
For Immediate Release

March 30, 2009

Media Release

Paralegal regulation sets precedent for consumer protection

TORONTO – Ontario broke new ground two years ago when it became the first jurisdiction in North America to license and regulate paralegals. Today, more than 2,300 paralegals are licensed and insured, providing consumers throughout the province with more choice, protection and improved access to justice.

The Law Society of Upper Canada developed and implemented the new regulatory system at the request of the Ontario Attorney General, and following extensive consultations with paralegals, lawyers, judges, legal associations, schools and colleges, and the public.

“The regulation of paralegals in Ontario is precedent-setting,” Attorney General Chris Bentley said today, following the tabling in the legislature of a two-year report on the implementation of paralegal regulation. “The Law Society met the challenge of regulating paralegals with great professionalism. The process of achieving regulation has been open and efficient and all partners involved in the process are to be commended for their efforts.”

Ontario’s licensed paralegals can represent clients in small claims court, before administrative tribunals, and in the Ontario Court of Justice for matters under the *Provincial Offences Act*.

With the advent of paralegal regulation, several colleges and schools have obtained accreditation from the Law Society for their training programs. It is anticipated that these programs will produce an additional 200 to 300 paralegal candidates each year.

Following the tabling of the two-year review of paralegal regulation, the Treasurer of the Law Society of Upper Canada, W. A. Derry Millar, said, “We believe the Ontario government’s commitment to the regulation of paralegals is visionary. Thanks to regulation, licensed paralegals are now held to the same high standard of professional conduct as lawyers, must pass a licensing examination, and carry liability insurance. They are now providing a range of important legal services within a recognized, regulated profession.”

Paul Dray, a licensed paralegal and Chair of the Law Society’s Paralegal Standing Committee noted, “The regulatory system is self-funding and has won the support of paralegals, lawyers, judges, and the public. We are extremely pleased with the progress made over the first two years of regulation and look forward to continuing to improve the services that licensed paralegals provide to consumers.”

The Law Society regulates lawyers and paralegals in Ontario in the public interest. The Law Society has a mandate to protect the public interest, to maintain and advance the cause of justice and the rule of law, to facilitate access to justice for the people of Ontario and act in a timely, open and efficient manner.

[Report to the Attorney General on the Implementation of Paralegal Regulation in Ontario](#)

-30-

For more information, please contact Roy Thomas, Communications Director at 416-947-7619, rthomas@lsuc.on.ca, or Susan Tonkin, Communications Advisor at 416-947-7605, stonkin@lsuc.on.ca.