



LEGAL AID ONTARIO
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Fact Sheet

Community legal clinics

Sustaining communities

[Community legal clinics](#) are non-profit legal centres. They are each governed by an independent board of directors who are representative of the community they serve. Clinics employ lawyers, legal workers, paralegals and administrative staff to provide information, legal advice and representation.

Legal Aid Ontario funds [77 community legal clinics](#) throughout the province, with 17 providing [specialty legal services](#). Most community legal clinics are located in specific areas, and many communities in Ontario are served by a clinic.

Clinics do not usually charge legal fees, but they may ask clients who have the money to pay some or all of the expenses of a case, such as court filing fees and medical expenses.

Clinic services

Clinics address the unique needs of low-income people by providing legal assistance in areas such as housing law, social assistance and other income support programs. These legal issues often represent people's most basic needs.

Clinics also provide community development, referrals, and public legal education to agencies and low-income communities, as well as engaging in activities to reform the law. They are often at the forefront of systemic change that benefits low-income Ontarians.

Although no two clinics are exactly alike, the types of issues they may provide help with include:

- Tenant rights
- Ontario Works
- Ontario Disability Support Program
- Employment Insurance
- Workplace Safety and Insurance
- Workers' Compensation

- Government pensions
- Immigration
- Employment rights
- Criminal injuries compensation
- Human rights

Specialty Clinics

The 17 [specialty legal clinics](#) focus on marginalized groups of disadvantaged clients or particular areas of law that affect large numbers of low-income people. They represent the elderly, the disabled, urban Aboriginals, and persons with HIV/AIDS.

Clinic services over the past five years

	2005 - 06	2006 - 07	2007 - 08	2008 - 09	2009 - 10
Direct client Services					
Cases	15,966	17,628	17,424	18,000	19,556
Brief service	29,170	28,795	29,249	30,421	36,898
Advice	100,951	101,515	99,315	104,393	74,687*
TOTAL	146,087	147,938	145,988	152,814	131,141

* April 2010 to December 2010 only

Questions?

For more information on this topic contact media@lao.on.ca