

Legal Aid Ontario

We provide legal assistance for low-income people living in Ontario

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LAO Update: Fall 2017 Edition

A quarterly update on Legal Aid Ontario's latest access to justice initiatives

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Message from the CEO

Legal Aid Ontario's (LAO) second quarter was a busy one with a particular focus on our work with vulnerable communities.

In September, we released our [three-year action plan for domestic violence clients](#). This comes after months of consultations that led us to a stronger understanding of how survivors are the experts in their own experience and have an important role to play in the development of solutions.

I strongly encourage you to read our [blueprint for domestic violence](#) as we move forward with projects aimed at enhancing services.

You may also have heard that the Clinic Committee of LAO's Board of Directors, through its Dispute Resolution Process, has decided to [withdraw funding from the African Canadian Legal Clinic](#). In the interest of transparency, we have posted the [Clinic Committee decisions](#) and supporting material on our website.

At LAO, we're deeply committed to ensuring that the Black community is well-served—and this is why we're working directly with members of the community to support the creation of a new, independent, Black-focused and Black-led clinic that will be up and running within a year. In the meantime, in addition to the legal services that we already provide, we have a number of [services available for members of the Black community](#).

We are also working with an [advisory committee](#) that plans to conduct consultation sessions across the province to hear directly from the Black community on how a future clinic can best meet the group's legal needs.

We hosted a community meeting in September to hear from members of the Black community to ensure the best legal aid services are provided. As we move forward in the coming months, we will be sure to keep all of our stakeholders updated on how we will continue to serve this community.

On the financial front, we are very pleased with the Federal Government's decision to provide LAO with an additional \$7 million to ensure that refugee services continue uninterrupted this year.

In addition, the two increases in the Bank of Canada rate will significantly increase the revenue that LAO receives from the Law Foundation of Ontario. This will result in LAO having a balanced budget at the end of the fiscal year.

Best,

David

David Field
President & CEO
Legal Aid Ontario

Spotlight: Racialized Communities Strategy consultation underway

LAO began holding a series of in-person and online sessions in October and will be making its way across the province from now until December to talk with racialized communities about the legal services they need.

Projects and announcements from the last quarter

LAO launches pilot to expedite applications from Toronto South Detention Centre

Joint letter with the John Howard Society to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services regarding the cost of inmate telephone communications

Why did Legal Aid Ontario withdraw its funding from the African Canadian Legal Clinic?

Legal Aid Ontario hosts community meeting about legal services for Ontario's Black communities

LAO releases domestic violence strategy blueprint

Statement from Legal Aid Ontario President & CEO David Field about the African Canadian Legal Clinic

Legal aid services for members of the Black community

Legal Aid Ontario advisory committee on legal services to the Black community

LAO statement regarding the Dispute Resolution Process with African Canadian Legal Clinic

LAO releases racialized communities strategy ahead of consultations

Selected media

Legal Aid Ontario lends support to black youth facing suspension from school

CBC News – June 27, 2017

Legal Aid Ontario, the non-profit group of lawyers that specializes in representing low-income clients, is providing a major financial boost to a program designed to help black students who are in conflict with the education system.

