

MENTAL HEALTH

People experiencing mental health issues are overrepresented in justice system. Mental health advocates refer to this as the criminalization of mental illness. LAO has been looking for ways to better advocate for this population as part of its Mental Health Strategy.

CERTIFICATES FOR FIRST-TIME ACCUSED

LAO is making certificates available if the Crown is seeking a conviction or a discharge for summary offences:

- to financially eligible adults with mental illness accused of a crime but with no prior criminal record
- youth with mental illness accused of a crime and with no prior dispositions.

An advocate's early intervention can mitigate the consequences of criminal charges on access to support services and independence, and better ensure clients are connected to other legal services that may be needed.

CERTIFICATES IN CIVIL MENTAL HEALTH PROCEEDINGS

LAO is introducing new certificates to financially eligible applicants who wish to bring guardianship applications before the Consent and Capacity Board and the Superior Court of Justice. This includes:

- people caught in the middle of a guardianship dispute, who wish to have their guardianship reviewed and
 - substitute decision makers, whose health-care decisions are being challenged.
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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Genevieve Oger
Bilingual Senior Communications Media Relations Officer
Phone: (416) 979-2352, ext.5208 | Cell: (416) 768-4461
Email: ogerg@lao.on.ca or media@lao.on.ca



For more information call Legal Aid Ontario at 1-800-668-8258 or visit www.legalaid.on.ca