

## STREET LAW SMARTS #1

### WHERE TO GET LEGAL HELP?

The Street Youth Legal Services (SYLS) Lawyer at Justice for Children and Youth can assist you with advice, referrals, or representation. The lawyer attends the following locations weekly:

Every other Tuesday	12noon-1:30pm	YMCA Drop-in 7 Vanauley Street
	12noon-1:30pm	Native Child and Family Services Drop-in 655 Bloor Street West
Tuesday	2pm – 3:30pm	Queen West Community Heath Centre 168 Bathurst Street
Thursday	1:00pm – 2:30pm	Evergreen Centre for Street Youth 381 Yonge Street

You can also contact the SYLS lawyer at Justice for Children and Youth:

Justice for Children and Youth  
Street Youth Legal Services Lawyer  
1203-415 Yonge Street  
Toronto, Ontario, M5B 2E7  
Tel. 416.920.1633, Fax. 416.920.5855  
[www.jfcy.org](http://www.jfcy.org)

**Legal Aid Ontario Client Services Centre: 1 (800) 668-8258**  
(Monday to Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm)

Legal Aid Ontario provides services to low-income individuals for certain legal issues. All legal aid services have the same financial eligibility requirements, but have different processes for accessing services. The Legal Aid Ontario website provides an overview of all of their services, [www.legalaid.on.ca/en/getting](http://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/getting)

## Community based Legal Aid Clinics

Community-based legal aid clinics provide services to low-income people and communities. These clinics help with different legal issues, including:

- Tenant Rights
- Ontario Works and Welfare
- Ontario Disability Support Program
- Government Pensions
- Immigration
- Workers' Compensation

Even if the clinic can't serve your exact needs, they may be able to direct you to someone who can. There are 80 clinics across the province. To find contact information for clinic, or to find the clinic for your area, call 1 (800) 668-8258 or go to: <http://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/contact/contact.asp?type=cl>

## Specialty Clinics

There are many specialty clinics across the province, which focus on a specific area of law, or specific individuals. Unlike the community legal clinics, specialty clinics are not limited to their local area, and may assist people anywhere in the province. Some of these clinics are:

- Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto
- Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario
- African Canadian Legal Clinic
- Centre for Spanish-Speaking Peoples
- Disability Law Centre - ARCH
- HIV and AIDS Legal Clinic (Ontario)
- Income Security Advocacy Centre
- **Justice for Children and Youth**
- Metro Toronto Chinese & Southeast Asian Legal Clinic
- Toronto Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic

To find contact information for clinic, call 1 (800) 668-8258 or go to: <http://www.legalaid.on.ca/en/contact/contact.asp?type=cl>

## Certificates

Legal aid certificates can be used to obtain a lawyer for certain types of matters, including: some criminal, family, or immigration law matters, or matters before certain boards or tribunals. Usually, you apply for a legal aid certificate by telephoning the Legal Aid Ontario Client Services Centre: 1 (800) 668-8258. Sometimes you can apply at a legal aid office or at the courthouse you are appearing at.

Once you are approved for a certificate, you can ask for a list of lawyers in your area that accept legal aid certificates. Whether you qualify for a legal aid certificate depends on the legal issue and financial eligibility. If you are denied legal aid, you have a right to appeal.

To find a legal aid office in your area, go to: <http://www.legalaid.on.ca>

## **Duty Counsel**

Duty counsel lawyers are at each courthouse. They can help people with matters in court that day. Duty counsel help people that don't have lawyers by giving them advice and helping them with the court process. Duty counsel cannot represent anyone in a trial. Types of duty counsel include:

- Criminal court duty counsel
- Family court duty counsel
- Mental health duty counsel
- Small Claims court duty counsel
- Tenant duty counsel

Legal help is also available through Family Law Information Centres (FLIC) and Family Law Service Centres at select courthouses. Centres will provide advice and brief services about custody, support, separation, and other family law matters. Free advice lawyers are available for people whose matter is not in court that day. Law Help Ontario also provides free legal services at Toronto's Superior Court.

### **Family Law Information Centres (FLICs):**

- 311 Jarvis Street, (416)-326-1694
- 47 Sheppard Avenue East, (416)-326-1233
- 393 University Avenue 9th Fl., (416)-327-2064

### **Toronto Central Family Law Service Centre:**

20 Dundas Street West Ste 201, (416)-348-0001

## **Eligibility for Legal Aid**

There are strict financial eligibility limits to qualify for legal aid. Eligibility depends on assets and income. They also look at your expenses, and the other people in your household. Clients may be asked to contribute to the cost of their legal fees. The same financial restrictions apply for all legal aid services, but you can talk to duty counsel or to legal aid clinics without first applying for legal aid approval.

Eligibility will also depend upon the type of legal issue, including the seriousness of the legal issue, and whether it poses a jeopardy to your personal liberty.

## Hiring a private lawyer

If you have a lawyer in mind, or one has been recommended to you, you can talk to them about hiring them to take on your case. Different lawyers charge different rates, usually based on their level of experience. They may charge a set fee for some things, or they might bill by the hour.

If you have a lawyer's name but need their contact information, go to the Law Society Lawyer and Paralegal Directory, at:

<http://www1.lsuc.on.ca/LawyerParalegalDirectory/index.jsp>

## Pro Bono Law Ontario

Pro Bono Law Ontario is a service that provides up to 30 minutes of free legal advice to individuals requiring assistance on select legal areas. These include: small claims, employment law, wills and estates, loan or credit card default, and contract matters, among others.

To receive assistance from Pro Bono Law Ontario in the Toronto or Ottawa areas, you must complete a form and meet financial eligibility requirements. The form can be found at: <https://www.lawhelpontario.org/legal-advice-in-person/>

Once you have completed the form, you may attend one of Pro Bono Law Ontario's Walk-In Centres to receive assistance. Walk-in centre locations are:

- 393 University Avenue, Suite 110, Toronto, Ontario (office is located behind the elevators in the same building as the Superior Court of Justice)
- 47 Sheppard Avenue East, Room 305, Toronto, Ontario – for Small Claims Court matters only (office is located on the 3rd floor, in the same building as the Toronto Small Claims Court)
- 161 Elgin, Street, Room 5027, Ottawa, Ontario (office is located on the 5th floor beside courtroom 52)

You may call Pro Bono Law Ontario at: 1-855-255-7256 for questions or further assistance, or see: <https://www.lawhelpontario.org/>

## Law Society Referral Service (416) 947-3330 or 1 (800) 268-8326

If you need help finding a lawyer, you can try the Law Society's Lawyer Referral Service (LRS). The service can help you find a lawyer that meets your needs, such as area of law, location and language. You will receive a ½ hour consultation for free.

## **Other Legal Clinics**

### Barbara Schlifer Commemorative Clinic

(416) 323-9149

The Barbara Schlifer Clinic provides legal information and referral service for women who are survivors of violence. [www.schliferclinic.com](http://www.schliferclinic.com)

### Community Legal Assistance Program

(416) 736-5030, press '4'

Osgoode Hall Law School program provides a variety of free legal services to low-income clients. [www.osgoode.yorku.ca/clasp](http://www.osgoode.yorku.ca/clasp)

### Downtown Legal Services

(416) 978-6447

University of Toronto's Law School student clinic provides a variety of free legal services to low-income clients. [dis.sa.utoronto.ca](http://dis.sa.utoronto.ca)

### Human Rights Legal Support Centre

1 (866) 625-5179

The centre provides advice, advocacy, and representation in human rights claims. [www.hrlsc.on.ca](http://www.hrlsc.on.ca)