

Legal Aid in the Courtroom

Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) currently accepts on-site applications in nine Ontario courthouses. To help meet its target, the province will work with LAO to place legal aid application offices in an additional 17 criminal court locations in Ontario in the coming months. Once open, on-site legal aid offices will be operating in 26 courthouses serving almost 80 per cent of criminal legal aid clients province-wide.

In these locations, an accused person can apply for legal aid on-site and, if successful, could retain a lawyer more quickly. Getting a lawyer on the case faster can help reduce the number of appearances needed to resolve a case, and allow more cases to move through the system more effectively.

LAO is also innovating a simplified online application process. LAO staff will be able to help a client apply for a legal aid certificate online and if approved, print it right away. This service will also be expanded in the coming months to allow defence counsel and caseworkers to access the system.

