, I have to face my employer.' The Legal Support Centre has your back," he says.

"It's just one simple call. Don't wait until tomorrow. Turn a dark day into a bright one."

> "The HRLSC put me at ease, let me make decisions for myself, and provided knowledge and insight throughout.
>
> I do not believe I would have got the settlement I desired had it not been for the HRLSC."
>
> **- HRLSC Client**

Organizational Projects

Staff Training

In 2021/22, the HRLSC continued to require training for all new employees:

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (*AODA*): Customer Service, and Information and Communications Standards;
- Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC): Working Together – The *Code* and the *AODA* (human rights training);
- Occupational Health and Safety training;
- LivingWorks START: suicide prevention e-learning; and
- NVision Insight Group – The Path: Your Journey through Indigenous Canada.

HRLSC staff training during the past fiscal period included:

- applied suicide intervention skills, delivered by LivingWorks;
- Islamophobia in the workplace, delivered by the National Counsel of Canadian Muslims;
- Trauma-informed lawyering, delivered by Myrna McCallum, Consultant;
- organizational risk management; delivered by RSM Canada LLP;
- Anti-Black Racism training, delivered by Turner Consulting Group Inc;
- executive and management training, delivered by the Schulich School of Business; and
- mental health first aid, delivered by the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Secure Cloud-Based Telephone System

In 2021/22, the transition by the HRLSC to a cloud-based telephone system increased its phone queue responses by more than 8%.

The cloud-based phone system intake services remain connected, efficient, and robust by providing a call-back option to decrease waiting times for clients thereby reducing reliance on, and the costs of, office hardware and creating a stable web platform that enhances the ability of HRLSC staff to interact with clients.

Website Redevelopment

In 2021, the HRLSC began to design and develop a highly functional, accessible, and easy-to-administer website. The new website also seeks to enhance usability (W3C) and accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1 Level AA), improve ease of site updating, increase site utilization, and integrate new client portal software.

Website development completed in 2021/22 included:

- rewritten and updated HRLSC How-To Guides content;
- technical analysis, as well as research and consultation with staff and stakeholders on the existing website, HRLSC service delivery, and vision for the future site;
- recommendations for the features (including privacy) and design of the new site;
- site design and conceptualization; and
- preparations for initial content migration.

Building, testing, and launching the HRLSC's new website are planned to be completed during the 2022/23 fiscal period.

Client Tracking Tool (CTT) Version 4

The HRLSC updated its Case Management System (CTT) in 2021/22. The new update, Version 4, provides the foundation required to implement the HRLSC's online client portal. The client portal is planned to launch in the next fiscal period.

The CTT V4 update also provided visual enhancements, platform streamlining, and increased protections of client information. The HRLSC conducted user acceptance and regression testing to assess the use of V4 by each staff position and ensure the update would allow CTT to continue operating properly.

Client Portal

In 2021/22, the HRLSC continued to develop its online portal to enhance client access to its services.

Once complete, the client portal will provide clients with an online platform— anytime, anywhere— from which to upload documents and increase access to services and accommodation(s), as needed. The online portal will also provide automated appointment confirmations, reminders, and self-scheduling options for clients.

The online portal will enhance HRLSC workload and case management efficiencies by decreasing call volumes and reducing the administrative work required to process client information. These efficiencies will increase HRLSC staff capacity to engage in priority tasks.

The client portal is planned to be completed during the 2022/23 fiscal period.

COVID-19 Recovery

The HRLSC continued to navigate the pandemic in 2021/22, complying with all government of Ontario public health and re-opening directives.

In 2021/22, the HRLSC continued to make use of video conferencing tools to support clients. Social media channels and the existing website were used to provide educational resources to members of the public, stakeholders, and community partners.

The HRLSC also used effective internal communications to keep staff engaged during the COVID-19 pandemic and Ontario’s re-opening. These communications included regular staff newsletters, a staff survey, virtual staff meetings and gatherings, and the launch of an internal SharePoint focused on providing resources and support to promote employee health and wellbeing.

Analysis of Operational Performance

Overview:

The global COVID-19 pandemic continued to significantly impact the HRLSC's operational performance during the 2021/22 fiscal period.

In August and September 2021, the HRLSC experienced a sharp increase in calls for intake in addition to many calls from Ontarians with questions related to the province's vaccine mandate and COVID-19 public health measures. To inform and appropriately direct callers seeking advice on vaccine mandates and masks, the HRLSC provided additional information and messaging in its phone queues and on its website.

The HRLSC continued in 2021/22 to be impacted by the logistical challenges faced by the HRTO compounded by COVID-19. The HRLSC consequently encountered extensive delays in processing applications and scheduling mediations and hearings. Due to these issues, the HRLSC's clients expressed frustration and a loss of faith in Ontario's human rights system.

> "I got quick, professional representation – over and above. I was assigned an amazing legal rep!"
>
> **- HRLSC Client**

