

Keep Sending Us Your Horror Stories!

A few weeks ago, we asked you to send your Legal Aid Sub-committee information about your experiences with the changes to Legal Aid Ontario. We are still looking for concrete evidence of the difficulties our members and their clients are experiencing, and have had a couple of issues based on the response we have received so far.

We are particularly looking for examples in the following areas, and we want to hear from you:

1. Have you applied for a discretionary increase since the new guidelines came into effect in November 2012? What was the basis for your request for discretion? What happened?

2. Have you applied for Mid-level Case Management in a Crown Wardship proceeding? What was your experience?

3. Have you ever had to refrain from taking a step (for example, bringing a Motion) because you did not have sufficient hours left and could not get any more hours other than taking a chance on discretion? What impact did this have on your client?

4. Have you stopped taking legal aid certificates altogether, or stopped taking them for particular types of cases? If so, what caused you to make that decision?

5. Do you get a timely response from the District Area Director's Office or the Lawyer Service Centre when you send in requests for additional hours allotments or disbursements? Have you been satisfied with their response?

We are meeting with representatives of Legal Aid Ontario in early July to discuss our members' concerns and it is important that we have as many concrete examples of the difficulties that our members have been facing for that meeting.

Please send your comments, experiences and/or horror stories to the Legal Aid Sub-Committee C/O Jean Hyndman at jean@jhyndman.ca or by fax to 416-366-6266. Please indicate whether you wish to remain anonymous or if we may use your name.