

Legal Centre News

Volume 63

Making a Difference in the Community Since 1989

Summer 2025



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This volume of the Peterborough Community Legal Centre newsletter features articles on a few of the many overlapping issues of inequality facing people in our community today. Additionally some articles may be helpful to those accessing PCLC who wish to learn more about the services we provide. Articles include:

- A legal update and reflections on sexual harassment in the workplace
- Information on eligibility requirements for accessing aid in matters of Wills and Powers of Attorney forms through PCLC
- A report on the cost-of-living and the inadequacy of the minimum wage
- Recommendations towards improving the accessibility of gender-affirming surgeries through OHIP
- A step-by-step guide on how to access your LTB portal

And more!

All images in this newsletter are credited and some articles include links to sources. These links are accessible on the digital copy of the newsletter.

Thanks for reading!

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Divisional Court Confirms Employers Have a Duty to Investigate Harassment Even if No Official Complaint is Made

This post is shared on the [Peterborough Community Legal Centre's Sexual Violence Projects](#) website.



In reviewing and overturning a [decision made by the Grievance Settlement Board](#)^[1] to reinstate five employees who had been terminated by Metrolinx for having engaged in behaviour that they deemed to be contrary to their harassment policies, the Divisional Court noted that:

“A victim’s reluctance to report or complain about sexual harassment may be caused by many factors: embarrassment, fear of reprisal, the prospect of further humiliation, or just the hope that, if ignored, the demeaning comments or behaviours will stop. This is true whether or not the conduct rises to the level of assault. A victim’s reluctance to report or complain cannot, however, relieve an employer of its statutory duty to conduct an investigation if an incident of sexual harassment comes to their attention.”^[1]

In terminating the five employees, Metrolinx interpreted its harassment policy which references “offensive behaviour arising from the use of electronic media, devices and systems.”^[2] The five employees had posted offensive comments to a WhatsApp page about several female employees, including that they “went down on her knees to get the acting supervisor job”^[3] and other similar comments suggesting that these women were getting special treatment by offering sexual favours to their male supervisors. While the women found these comments distressing, they did not want to make a formal complaint for fear of retaliation from their fellow employees.

A victim’s reluctance to report or complaint cannot, however, relieve an employer of its statutory duty to conduct an investigation if an incident of sexual harassment comes to their attention.

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Divisional Court Confirms Employers Have a Duty to Investigate Harassment Even if No Official Complaint is Made

The Arbitration Board recognized that the behaviour of the five employees was “shameful and reflected poorly on their character”^[4]. Despite this, they ordered the reinstatement of the five employees because these conversations had “occurred outside the workplace on the Grievors’ own time, using their cellphones through an online medium they reasonably believed and intended to be private to the Grievors”^[5]. Metrolinx appealed this decision to the Divisional Court.

In overturning the arbitrator’s decision the Divisional Court remarked that:

“The alleged sexual harassment in this case would fall into category (a) of the definition of “workplace sexual harassment”. It was a “course of vexatious comment” that the Grievors ought reasonably to have known would be unwelcome. When it became known to Ms. A, it created a demeaning and offensive work environment that no employee should be compelled to endure.”^[6]

This decision is important in two respects. First, it recognizes the employer’s obligation to investigate harassment in the workplace when it comes to their attention, regardless of whether or not a “formal complaint” was made. Second, it recognizes that behaviour that takes place online and after hours can still constitute sexual harassment and can negatively impact workplace culture, thereby creating a toxic work environment for the employees.

Disclaimer:

This post contains general legal information as of January 29, 2025, that may or may not apply in a particular situation. It is important to note that the law, government policies and available programs can change, and this blog will not be updated to reflect these changes. It is highly recommended to seek legal advice from a lawyer.

References:

[1] Amalgamated Transit Union - Local 1587 (Juteram et al.) v The Crown in Right of Ontario (Metrolinx), 2023 CanLII 72192 (ON GSB), <<https://canlii.ca/t/jzk7s>>, retrieved on 2025-01-30

[2] Metrolinx v. Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 1587, 2024 ONSC 1900 (CanLII), <<https://canlii.ca/t/k3tj8>>, retrieved on 2025-01-30

[3] Ibid. para. 9.

[4] Metrolinx DC, Supra, note 2 at para. 18.


[6] Ibid.

[5] Metrolinx AB, Supra note 1 at para. 13.

[7] Metrolinx DC, Supra, note 2 at para.51.

Do you need a will? Do you need a power of Attorney?

- ⇒ If you are 60 years old or older;
- ⇒ If you have a terminal illness or a degenerative condition likely to cause loss of capacity;
- ⇒ If you are in receipt of a low/fixed income;
- ⇒ If you do not own a business;
- ⇒ If you do not have income from a foreign source and do not own foreign property (including foreign bank accounts);
- ◆ You may be eligible for help with drafting a Will or completing a Power of Attorney form!
- ◆ The Legal Centre has an arrangement with Renfrew County Legal Clinic (RCLC) to assist eligible individuals in Peterborough City and County with drafting Wills and completing Power of Attorney Forms (both Personal Care and Property).