Legal Aid Ontario considering suspension of immigration, refugee services

Amanda Jerome, The Lawyers Daily – July 10, 2017

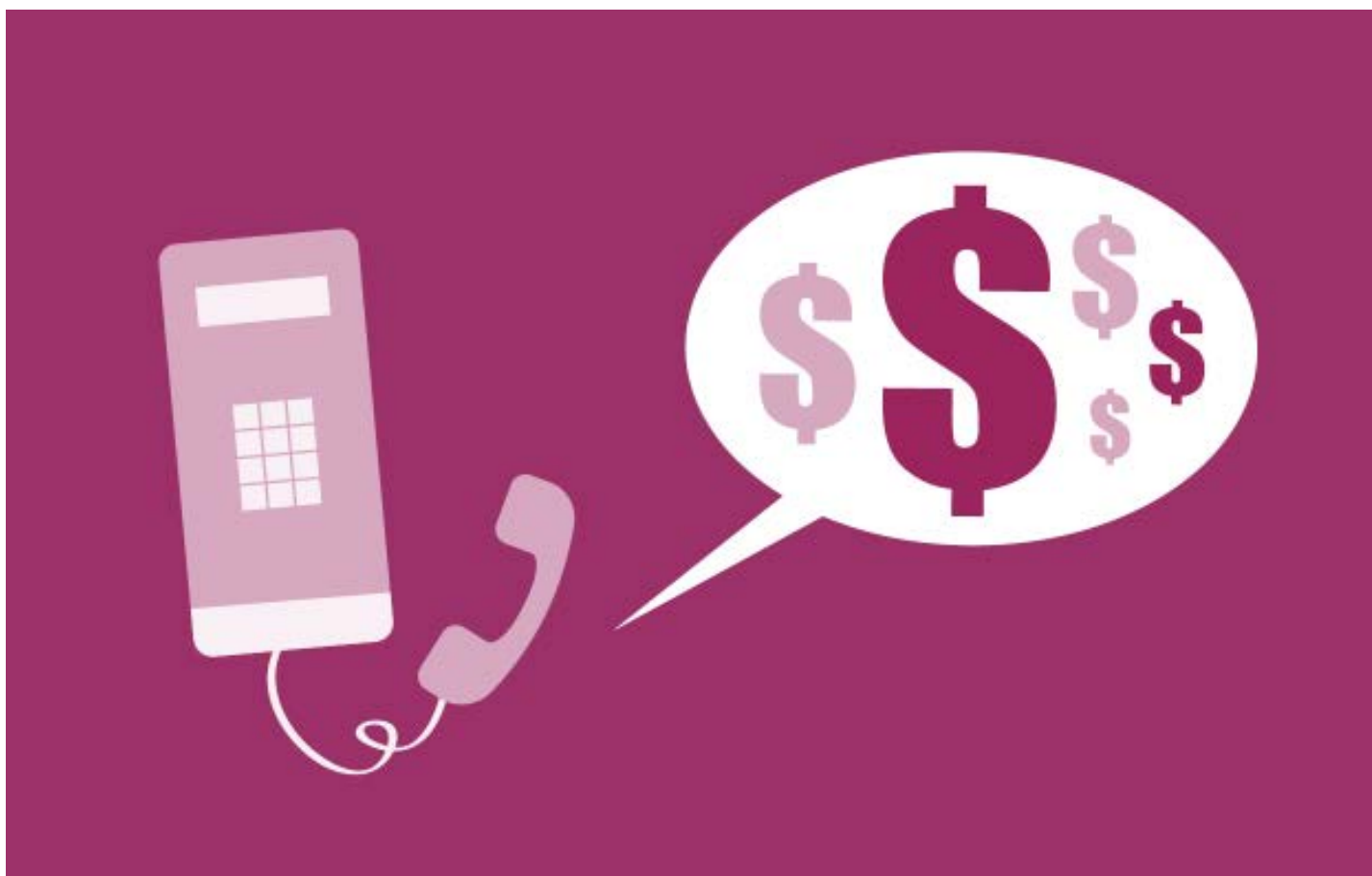
Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) officials are meeting with the federal government in a bid to boost funding for immigration and refugee services, which are in danger of being suspended.

Legal Aid Ontario defunds the African Canadian Legal Clinic over allegations of financial mismanagement

Jacques Gallant, Toronto Star – August 16, 2017

Legal Aid Ontario is defunding the African Canadian Legal Clinic. The decision affecting the legal aid clinic, which has served Toronto's Black community for over 20 years, was announced Wednesday afternoon by the five-member clinic committee of LAO's board of directors.

Blog



The high cost of calling home from jail

– September 2017



The information you need when applying for legal aid

– July 2017

Client services

Intake, triage and support services

LAO offers intake, triage and support services to people applying for legal aid, existing legal aid clients and lawyers who provide legal services on behalf of legal aid.