Statistics

18,577

Initial inquiries answered

2038

Individuals receiving in-depth legal assistance

181

Mediations

8

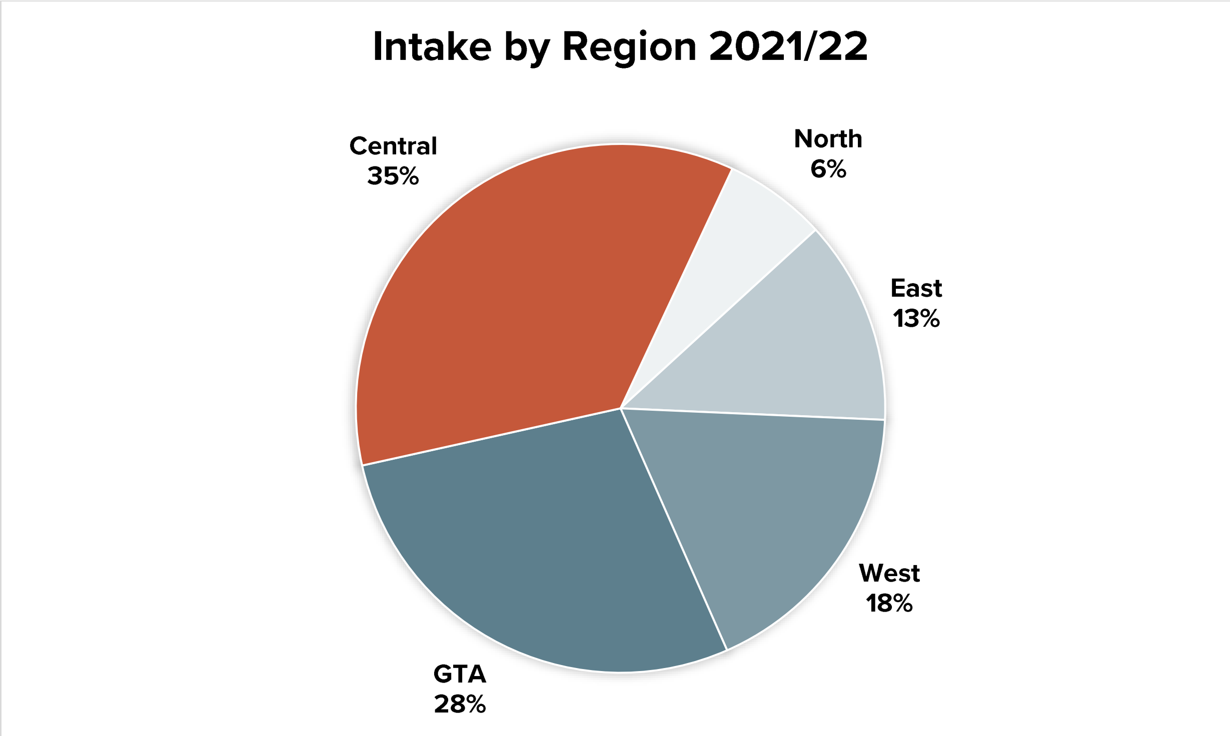
Hearings

180

Settlements

277,029

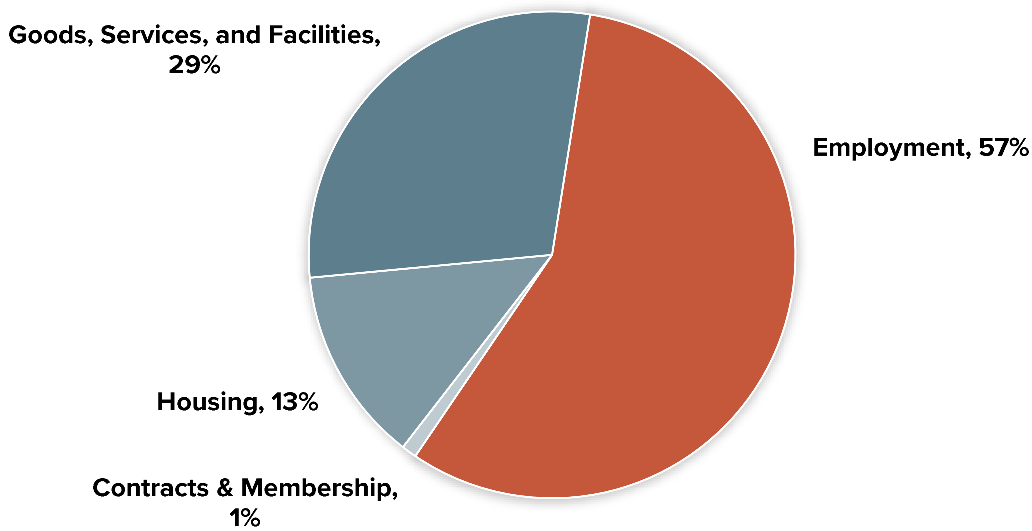
Visits to the HRLSC website



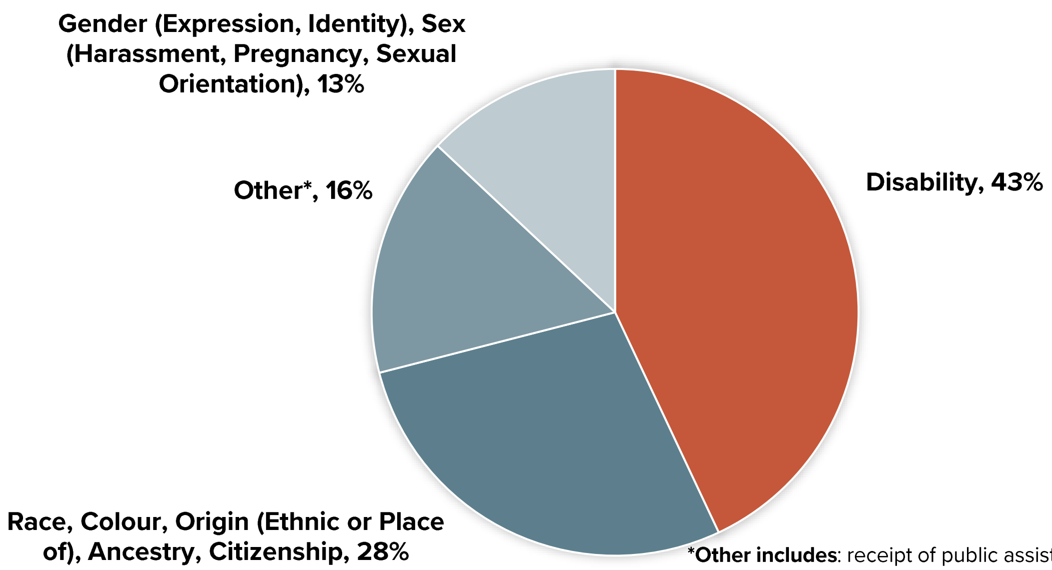
> “I want to express how grateful I am to have discussed my case with the HRLSC. It took a lot of courage for me to make the call. The HRLSC made it much easier by being so patient, kind and understanding. It is with a grateful heart that I thank the HRLSC.”

