Legal Aid Services Act 2020 Policies

Modification or refusal of services for uncooperative, disruptive conduct

LEGAL AID ONTARIO
AIDE JURIDIQUE ONTARIO

LAO is committed to accessibility and accommodation in client service, and to promoting the core principles of dignity, independence, inclusion, integration, responsiveness and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Some individuals with mental or physical disabilities, or capacity issues, find it difficult to navigate services. These individuals, who may at times be challenging to serve, are among the most vulnerable of all LAO's clients, and assisting these clients is an important part of LAO's mandate. LAO staff and service providers are committed to serving this client group in a manner that is respectful and effective. LAO takes all reasonable steps to serve eligible individuals seeking legal aid services, including clients who have accessibility and accommodation needs, and who may be challenging to serve.

In some rare circumstances, an individual may engage in conduct that is uncooperative or disruptive, with the result that LAO cannot effectively provide the individual with legal aid services. LAO may refuse to consider an application for services made by or on behalf of an individual who has engaged in such conduct.

Uncooperative or disruptive conduct includes but is not limited to:

• Repeated violent, threatening, abusive, harassing or menacing conduct

• Demands and instructions that are, in the view of LAO or the service provider, a violation of the Rules or Policies, or the Law Society of Ontario's Rules of Professional Conduct

Where feasible and appropriate, before refusing the client's application, LAO may offer modified services to such individuals. Modified services may include conditions on the client's interactions with the service provider, as agreed to by LAO in the case of staff services, and by the roster member in the case of non-staff services. If the client declines the modifications offered, LAO may refuse the client's application, as provided in the Rules.