- **Call Centre – Tier 1**

Agents in Tier 1 of LAO's call centre can help assess service needs and provide information about qualifying for legal aid. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to: triage, making referrals, performing status checks and updating client profiles.

- **Call Centre – Tier 2**

Tier 2 agents conduct an in-depth analysis of a client's legal needs, financial situation and case details to determine eligibility for legal aid services. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to: processing applications, issuing certificates, making referrals, and providing enhanced public legal information.

• **Call Centre – In-custody**

LAO also offers a service dedicated to helping people who are incarcerated across the province. Staff take calls directly from inmates to determine legal aid eligibility, process applications and issue certificates as well as conduct status checks on submitted applications.

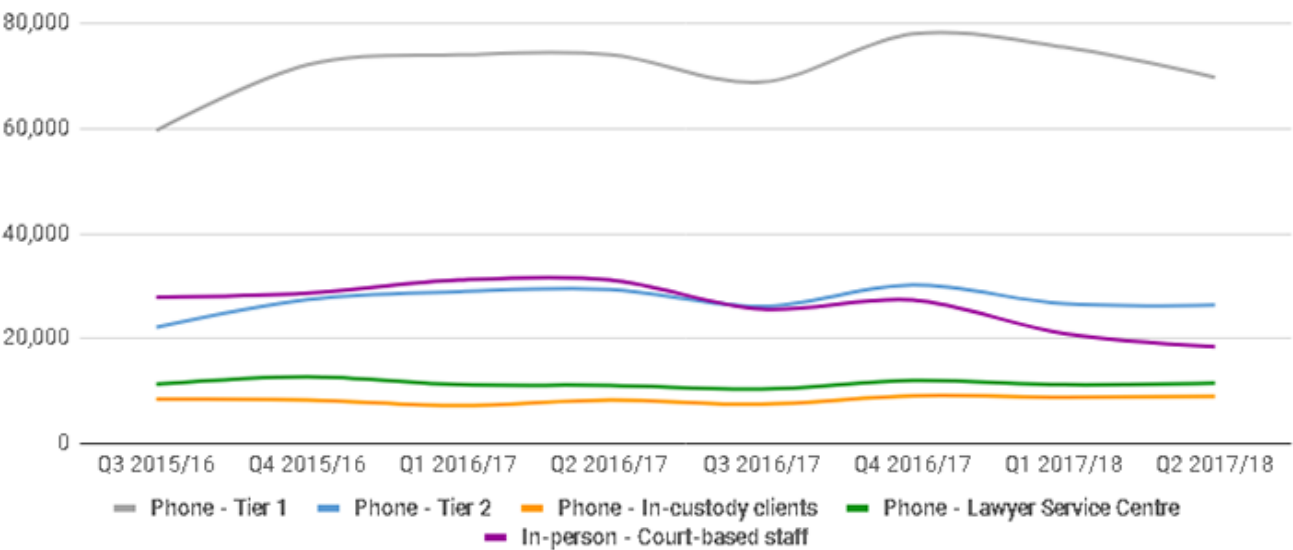
• **Call Centre – Lawyers**

Lawyers who do legal aid work can contact the call centre for information, including but not limited to: tariff, billing, account status and technical support. This group serves as a first point of contact for most lawyers' enquiries.

• **Court-based staff**

Legal aid workers do their jobs alongside duty counsel and staff lawyers in courthouses and legal aid offices. They can help clients with in-person certificate applications, contacting sureties and adjourning matters in first appearance court.