- HRLSC client

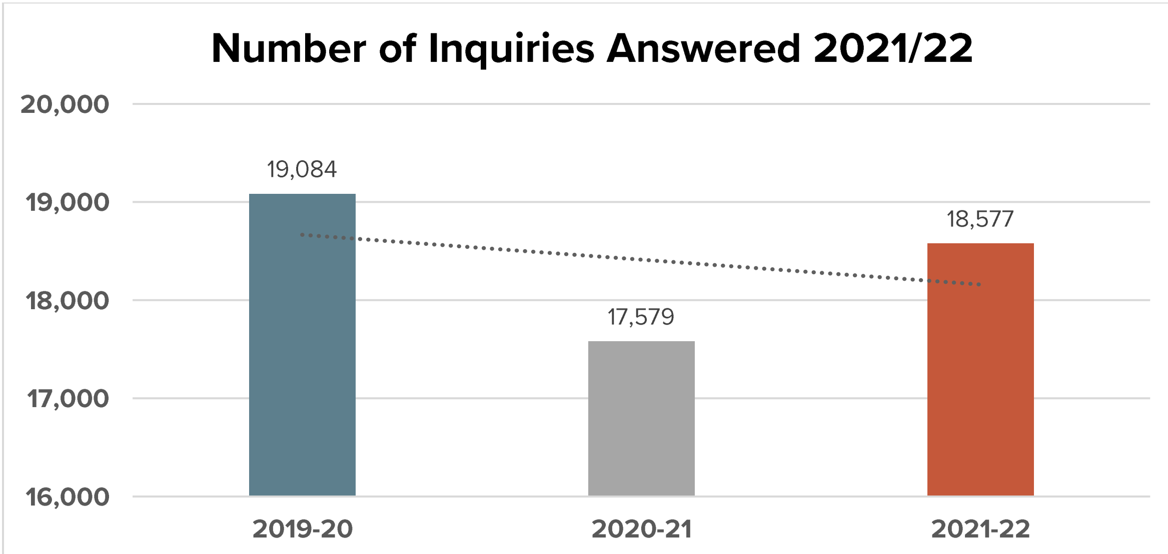
Intake by Social Area 2021/22



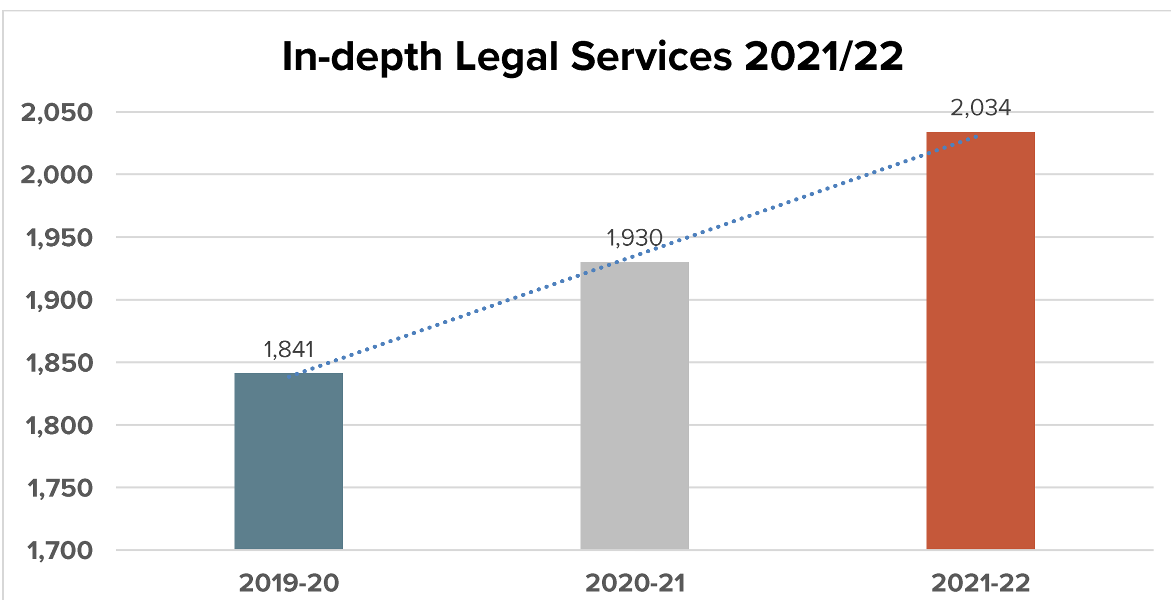
Intake by Grounds of Discrimination 2021/22



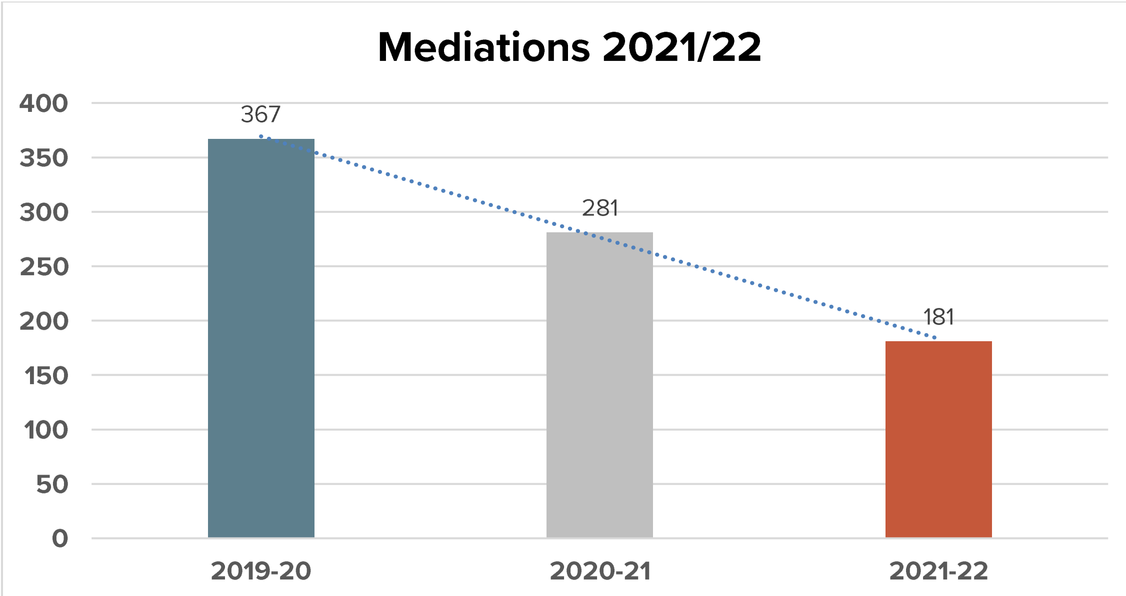
***Other includes**: receipt of public assistance or record of offences, family or marital status, age, reprisal or association, and creed (religion)



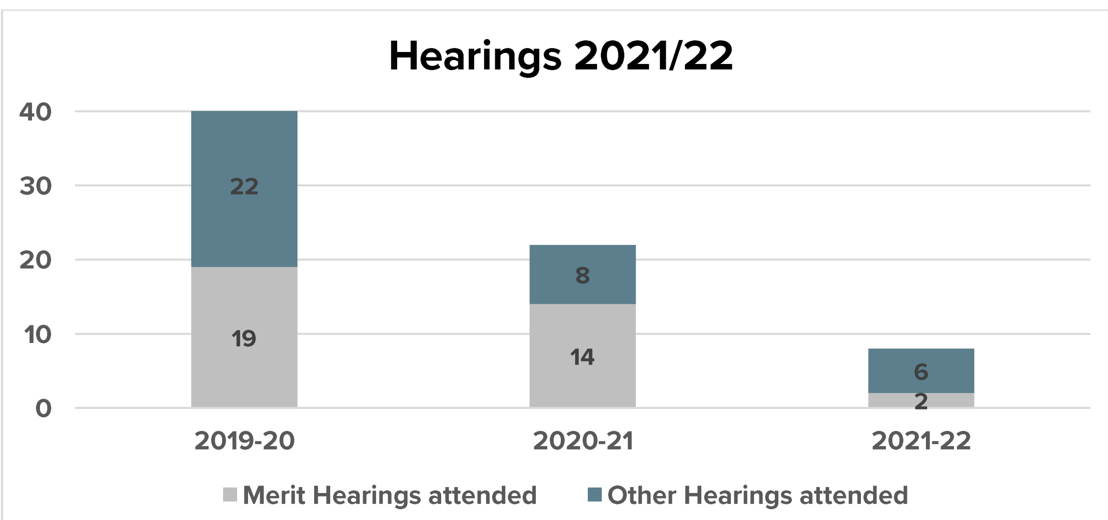
In 2021/22, the HRLSC provided summary advice on 18,577 inquiries: an increase of 5.6% from the 2020/21 fiscal period. This increase is attributable to the Government of Ontario's COVID-19 reopening plan, as well as intake efficiencies gained through implementation of the HRLSC's cloud-based telephone system.



