

Administrative burden



Published: October 2021

LAO values its relationships with roster members, and the important work they do for legally aided clients. LAO welcomes the opportunity to provide information and other supports to roster members. LAO interacts daily with roster members through many channels, including the lawyer portal, direct email and telephone contact, and in-person at LAO offices across the province. In particular, LAO welcomes the opportunity to support new roster members by, among other things, answering their questions and connecting them with resources to support their provision of high-quality services and their development of efficient and accurate billing practices. The vast majority of LAO's roughly 4,500 roster members interact with LAO in a manner that is reasonable and appropriate. In a small number of circumstances, the conduct of certain roster members is unreasonable, inappropriate, and even abusive or harassing to LAO staff. This type of conduct disproportionately consumes LAO resources, is unfair to LAO staff, and is inconsistent with roster membership, and may violate the Rules of Professional Conduct of the Law Society of Ontario. This policy is intended to address the small number of circumstances where this occurs.

1. This policy applies to roster members and their employees who are supervised by or who are acting under the direction of the roster member.
2. In accordance with Rule 28(2)(e), roster members and their employees shall not create any unreasonable or excessive administrative burden on LAO.
3. An unreasonable or excessive administrative burden occurs when, over a period of time, there is an ongoing unreasonable, unnecessary, excessive, or inappropriate consumption of LAO resources by a roster member and/or their staff on their behalf as a result of conduct including but not limited to:
 - Repeated and excessive correspondence about the same, or substantially the same issues
 - Repeated submission of inaccurate, noncompliant, unreasonable or inappropriate accounts
 - Repeated requests regarding the same, or substantially the same, issue including requests for extensions, reviews of accounts, or additional payment for services in excess of amounts authorized
 - Actions by a roster member that subvert or delay the LAO's efforts to ensure

compliance with the *Legal Aid Services Act, 2020 (LASA 2020)*, LAO's Rules or policies

- Repeated interactions with LAO's compliance departments caused by the roster member's manner of practice
 - Repeated, unnecessary interactions with LAO's compliance departments
4. Where, in LAO's view, a roster member and/or their employee who is supervised by or who is acting under the direction of the roster member engage in conduct which creates an unreasonable or excessive administrative burden, LAO will notify the roster member. A violation of this policy occurs where the roster member and/or their employee continues the conduct at issue after having received such notice.
 5. Violation of this policy may result in remedial action up to and including removal from the roster in accordance with LAO's Rules, and a report being made to the Law Society of Ontario.