

JONATHAN ODUMERU

odumeruj@gmail.com

Region	Incumbency	Slate or Coalition Affiliation	Law Association Membership
Toronto	Not An Incumbent	Unaffiliated	None

LiRN Funding and Libraries	
Will you support the Law Society maintaining its current level of funding for LiRN, adjusted annually for inflation?	Yes
Do you recognize the importance of the Law Society’s support for the LiRN budget in maintaining licensee competence across Ontario?	Yes
The courthouse library system is a critical resource for all kinds of practitioners across the province. Access to legal resources improves access to justice, which is a fundamental goal of the LSO.	
If you are an incumbent, do you regret voting to cut the LiRN budget by 10% in November 2020?	N/A
N/A - not an incumbent.	
Do you support offloading funding for LiRN/law libraries to the Law Foundation of Ontario?	No
Moving responsibility for courthouse libraries to the Law Foundation does not guarantee the survival of this library system. I believe that the resources provided by the courthouse library system support lawyers’ and paralegals’ ability to provide quality legal services across the province, and ensuring such ability is core to the LSO’s mandate. Shifting this burden to a grant-making institution that does not answer to Convocation strips the LSO of the ability to ensure the survival of these precious resources.	

Legal Aid Funding	
Will you advocate for Legal Aid Ontario funding improvement and sustainability to ensure that being a Legal Aid-empanelled lawyer remains a viable area of practice for the private bar?	Yes
🔗 If you answered “yes”, how?	
LAO is highly reliant on funding from government sources and the Law Foundation of Ontario (LFO). Funding from LFO, however, is variable due to the nature of its own funding source, and in 2022 the LAO saw a significant reduction in funding from the LFO, thereby needing to secure additional one-time funding from government sources to help avoid service reductions. I believe the LSO needs open dialogue with the board of directors for LAO to understand how the LSO can assist LAO with securing more sustainable funding, particularly from all levels of government. LAO is essential for access to justice in Ontario, and the LSO must support it.	
Please describe efforts that you believe should be undertaken by the Law Society to advocate for investment in LAO and increased financial allocation to LAO from the provincial and federal governments’ budgets.	
LAO tracks several key performance indicators, revealing how it has performed on an annual basis. The LSO may assist in advocating for increased funding for LAO by using these KPIs as well as qualitative indicators to independently report on LAO’s impact on access to justice in Ontario. A report of this nature could act as an advocacy piece by revealing what effect more stable funding would have on access to justice and how less predictable variable funding can endanger it.	

Paralegal Scope of Practice	
On December 1, 2022, Convocation approved the Family Legal Service Provider (FLSP) license to allow paralegals who complete specified training to assist clients with certain family law services. The FLSP is to be reviewed in 3 years. Should paralegals’ scope of practice be expanded?	
Yes, it should be expanded.	
🔗 If you answered “yes”, in what ways, why, and what additional training (if any) should be required of paralegals?	
I think it is important for the LSO to continue to explore how to expand the scope of practice for paralegals, as it’s in the public interest for our professions to evolve to the needs of the people of Ontario.	
Lawyer licensees pay an annual competency levy as part of their annual fees that contributes towards LiRN, which funds courthouse libraries. Would you support a requirement for paralegals to also pay an annual competency levy?	Yes
I say yes with caveats. Any increases in fees for paralegals need to be accompanied with increases in services available to them specifically. I would not support such a levy if it (a) significantly increased their fees; or (b) did not guarantee improved services provided to paralegals.	

Law Association Involvement	
When did you become a member of each of the associations you selected above? Which board or executive roles, if any, have you served in as part of these associations? Please list relevant dates and roles.	
Not a member of a county or district law association.	
Why are you a member of each of the associations you selected above?	
Not a member of a county or district law association.	