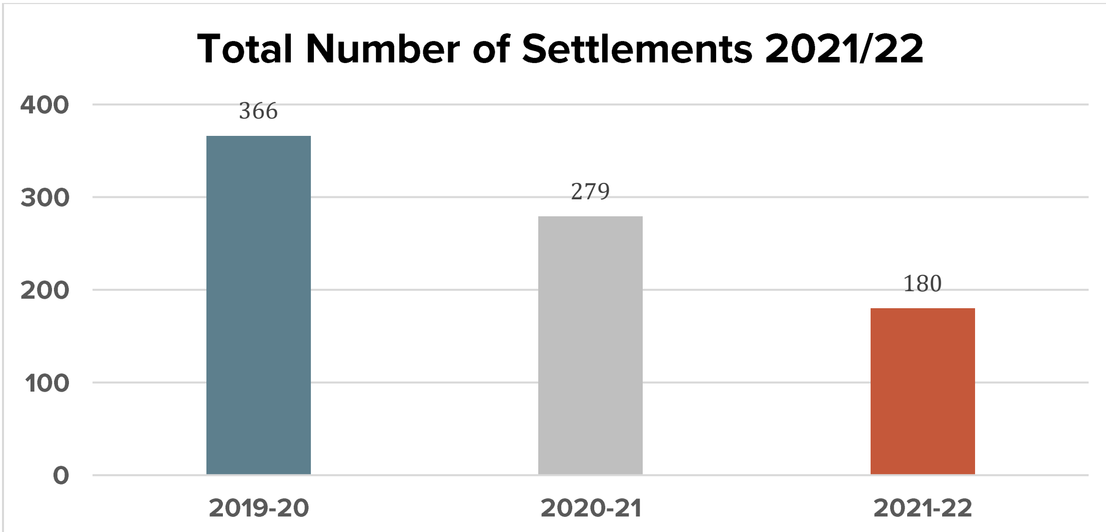
The HRLSC provided in-depth legal services to 2038 individuals who were considering, or had filed, applications to the HRTO: an increase of 55% from the 2020/21 fiscal period.



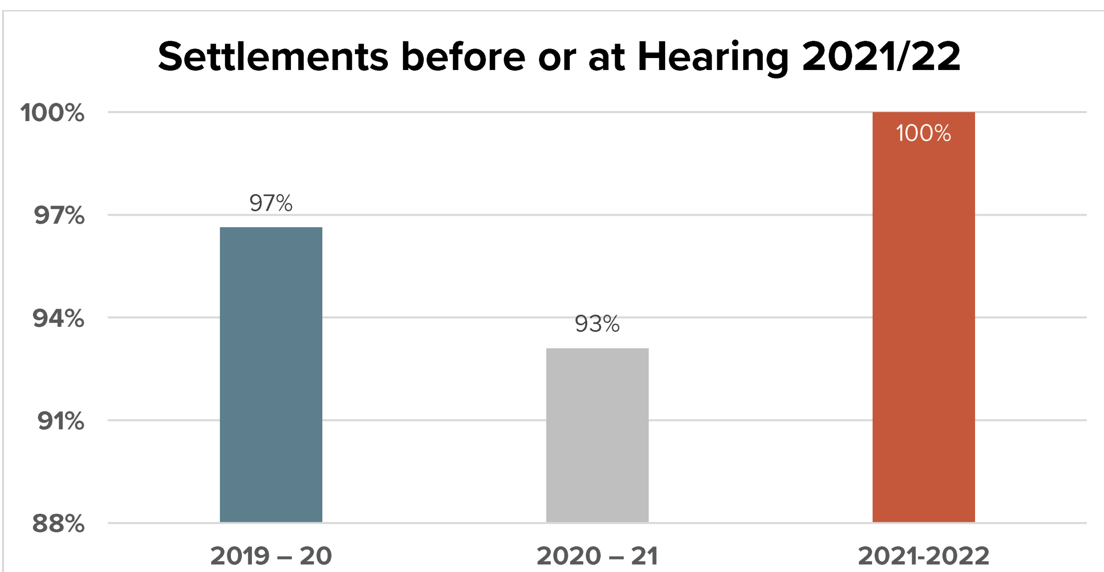
The HRLSC represented 181 individuals in mediation in 2021/22: a decline of 36% from the 2020/21 fiscal period. The percentage of mediations attended by HRLSC staff to provide clients with legal representation declined 50% from the 2020/21 fiscal period.



During the past fiscal period, HRLSC counsel provided representation to clients at 8 preliminary hearings and merit hearings.



The HRLSC settled 180 matters at all stages of the application process in 2021/22: a decrease of approximately 35% from the 2020/21 fiscal period.



During the 2021/22 fiscal period, only two merit hearings were scheduled to proceed. The relatively small number is a result of the continued impact of the global pandemic and the scheduling backlog at the HRTO.

Performance Measures

2021-2022 Achievements

Telephone Answer Rates:

Target: **70%**

Result: **87%**

The HRLSC telephone answer-rate at intake during 2021/22 exceeded its target by 17% and increased 8% from the previous fiscal period. This increase in efficiency and responsiveness can be attributed to the cloud-based telephone system. Clients wait times in the telephone queue were also reduced in 2021/22.

Settlement Rate at Mediation

Target: **66%**

Result: **65%**

The percentage of mediations resulting in settlements in 2021/22 fell just short of its target (1%) and was slightly lower than the previous fiscal period. To address this result, the HRLSC will continue to advocate for an increase in mediations conducted at the HRTO.

Cases Settled Before or at Hearing

Target: **70**

Result: **16**

The number of cases settled before or at hearing was below the target for 2021/22. This decrease is directly attributable to reduced hearings at the HRTO and ongoing issues related to scheduling. The HRTO also continued to operate with less adjudicators during the 2021/22 fiscal period. To mitigate this reduction, the HRLSC will continue to move up the dates of hearings for clients where possible.