Persons assisted for intake, triage and support



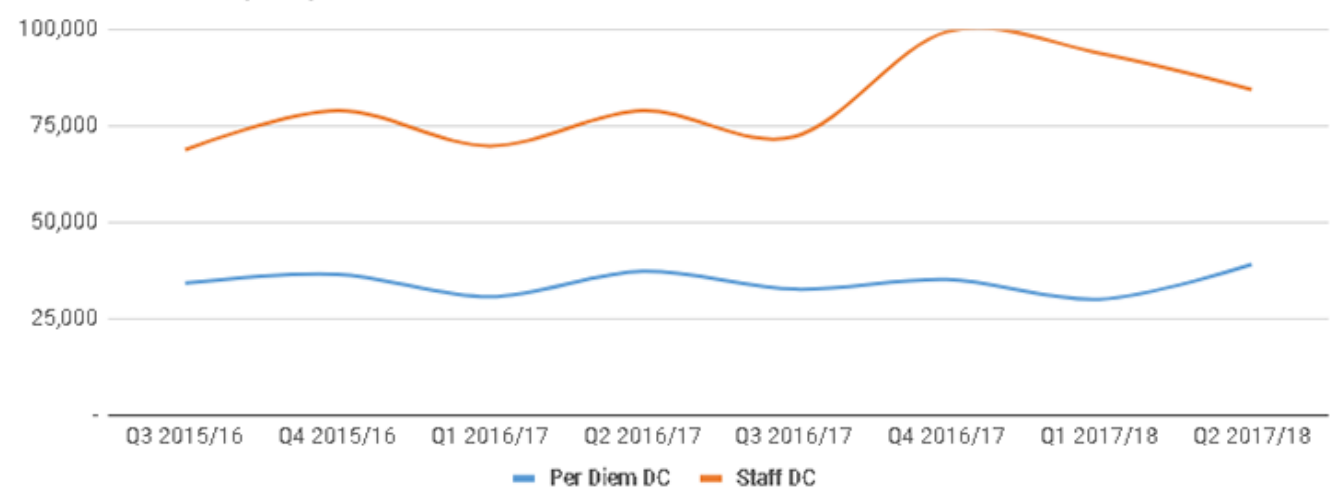
Persons assisted for intake, triage and support	2015/16		2016/17				2017/18	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Phone: Tier 1	59,673	72,204	74,088	74,118	68,891	78,089	75,588	69,813
Phone: Tier 2	22,113	27,428	28,906	29,324	26,108	30,167	26,587	26,336
Phone: In-custody clients	8,381	8,244	7,180	8,236	7,419	8,992	8,773	8,919
Phone: Lawyer Service Centre	11,226	12,679	11,175	11,000	10,306	11,928	11,132	11,403
In-person: Court-based staff	27,834	28,619	31,145	31,169	25,555	27,304	20,907	18,373

Duty counsel services

Duty counsel are LAO staff and per diem lawyers in courthouses. They can give immediate legal assistance to low-income people who would otherwise be unrepresented and unassisted.

Criminal law services

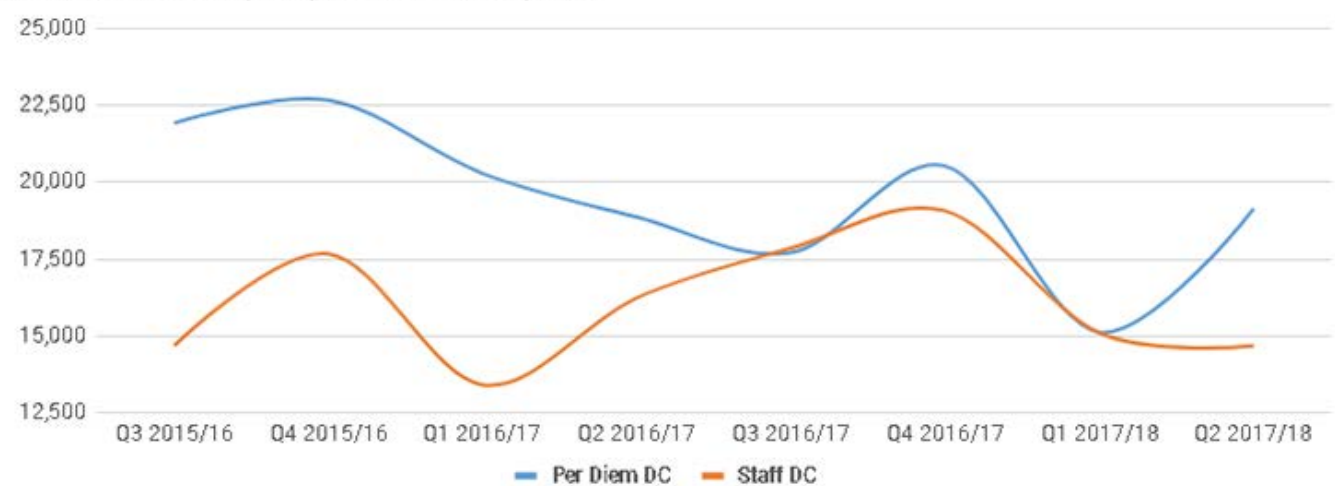
Persons assisted by duty counsel - Criminal law



