

Ontario Legal Conference and Retreat

Ontario Bar Association



In person

Date: September 13-14, 2025

Location: The Brock Niagara Falls
Tapestry by Hilton
5685 Falls Avenue
Niagara Falls, ON



This program contains 1.0 Professionalism EDI Hour.
This program contains 2.0 Professionalism Hours.
This program is eligible for up to 4.5 Substantive Hours.

The OBA has been approved as an Accredited Provider of Professionalism Content by The Law Society of Ontario.

This September, grow your referral network, take part in expert-led CPD sessions and enjoy the natural beauty and man-made fun of Niagara Falls at the OBA's fourth annual Ontario Legal Conference & Retreat.

With top-notch professional development, specifically tailored to solicitors in solo and small firm practices, you'll be sure to walk away with practical insights and valuable advice to implement in your practice.

Bring your family or friends and get away for a weekend of networking, learning and play!

Friday, September 12, 2025

9:00 pm Late Night Social Events: Karaoke and Games Room

Saturday, September 13, 2025

7:30 am Registration and Breakfast **[NIAGARA ROOM]**

8:45am **Welcome Remarks and OBA-President Mandate**
Katy Commisso, OBA President

9:00am **Remarks from the Attorney General of Ontario**
The Honourable Doug Downey, Attorney General of Ontario

9:10 am **Remarks from the Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice**
The Honourable Sharon Nicklas, Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice

9:20 am **Greetings from the Regional Senior Justice**
The Honourable Justice Paul Sweeny, SCJ - Central South Region

9:25 am **Civil Rules Review Update**
The Honourable Cary Boswell, Superior Court of Justice and Co-Chair Civil Rules Review Working Group
Hear the latest on the Civil Rules Review from Co-Chair Justice Boswell.

9:50 am **Readying Yourself for Change**
Dr. Kirsten Robertson, Associate Professor of Organizational Behaviour and Human Resources at the Goodman School of Business, Brock University
Equip yourself with an understanding of our natural responses to change and how to better prepare yourself for and navigate change in your personal or professional life.

10:20 am **Declarations of Death and Absenteeism**

Karen Shedden, Daniel & Partners LLP and President of the Lincoln County Law Association

- When is a Declaration of Death or Absenteeism necessary?
- Key considerations and procedural nuances

10:45 am Networking Break **[NIAGARA ROOM]**

11:00 am **Essentials of Joint Venture Agreements **[BROCK ROOM]****
Andrew Ruzza, Barrister & Solicitor

- The when, who, what and why of joint venture agreements
- Key provisions and considerations
- Tax concerns and how to address them

11:25 am **Possessory and Prescriptive Rights in Ontario in the Aftermath of Land Titles Conversion**
Bob Aaron, Aaron & Aaron

- *Land Titles* (Land Titles Conversion Qualified and Absolute) versus *Registry* properties
- Implications of the *Real Property Limitations Act*
- Recent decisions you need to know

11:50 am **Ontario Land Tribunal Essentials**
Sharyn Vincent, Vice-Chair, Ontario Land Tribunal

- Scope of the OLT's jurisdiction and how it differs from its predecessor tribunals
- What to keep in mind when making an application to the OLT

12:15 pm **Effective Advocacy Before the Landlord and Tenant Board**
Kevin Lundy, Cohen Highley LLP

- "Renovictions": What you need to know beyond the media hype
- Subleases, assignments & unauthorized occupants: Pitfalls for landlords and tenants
- Rent reductions after an Above Guideline Increases

12:40 pm Networking Lunch

www.oba.org/pd
Questions? pd@oba.org

2:00 pm Afternoon Activities

Select from our organized activities, or head out on your own to explore all that Niagara Falls has to offer.

Pre-registration required*:

- **Wine Tour:** Get a behind the scenes look at Inniskillin Winery in Niagara on the Lake with this Barrel Cellar tour. (Hotel pick-up at 1:30pm)
- **Niagara Parks Power Station & Tailrace Tunnel Experience:** Discover the historic Niagara Parks Power Station. Then travel down a glass-paneled elevator to follow the path traveled by water through the tunnel to a viewing platform over the Niagara River. (Meet at Power Station at 2:00pm)

6:30 pm Reception and President's Dinner* [NIAGARA ROOM]

9:00 pm Late Night Social Events: Karaoke and Games Room

Sunday, September 14, 2025

7:45 am Breakfast service opens **[BROCK ROOM]**

8:10 am LDD Sponsored Breakfast Session [BROCK ROOM]

What's Happened and What's Going On

Maurizio Romanin, Barrister and Solicitor, and President, LawyerDoneDeal Corp.

- Join our Premier Event Sponsor, LDD for this special breakfast session

9:00 am Strategies for Will Drafting as Part of Your Practice

Bryan Carvalho, Ferreira & Bettencourt LLP

- Why will drafting could be a valuable addition to your practice
- Advice for simplifying the process and helpful tools to implement
- How to avoid dabbling and potential pitfalls

9:25 am Aborted Real Estate Transactions: The Latest from the Courts

Harry Herskowitz, Delzotto, Zorzi LLP

Get up-to-speed on the latest key principles and guidance from the Courts on aborted real estate transactions, including:

- Purpose of the deposit
- Equitable remedy of relief against forfeiture
- Calculating innocent vendors' damages and mitigation obligations

9:50 am Common Estate Planning Challenges and Strategies to Address Them

Gosha Sekhon, Sekhon Legal Services

Hear about common potential traps that arise in estate planning and equip yourself with effective strategies for managing them

10:15 am Safe Funds Transfer: Is It Really Money?

Ray Leclair, LawPRO

Safiyya Vankalwala, LawPRO

Your online bank account shows the funds, but is it actually money? Here's what you didn't learn in law school about Payments Canada and the rules of fund transfers. Learn about the real risks and how to protect yourself.

10:40 am Networking Break **[NIAGARA ROOM]**

11:00 am My Favourite Things: AI Tools Edition [NIAGARA ROOM]

Brent J. Arnold, Founder, Capstan Legal

Donald B. Johnston, Aird & Berlis LLP

Allan J. Ritchie, Loopstra Nixon LLP

Christiane Saad, Director, Justice, Association des collèges et des universités de la francophonie canadienne

How are AI tools making practice better for lawyers? Our panel will share their favourite AI tools and how they are using these tools to improve efficiencies and client service. How are AI tools making practice better for lawyers? Our panel will share their favourite AI tools and how they are using these tools to improve efficiencies and client service.

11:45 am Technology Test Drives

Jordan McCown, RealAML

Jonathan Clancy, OBA AI Academy

See the latest legal tech in action.

12:15 pm Neurodivergence in the Legal Profession

Moderator: Kelly McDermott, Deputy Regional Solicitor and Director of Legal Services, Regional Municipality of Durham and Past President of the Ontario Bar Association

Kate Julien, Canada Life

Michelle Liu, Liu Chooti Law & Counselling

Brian Studniberg, Henein Hutchison Robitaille LLP

Join us to explore how neurodivergent lawyers navigate demanding legal environments, often while masking or compensating for challenges that go unrecognized. Our panel will share real-life reflections and suggest ways the legal profession can better understand and support those whose differences aren't immediately obvious.

1:15 pm Concluding Remarks

Katy Commisso, OBA President

1:20 pm Lunch To Go **[BROCK ROOM]**

*Additional fees apply.