Clients Who Rated Service as “Very Good” or “Good”

Target: **85%**

Result: **94%**

In the 2021/22 client surveys, the target percentage of clients rating HRLSC service as “very good” or “good” was exceeded. In addition, 97% of clients surveyed stated that their legal options were explained clearly and that they felt that HRLSC staff/lawyers understood their issue(s). Similar to the past fiscal period’s survey, 94% of clients stated in 2021/22 that they would recommend the HRLSC to other Ontarians in need of legal advice and information about possible *Code*-based discrimination.

Percentage of Cases Settled at Hearing

Target: **75%**

Result: **100%**

All cases that proceeded to an HRTO hearing in 2021/22 were settled at the hearing; exceed the target by 25%. In context, the HRLSC attended only two merit hearings during the 2021/22 fiscal period due to the reduction in the number of mediations at the HRTO and issues related to scheduling. The HRTO continued to operate with a reduced number of adjudicators in 2021/22, impacting its ability to proceed with hearings. To mitigate this the HRLSC will continue to move up the dates of hearings for clients, where possible.

Positive Human Rights Stories in the Media

Target: **10**

Result: **9**

The HRLSC attained 90% of its target of 10 positive references to human rights in the media during 2021/22.This slight non-reaching of target was due in part to the reduced number of merit decisions at the HTRO during the past fiscal period which tend to generate media coverage. The HRLSC will continue to seek out positive media coverage regarding its activities in support of its clients as regular hearing scheduling at the HRTO resumes.

Risk Analysis

COVID-19 Pandemic

The global COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the work of the HRLSC during 2021/22.

Remote work was a key example of how the HRLSC had to manage disruptions. The need to work remotely continued to impact services at the HRLSC and HRTO as neither were permitted to conduct in-person meetings as neither were permitted to conduct in-person hearings under the Province's public health directions that were enacted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. New HRLSC staff and students working remotely were also impacted as adjustments were required to ensure that required technology and training were delivered.

In response to the challenges of working remotely, the HRLSC undertook significant modernization measures to better serve clients including implementing a cloud-based telephone system, beginning upgrading its website, and starting to build an online client portal. The website and portal are planned to be completed in 2022/23.

COVID-19 issues also preoccupied Ontarians in the fall of 2021/22 with inquiries to the HRLSC regarding vaccine and mask mandates greatly increasing call volumes. To mitigate the large number of inquiries relating to COVID-19 and related policies, the HRLSC developed informational materials for use online, in phone messages, and by intake staff. This planning and messaging supported expedited and informative service.

Staffing Changes

The HRLSC experienced increased turnover among its staff during 2021/22. The HRLSC's static budget and growing wage inequities with other government agencies challenged staff recruitment and retention. Some additional challenges included the nature of the labour market in 2021/22: employee-centred, with many employers facing the "great resignation" as worker mobility increased in response to pandemic-related disruptions. To best manage this operational risk, the HRLSC continued providing staff with professional development and training opportunities where possible.

HRTO Operations

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the HRTO during the 2021/22 fiscal period. Pandemic restrictions in place at the HRTO, and the ongoing backlog, delayed the work of the HRLSC particularly on scheduling and conducting mediations and hearings. The HRTO also operated with a reduced complement of adjudicators. Where new appointments occurred, the orientation and training time required for new adjudicators continued to delay processing applications. These delays resulted in a reduced number of mediations and hearings. As HRLSC's workflow directly corresponds to the timing of processing applications, appearances by HRLSC staff at the HRTO were reduced.

In response to these challenges, the HRLSC adjusted its service delivery model to include lawyer interviews at the pre-application stage. This adaptation resulted in increased front-end legal services provided by lawyers.

Also, an increased number of Notices of Intent to Dismiss (NOIDs) were issued in the 2021/22 fiscal period. NOIDs are HRTO-initiated proceedings that identify applications that appear to be outside of the HRTO's jurisdiction. In response to this increase, the HRLSC supported clients by providing information, summary legal advice, and representation in preparing submissions for responses to NOIDs.

Analysis of Financial Operations

Cost Allocation

The HRLSC in 2021/22 effectively managed funds to maintain stability in each major budget area and optimize service delivery. The results accurately reflect service costs:

Expense	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Salaries & Benefits	86%	87%	85%	84%
Operating	13%	13%	14%	15%
Board	1%	1%	1%	1%

Salaries and benefits continued to be the highest allocation of the HRLSC's costs during the 2021/22 fiscal period.

Expenditures were monitored and assessed to ensure appropriate and balanced allocations in each budget area in order to support and maximize services in a cost-effective manner.

Cost Summary

Expense	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
Salaries and Benefits	$ 4,880,405	$ 4,180,009	$ 4,319,934	$ 4,501,831
Operating	$ 749,922	$ 603,024	$ 722,768	$ 811,747
Board	$ 25,919	$ 32,223	$ 46,896	$ 53,037
Total	**$ 5,656,246**	**$ 4,815,256**	**$ 5,089,598**	**$ 5,366,615**

Analysis:

The HRLSC has worked within a static budget since 2016, with the exception of 2019 when the budget was temporarily reduced.

Costs for the 2021/22 fiscal period were effectively managed through monitoring, analysis, and timely decision-making supported by an agile model of service delivery.

The HRLSC made temporary additions to its staff complement to support projects related to a recent government audit and the priorities outlined in the Minister's mandate letter. These additions resulted in higher costs for salaries and benefits during the 2021/22 fiscal period.

The audit recommendations related to both operations and governance. As a result, Board members participated in the review and implementation of many of the recommendations. Increased Board participation resulted in higher Board-related costs in 2021/22.

The increased operating expenses during the 2021/22 fiscal period were due mainly to IT subscriptions renewals supporting IT infrastructure and upgrades.

The most significant financial challenge for the HRLSC in 2021/22 continued to be staff retention, primarily due to non-competitive salaries. The HRLSC continues to meet with MAG to address the inequities. Without an increase to the HRLSC's base budget, reductions in staff and services will be required even as Ontarians' demand for legal advice and support on human rights issues increases.

Fulfillment of Mandate Letter 2021/22

Current Mandate Letter Priorities

The HRLSC's vision, mandate, and core values are aligned with the priorities of the government of Ontario and expectations of MAG. These priorities are communicated to the HRLSC by the Minister via mandate letters.

In MAG's mandate letter to the HRLSC covering the 2020/21 fiscal period, the Attorney General provided direction by outlining several priorities with two key focuses: the responsible use of funds and service standards.