Persons assisted by duty counsel - criminal law	2015/16		2016/17				2017/18	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Per Diem DC	34,277	36,618	30,744	37,383	32,748	35,215	30,116	39,126
Staff DC	68,874	78,968	69,831	78,976	72,275	99,422	93,836	84,437
Total	103,151	115,586	100,575	116,359	105,023	134,637	123,952	123,563

Family law services

Persons assisted by duty counsel - Family Law

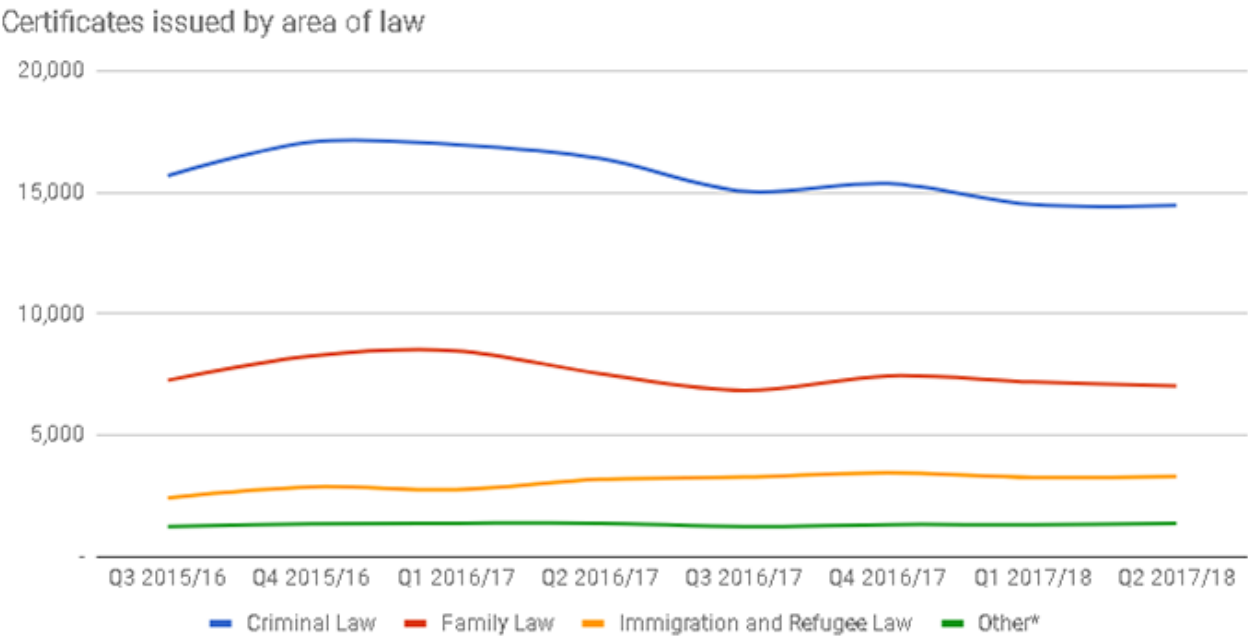


Persons assisted by duty counsel - family law	2015/16		2016/17				2017/18	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Per Diem DC	21,924	22,669	20,284	18,864	17,711	20,527	15,118	19,148
Staff DC	14,684	17,674	13,416	16,248	17,858	19,068	15,096	14,684
Total	36,608	40,343	33,700	35,112	35,569	39,595	30,214	33,832

Representation by a private practice lawyer

Legal aid applicants who are financially eligible, and who are facing a serious legal matter covered by LAO, may be issued a certificate to cover the cost of a private practice lawyer.

