



Law Commission of Ontario draft recommendations promote changes to make Ontario's fragmented family justice system more consistent and accessible

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TORONTO, February 22, 2012 – The Law Commission of Ontario (LCO) today released for public feedback an Interim Report *Towards a More Responsive and Effective Family Law System*, which focuses on entry points to the family justice system.

The Ontario family justice system is fragmented and convoluted. For many low and middle income persons the system consists of too much piecemeal information and too many halfway solutions which are hard to access without some additional legal assistance. The system must also be more responsive to Ontario's changing population.

The LCO recognizes the efforts of the Ontario government and Legal Aid Ontario, but more reform is needed. The LCO's draft recommendations include:

- the creation of one online hub with legal and non-legal information for families;
- innovation in the delivery of legal services and legal aid services;
- improved access for members of Aboriginal communities;
- in the long run there should be comprehensive, multidisciplinary family centres close to communities which are the gateway to specialized family (legal) services.

"The problems in the delivery of family justice services call for innovation and responsiveness to Ontario's changing demographics", said LCO Executive Director, Dr. Patricia Hughes. "Individuals in a situation of family breakdown need a wide variety of family services, ideally through a single entry point. In the short term, though, we expect that early information, legal advice and support can help more people in finding solutions before they reach the court, preventing stress, frustrations and significant expenses."

Public consultations on the Interim Report will run until April 30, 2012. Based on the results of those consultations, the LCO anticipates releasing a Final Report in mid 2012.

Launched in September 2007, the LCO, funded by the Law Foundation of Ontario, the Ministry of the Attorney General, Osgoode Hall Law School and the Law Society of Upper Canada, and housed in the Ignat Kaneff Building, York University, operates independently of government to recommend law reforms to enhance access to justice.

Aussi disponible en français

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