Responsible Use of Funds:

In 2021/22, the HRLSC continued to meet MAG's organization-specific expectations. The HRLSC:

- operated within its budget allocation and in accordance with Agencies and Appointment Directives;
- continued to respond diligently to the recommendations in its 2020 Audit Report;
- outsourced payroll services;
- eliminated its full-time accountant position and outsourced bookkeeping services; and
- held all Board meetings virtually.

Service Standards:

In 2021/22, the HRLSC also continued to meet MAG's organization-specific service standards. The HRLSC:

- implemented the Government of Ontario's COVID-19 reopening plan including re-commencing in-person staff work and client meetings;
- responded in a timely manner to both the continued risks posed by COVID-19 and the challenges experienced by the HRTO;

- explored and implemented digital modernization strategies;
- greatly improved client access to HRLSC services though the cloud-based telephone system which increased the call answer rate and reduced wait times. This system also provided a separate priority phone line for Indigenous clients and prioritized calls from inmates in the queue;
- updated its CTT platform for its online client portal planned to be completed during the 2022/23 fiscal period;
- adapted its legal services to respond to clients' needs in relation to the HRTO's increased use of NOIDs;
- kept Three-Pillar partners abreast of noteworthy trends identified by community stakeholders and from HRLSC case work;
- realigned tasks to ensure Ontarians continued to receive high-quality legal services despite significant staff turnover and delays in filling key positions;
- continued to collect statistical information to inform HRLSC decision-making;
- participated in organizational risk management workshops; and
- shared information readily with MAG via reporting structures.

HRLSC Board of Directors

The HRLSC's Board of Directors possess a wide array of relevant professional expertise and personal experience to best govern the HRLSC and realize its strategic vision. The HRLSC's Board reflect the diversity of Ontario:

Board Member	Position	Term	Total Remuneration for Fiscal Year
Ena Chadha	Chair of the Board	2021 – 2024	$ 13,301
Mary Joe Freire	Interim Chair of the Board (Jul '20 – Aug '21) Vice Chair and Director (Aug '21 – Mar '21)	2021 – 2024	$ 17,468
Patrick Nadjiwan	Director	2020 – 2022	$ 2,438
Martial Moreau	Treasurer and Director	2022 – 2025	$ 6,188
Evelyn Ball	Director	2022 – 2025	$ 4,688
Tamar Witelson	Director	2022 – 2025	$ 3,563
Michelle Tan	Director	2022 – 2025	$ 3,188
Gary Pieters	Director	2021 – 2023	$ 2,250

Audited Financial Statements

Human Rights Legal Support Centre
Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2022

Contents

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Board of Directors of Human Rights Legal Support Centre

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Human Rights Legal Support Centre (the "Centre"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2022, and the statements of operations, net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Centre as at March 31, 2022, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Centre in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Other Matter

The financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2021 were audited by another auditor who expressed an unmodified opinion on those financial statements on July 20, 2021.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Centre's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Centre or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Centre's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Centre's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Centre's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Centre to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants
Oakville, Ontario
Report Date

Human Rights Legal Support Centre
Statement of Financial Position

March 31	2022 General Operations - MAG	2022 Department of Justice Canada	2022 One Time Project Fund	2022 Total	2021 General Operations MAG	2021 Department of Justice Canada	2021 One Time Project Fund	2021 Total
Assets								
Current assets								
Cash	**$ 620,023**	**$ 55,286**	**$ -**	**$ 675,309**	$ 602,563	$ 89,741	$ -	$ 692,304
Accounts receivable	**2,043**	**-**	**-**	**2,043**	3,221	-	-	3,221
HST recoverable	**82,092**	**5,587**	**-**	**87,679**	66,612	3,250	-	69,862
Prepaid expenses	**60,071**	**3,755**	**-**	**63,826**	61,706	4,515	-	66,221
Interfund balance	**(1,848)**	**(53,126)**	**54,974**	**-**	(100,428)	(53,822)	154,250	-
	762,381	**11,502**	**54,974**	**828,857**	633,674	43,684	154,250	831,608
Capital assets (Note 2)	**75,871**	**2,194**	**-**	**78,065**	72,692	5,486	-	78,178
Intangible assets (Note 3)	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	4,677	-	-	4,677
	75,871	**2,194**	**-**	**78,065**	77,369	5,486	-	82,855
	$ 838,252	**$ 13,696**	**$ 54,974**	**$ 906,922**	$ 711,043	$ 49,170	$ 154,250	$ 914,463
Liabilities								
Current								
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	**$ 562,888**	**$ 48,602**	**$ -**	**$ 611,490**	$ 355,281	$ 39,706	$ -	$ 394,987
Accounts payable - MAG	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	50,335	-	-	50,335
	562,888	**48,602**	**-**	**611,490**	405,616	39,706	-	445,322
Net Assets								
Operating fund (Note 7)	**275,364**	**-**	**-**	**275,364**	305,427	-	-	305,427
Department of Justice Canada	**-**	**(34,906)**	**-**	**(34,906)**	-	9,464	-	9,464
Internally restricted fund	**-**	**-**	**54,974**	**54,974**	-	-	154,250	154,250
	275,364	**(34,906)**	**54,974**	**295,432**	305,427	9,464	154,250	469,141
	$ 838,252	**$ 13,696**	**$ 54,974**	**$ 906,922**	$ 711,043	$ 49,170	$ 154,250	$ 914,463

On behalf of the Board of Directors:

____________________ Director ____________________ Director

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre
Statement of Operations

For the year ended March 31	2022 General Operations - MAG	2022 Department of Justice Canada	2022 One Time Project Fund	2022 Total	2021 General Operations MAG	2021 Department of Justice Canada	2021 One Time Project Fund	2021 Total
Revenue								
Ministry of the Attorney General	$ **5,336,200**	$ **-**	$ **-**	$ **5,336,200**	$ 5,185,865	$ -	$ -	$ 5,185,865
Department of Justice Canada	**-**	**455,040**	**-**	**455,040**	-	396,271	-	396,271
Other income	**352**	**-**	**-**	**352**	310	-	-	310
	5,336,552	**455,040**	**-**	**5,791,592**	5,186,175	396,271	-	5,582,446
Expenditures								
Salaries and wages	**3,687,374**	**365,064**	**-**	**4,052,438**	3,621,330	330,443	-	3,951,773
Employee benefits (Note 4)	**814,457**	**59,760**	**-**	**874,217**	713,905	58,355	-	772,260
Services	**558,671**	**52,399**	**-**	**611,070**	505,901	77,633	-	583,534
Communication	**135,652**	**13,628**	**-**	**149,280**	132,613	10,588	-	143,201
Province wide service delivery	**15,010**	**-**	**-**	**15,010**	26,833	-	-	26,833
Travel	**342**	**-**	**-**	**342**	1,488	-	-	1,488
Supplies and equipment	**52,805**	**5,267**	**-**	**58,072**	69,522	6,395	-	75,917
Board expense	**53,037**	**-**	**-**	**53,037**	46,896	-	-	46,896
Amortization	**49,267**	**3,292**	**-**	**52,559**	67,687	3,292	-	70,979
Consulting	**-**	**-**	**99,276**	**99,276**	-	-	-	-
	5,366,615	**499,410**	**99,276**	**5,965,301**	5,186,175	486,706	-	5,672,881
Deficiency of revenue over expenditures for the year	$ **(30,063)**	$ **(44,370)**	$ **(99,276)**	$ **(173,709)**	$ -	$ (90,435)	$ -	$ (90,435)