A certificate is a voucher that a low-income person can take to one of more than 3,600 private practice lawyers across the province who accept legal aid clients. A certificate guarantees the lawyer payment for a certain number of hours if they accept the case.



Certificates issued by area of law	2015/16		2016/17				2017/18	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Criminal Law	15,706	17,098	16,982	16,415	15,065	15,386	14,520	14,492
Family Law	7,269	8,274	8,483	7,535	6,841	7,452	7,200	7,028
Immigration and Refugee Law	2,424	2,869	2,753	3,178	3,276	3,451	3,259	3,306
Other ^[1]	1,240	1,344	1,369	1,372	1,235	1,316	1,314	1,365
Total Certificates Issued	26,639	29,585	29,587	28,500	26,417	27,605	26,293	26,191

^[1] Other is a category that represents all other legal matters covered by LAO certificates, such as: CCB matters, prison law matters and matters before civil tribunal.

Performance measures

Key Performance Indicator (KPI) name	Measurement frequency	Last measured	Target	Previous year (2016/17)	Current value
% of same day decisions for certificates	Quarterly	Q1 2017/18	80%	75.6%	80.0%
% of area office appeals heard within 3 days	Quarterly	Q1 2017/18	80%	51.6%	47.5%
Acceptance rate for certificate applications	Quarterly	Q1 2017/18	87%	87.7%	82.6%
% of calls answered within 3 minutes (L1)	Quarterly	Q1 2017/18	80%	83.0%	52.0%
% of calls answered within 3 minutes (LSC)	Quarterly	Q1 2017/18	80%	69.0%	74.0%

% of calls answered within 3 minutes (Worklist)	Quarterly	Q1 2017/18	80%	88.0%	62.0%
% of calls answered within 20 minutes (L2)	Quarterly	Q1 2017/18	80%	79.0%	64.0%
Overall client satisfaction - % of positive responses (in-person)	Annual	Q3 2016/17	80%	93.0%	93.0%
Number of Ontarians financially eligible for LAO's services	Annual	Q1 2017/18	Maintain	1,540,000	1,540,000
Overall lawyer satisfaction - % of positive responses	Annual	Q3 2016/17	60%	56.0%	56.0%

Statement of operations

Revenue	Apr. 1, 2016 - Sept. 30, 2016 (\$M)	Apr. 1, 2017 - Sept. 30, 2017 (\$M)
Government Funding	\$202.8M	\$207.3M
Law Foundation	\$12.1M	\$21.0M
Other Revenue	\$6.4M	\$6.9M
Total revenue	\$221.3M	\$235.1M

Core Business Expenses

Certificate Costs	\$112.2M	\$115.9M
Client Service Offices	\$11.4M	\$10.4M
Clinic Program	\$46.4M	\$45.2M
Duty Counsel Program	\$28.3M	\$27.0M
Service Innovation	\$1.0M	\$1.1M
Total Core Business Expenses	\$199.3M	\$199.4M

Operating Expenses

Service Provider Support	\$3.4M	\$3.1M
Administrative Expenses	\$19.6M	\$17.0M
Other Expenditures	\$4.0M	\$3.8M
Program Support	\$14.8M	\$13.0M
Total Operating Expenses	\$41.8M	\$37.0M

Total expenditures

\$241.1M

\$236.4M

Surplus / (deficit) before other corporate

expenditures / savings

(\$19.8M)

(\$1.3M)

Totals may not add due to rounding

Getting legal help

- Are you eligible for legal aid?
- Types of help
- Getting help in the courtroom
- Community and specialty clinics

For lawyers

- News and notices
- Legal Aid Online*
- Billing inquiries
- Forms library

Resources

- Accessibility
- Careers at LAO
- Legal Aid Ontario mobile app
- News archives
- Other resources

Contacts

- Call us toll-free for help
- Legal professionals
- Media
- Legal Aid Ontario information and services
- Making an appeal or complaint
- Ethics hotline



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