

CLINIC MODERNIZATION

New framework for the delivery of legal aid services by community legal clinics

Consultation and engagement update: Timing of the *Legal Aid Services Act, 2020*

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In August, 2020, to prepare for the [Legal Aid Services Act, 2020](#) (LASA 2020) coming into force, LAO launched a consultation and engagement process on [clinic modernization](#). In addition to consulting directly with clinics from August to early October (see [Phase 1](#) consultation update), LAO has been meeting biweekly with the Association of Community Legal Clinics of Ontario (ACLCO) since September to discuss the important issues of clinic modernization and an updated framework (LAO Board rules under LASA 2020 and a new LAO-clinic agreement).

LASA 2020 will come into force at a date to be proclaimed, which is anticipated to occur after April 1, 2021. This means the LAO Board rules that will govern Legal Aid Ontario under LASA 2020 will not be in place by April 1, 2021.

For continuity of services, interim agreements will be needed for the period between April 1, 2021 (when the current LAO-clinic agreements are cancelled by amendments to LASA 1998) and when LASA 2020 comes into force. The goal of the interim agreement is continuity of funding and services, without disruption. Interim agreements will need to be in place by March 31, 2021.

LAO plans to share a draft interim agreement for feedback from clinics in the near future.

LAO and the ACLCO will be continuing to discuss the new framework (LAO Board rules and a new LAO-clinic agreement) which will need to be finalized prior to LASA 2020 being proclaimed. Further information will follow about this work at a later date.

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