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre
Statement of Net Assets

For the year ended March 31

	2022				2021			
	General Operations MAG	**Department of Justice Canada**	**One Time Project Fund**	**Total**	General Operations MAG	Department of Justice Canada	One Time Project Fund	Total
Net assets, beginning of year	**$ 305,427**	**$ 9,464**	**$ 154,250**	**$ 469,141**	$ 459,677	$ 99,899	$ -	$ 559,576
Deficiency of revenues over expenditures for the year	**(30,063)**	**(44,370)**	**(99,276)**	**(173,709)**	-	(90,435)	-	(90,435)
Interfund transfer (Note 1)	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	(154,250)	-	154,250	-
Net assets, end of year	**$ 275,364**	**$ (34,906)**	**$ 54,974**	**$ 295,432**	$ 305,427	$ 9,464	$ 154,250	$ 469,141

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre
Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended March 31	General Operations MAG 2022	Department of Justice Canada 2022	One Time Project Fund 2022	Total 2022	General Operations MAG 2021	Department of Justice Canada 2021	One Time Project Fund 2021	Total 2021
Cash provided by (used in)								
Operating activities								
Deficiency of revenue over expenditures for the year	$ **(30,063)**	$ **(44,370)**	$ **(99,276)**	$ **(173,709)**	$ -	$ (90,435)	$ -	$ (90,435)
Amortization	**49,267**	**3,292**	**-**	**52,559**	67,687	3,292	-	70,979
Changes in non-cash working capital balances								
Accounts receivable	**1,178**	-	-	**1,178**	12,028	-	-	12,028
HST recoverable	**(15,480)**	**(2,337)**	-	**(17,817)**	(9,090)	(3,250)	-	(12,340)
Prepaid expenses	**1,635**	**760**	**-**	**2,395**	(4,562)	(379)	-	(4,941)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	**207,607**	**8,896**	-	**216,503**	(22,064)	13,198	-	(8,866)
Accounts payable - MAG	**(50,335)**	-	-	**(50,335)**	(212,566)	-	-	(212,566)
	163,809	**(33,759)**	**(99,276)**	**30,774**	(168,567)	(77,574)	-	(246,141)
Investing activities								
Interfund transfers	**(98,580)**	**(696)**	**99,276**	**-**	(18,874)	18,874	-	-
Purchase of capital assets	**(47,769)**	**-**	**-**	**(47,769)**	38,350	-	-	38,350
	(146,349)	**(696)**	**99,276**	**(47,769)**	19,476	18,874	-	38,350
Increase (decrease) in cash during the year	**17,460**	**(34,455)**	**-**	**(16,995)**	(149,091)	(58,700)	**-**	(207,791)
Cash, beginning of year	**602,563**	**89,741**	-	**692,304**	751,654	148,441	-	900,095
Cash, end of year	$ **620,023**	$ **55,286**	$ -	$ **675,309**	$ 602,563	$ 89,741	$ -	$ 692,304

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

1. Significant Accounting Policies

Nature of Operations

The Human Rights Legal Support Centre (the "Centre") was established December 20, 2006 as a corporation without share capital as a result of Royal Assent being granted to Section 45.11 of the *Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2006.* The legislation took effect on June 30, 2008 and the Centre opened on that day.

The Centre is not a Crown agency, but is designated as an operational service agency and reports to the Ministry of the Attorney General ("MAG"). The Centre is independent from, but accountable to the Government of Ontario. Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") between the Centre and the Attorney General for the Province of Ontario, the objectives of the Centre are:

(a) To establish and administer a cost-effective and efficient system for providing support services, including legal services, respecting applications to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal under Part IV of the Code; and

(b) To establish policies and priorities for the provision of support services based on financial resources.

The Centre is a not-for-profit organization, as described in Section 149(1)(I) of the *Income Tax Act*, and therefore is not subject to either federal or provincial income taxes.

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are prepared by management in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit-organizations. The financial statements have been prepared within the framework of significant accounting policies summarized below:

The Centre maintains an Operating Fund, Department of Justice Canada Fund and an internally restricted fund (One Time Project Fund).

The day to day activities of the Centre are recorded in the Operating Fund which is funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General ("MAG").

The Department of Justice Canada Fund ("DOJ") is an externally restricted fund to provide funding for a specialized team to provide free legal advice and public legal education information to individuals across Ontario who have experienced sexual harassment at work. The Centre entered into an agreement with the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of Canada to fund this project for the period from July 3, 2019 to March 31, 2024.

The internally restricted fund was established, by the Board of Directors to fund one time projects. Currently, the Centre has two projects in process - Income Eligibility Criteria and the Justice Technology onboarding costs. This fund is financed by appropriations from the operating fund. During the year, the Board of Directors approved a transfer of $Nil (2021 - $154,250) from the operating fund.

1. **Significant Accounting Policies** (continued)

Revenue Recognition

The Centre follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions, which includes government grants.

The Centre receives revenue from the MAG. The amounts are recorded as revenue when received or receivable. All of the funds received are restricted as to use for purposes set out in the MOU.

The Centre receives revenue from the Department of Justice Canada. The amounts are recorded as revenue when received or receivable. All of the funds received are restricted as to use for purposes as set out in the funding agreement.

Capital Assets

The costs of capital assets are capitalized upon meeting the criteria for recognition as a capital asset; otherwise, costs are expensed as incurred. The cost comprises its purchase price and any directly attributable cost of preparing the asset for its intended use.

Capital assets are measured at cost less accumulated amortization and accumulated impairment losses.

Amortization is provided for on a straight-line basis at rates designed to amortize the cost of the capital assets over their estimated useful lives. The annual amortization rates are as follows:

Computer equipment	-	3 years
Furniture and fixtures	-	5 years

Capital assets are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that its carrying amount may not be recoverable. If any potential impairment is identified, the amount of impairment is quantified by comparing the carrying value of the capital asset to its fair value. Any impairment of the capital asset is recognized in income in the year in which the impairment occurs.

An impairment loss is not reversed if the fair value of the capital asset subsequently increases.

Intangible Assets

The costs of intangible assets are capitalized upon meeting the criteria for recognition as an intangible asset, otherwise, costs are expensed as incurred. The cost of a separately acquired intangible asset comprises its purchase price and any directly attributable cost of preparing the asset for its intended use.

1. **Significant Accounting Policies** (continued)

Intangible Assets (contiuned)

Intangible assets are measured at cost less accumulated amortization and accumulated impairment losses.

Amortization of application software is provided for on a straight-line basis at rates designed to amortize the cost of the intangible assets over their estimated useful lives. The annual amortization rates are as follows:

Client tracking tool	-	5 years
Computer software	-	3 years

An intangible asset is tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that its carrying amount may not be recoverable. If any potential impairment is identified, then the amount is quantified by comparing the carrying value of the intangible asset to its fair value. Any impairment of the intangible asset is recognized in income in the year in which the impairment occurs.

An impairment loss is not reversed if the fair value of the intangible asset subsequently increases.

Financial Instruments

All financial instruments are initially recognized at fair value and subsequently at amortized cost. Financial assets are tested for impairment when changes in circumstances indicate that the asset could be impaired. Transaction costs are expensed for those items remeasured at fair value at each statement of financial position date and charged to the financial instrument for those measured at amortized cost.

Impairment

At the end of each year, the Centre assesses whether there are any indications that a financial asset measured at amortized cost may be impaired. Objective evidence of impairment includes observable data that comes to the attention of the Centre, including but not limited to the following events: significant financial difficulty of the issuer; a breach of contract, such as a default or delinquency in interest or principal payments; and bankruptcy or other financial reorganization proceedings.

When there is an indication of impairment, the Centre determines whether a significant adverse change has occurred during the year in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows from the financial asset.

1. **Significant Accounting Policies** (continued)

Impairment (continued)

When the Centre identifies a significant adverse change in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows from a financial asset, it reduces the carrying amount of the financial asset to the greater of the following:

- The present value of the cash flows expected to be generated by holding the financial asset discounted using a current market rate of interest appropriate to the financial asset; and
- The amount that could be realized by selling the financial asset at the statement of financial position date.

Any impairment of the financial asset is recognized in income in the year in which the impairment occurs.

When the extent of impairment of a previously written-down financial asset decreases and the decrease can be related to an event occurring after the impairment was recognized, the previously recognized impairment loss is reversed to the extent of the improvement, but not in excess of the impairment loss. the amount of the reversal is recognized in income in the year the reversal occurs.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures during the current period. Actual results may differ from these estimates, the impact of which would be recorded in future periods.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognized in the year in which the estimates are revised and in any future years affected.

Pension Plan

The Centre, through the sponsorship of MAG, is a participating employer to a multi-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the Ontario Pension Board ("OPB") for employees of the Province of Ontario. In accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, as sufficient information is not available to the Centre to use defined benefit plan accounting, the Centre accounts for the pension plan as a defined contribution pension plan. The Centre expenses pension contributions when made.

2. Capital Assets

	2022 Cost	2022 Accumulated Amortization	2021 Cost	2021 Accumulated Amortization
Computer equipment	**$ 553,895**	**$ 475,830**	$ 506,126	$ 427,948
Furniture and fixtures	**4,150**	**4,150**	4,150	4,150
	$ 558,045	**479,980**	$ 510,276	$ 432,098
Net book value		**$ 78,065**		$ 78,178

3. Intangible Assets

	2022 Cost	2022 Accumulated Amortization	2021 Cost	2021 Accumulated Amortization
Client tracking tool	**$ 668,030**	**$ 668,030**	$ 668,030	$ 663,353
Computer software	**141,059**	**141,059**	141,059	141,059
	$ 809,089	**$ 809,089**	$ 809,089	$ 804,412
Net book value		**$ -**		$ 4,677

4. Pension Plan

The Centre, through the sponsorship of the MAG, is a participating employer to a defined benefit plan administered by the Ontario Pension Board ("OPB") for employees of the province of Ontario. Based on contribution rates as set by the OPB, the Centre matches employee contributions to the plan at the rate of 7.4% (2021 - 7.4%) of earnings up to the CPP yearly pension maximum entitlement ("YPME") and 10.5% (2021 - 10.5%) for earnings above the YPME. The Centre contributed $299,801 (2021 - $300,010) to the plan which is recorded in employee benefits in the statement of operations.

5. Contingent Liabilities

The Centre is party to legal proceedings with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario which arise from normal operations. Actual liabilities with respect to these actions and proceedings cannot be determined. Management believes that they will be successful and any potential liability will not materially affect the financial position of the Centre. Any ultimate liability in respect of these legal proceedings will be accounted for as an expense in the year incurred.

6. Economic Dependence

The Centre derives its primary operating revenue from the Ministry of the Attorney General.

7. Operating Fund

The Centre has expended grants received as follows:

		2022		2021
Revenue - Ministry of Attorney General	**$**	**5,336,200**	$	5,185,865
Other income		**352**		310
Operating expenses (excluding project expenses)		**(5,366,615)**		(5,186,175)
Amortization included in operating expenses		**49,267**		67,687
Sale (purchase of capital assets)		**(47,769)**		38,350
	$	**(28,565)**	$	106,037

Reconciliation of net assets:

		Capital		Operating		Total
Net assets, beginning of year	$	77,369	$	228,058	$	305,427
Deficiency of revenue over expenditures for the year		-		(30,063)		(30,063)
Funds transferred from capital fund		(1,498)		1,498		-
Net assets, end of year	$	75,871	$	199,493	$	275,364

8. Financial Instruments

Credit Risk
Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party by failing to discharge an obligation. The Centre is exposed to credit risk resulting from the possibility that a customer or counterparty to a financial instrument defaults on their financial obligations or if there is a concentration of transactions carried out with the same counterparty. The Centre's financial instruments that are exposed to concentrations of credit risk consist primarily of accounts receivable. The Centre is also exposed to credit risk arising from all of its bank accounts being held at one financial institution. The Centre has exposure to credit risk in cash and accounts receivable to a maximum of $677,352 (2021 - $695,524).

8. **Financial Instruments** (continued)

Liquidity Risk
Liquidity risk is the risk that the Centre encounters difficulty in meeting its obligations associated with financial liabilities. Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of operational liquidity requirements, the Centre will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction on the due date; will be forced to sell financial assets at a value, which is less than what they are worth; or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset. Liquidity risk arises from accounts payable and accrued liabilities. The Centre meets its liquidity requirements by preparing and monitoring detailed forecasts of cash flows from operations, anticipating investing and financing activities and holding assets that can readily be converted into cash.

Market Risk
Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in the market prices. Market risk is comprised of currency risk, interest rate risk and other price risk. The Centre is not exposed to significant market risk.

These risks have not changed from the prior year.

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