We can assist with
drafting Wills and
Power of Attorney

If you believe you meet the eligibility criteria, call us at 705-749-9355 and leave a message.

We will call you back to do an intake interview. We will gather some contact and eligibility information and your verbal direction to share that information with RCLC. Once we have that, RCLC will follow up with you to move the process forward.

In most cases we (and RCLC) must speak to the eligible person directly. However, if you know someone who meets this criteria and there are circumstances that make it difficult for them to contact us directly, please feel free to call us as well. We make arrangements with you to connect with them, or we may need to refer you elsewhere.



Notice!

If you need the Will drafted in less than 2 months, there may be inadequate time for us to assist you and we may need to refer you elsewhere.



Minimum Wage, Living Wage, and Homelessness

The minimum wage is going up but will you be able to afford a bachelor apartment in Peterborough? No, unless you earn a lot more than the minimum wage.



Image retrieved from Cardiff Life Business [Cardiff Business Life | Edition 03 by WCS](#)

On October 1, 2025, the minimum hourly wage for most workers will increase from \$17.20/hour to \$17.60/hour. In 2018, the minimum wage was \$14/hour. An increase over 7 years of \$3.60/hour is an improvement, but is it enough?

The [Ontario Living Wage Network](#) looks at the amount that working people in Peterborough and other locations would have to earn to cover the cost of basic necessities such as food, shelter, transportation, and childcare. Their estimates do include debt payments or saving for emergencies. **As of April 2025, the estimated living wage in Peterborough would be \$20.60 per hour, \$3.00/hour more than the minimum wage as of October 2025.** What does this mean for minimum wage, full time workers in Peterborough? It means that most will struggle to pay their rent and afford other basic necessities.

The United Way [Housing is Fundamental Report 2024](#) looked at average market rents in Peterborough and the required minimum wage for “affordability” based on 2023 statistics. “Affordability” was defined as meaning that the household pays no more than 30% of its gross income on rent. As of 2023, a full time minimum wage worker needed an hourly wage of \$17.99/hour to afford an average bachelor apartment rent of \$877/month. **This means that the October 1, 2025 increase to \$17.60/hour would not even have been enough in 2023 to allow a minimum wage worker to afford to rent a bachelor apartment and pay for other necessities.** In 2025, the average rent for a bachelor apartment is \$1576/month. Clearly, minimum wages are not enough to cover basic 2025 expenses like rent and food in Peterborough. This may help to explain why Kawartha Food Share has to assist more than 14,000 men women and children every month in this community [1].



Image retrieved from Freepik [Dollar Sign Clip](#)

[1] [Kawartha Food Share - Home](#)

Barriers to Accessing Gender-Affirming Surgery Through the Ontario Health Insurance Plan



Image retrieved from San Francisco Health Plan at [Access Gender Affirming Care - San Francisco Health Plan](https://www.sanfranciscohealthplan.org/access-gender-affirming-care)

Gender-affirming healthcare (GAHC) is an umbrella term that describes medical treatments and procedures that promote the development of masculine or feminine characteristics [1]. Access to GAHC is essential to the well-being and dignity of Transgender (Trans) people in Ontario. While not every Trans person decides to receive GAHC, those who do have described it as life-saving and intrinsic to their ability to thrive. Research strongly supports that GAHC leads to better mental health outcomes for Trans people. For example, a 2014 interview-based study conducted in the UK found that after receiving GAHC, the number of participants who experienced suicidal ideation reduced from 67% to 3% [2]. An additional study from the United States discredited the myth that those who access GAHC procedures experience high rates of regret, when only 1% of study participants were found to regret their gender-affirming surgery [3]. This highlights the positive impact that GAHC has, and the necessity of accessible GAHC to address the over-representation of Trans people in rates of poor mental health and suicide.

Due to financial barriers, many individuals seek GAHC through the Ontario Health Insurance Program (OHIP). Unfortunately, qualifying for OHIP-covered GAHC is overly restrictive, which prevents many people from receiving necessary health care. OHIP covered gender-affirming surgery, in particular, is riddled with undue hurdles that limit many Trans people from accessing health care that can be life-saving.

To receive OHIP-covered gender-affirming surgery, an applicant must provide documentation proving that they have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria [4]. Requiring a diagnosis of gender dysphoria is premised on the outdated notion that being transgender is a matter of medical diagnosis, rather than self-identification. It also incorrectly assumes that all Trans people experience gender dysphoria. While many Trans people do experience dysphoria, others may exclusively associate their gender with feelings of euphoria when they present and are perceived as their identified gender. For this reason, it is demeaning and discriminatory to reduce one's identity to a diagnosis. Moreover, someone must have access to a doctor or nurse practitioner who is willing to provide a dysphoria assessment, which is compounded by a critical shortage of family doctors and a failing healthcare system in Ontario [5].

Those seeking genital surgeries are also required to have been receiving Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) for 12 continuous months before being eligible, unless their doctor recommends otherwise [6]. This is problematic for at least two reasons. First, not all Trans people who want genital surgery also want to receive HRT. For example, a non-binary person may desire vaginoplasty due to dysphoria they experience by having male genitals, but may not want to take estrogen for fear of their breasts enlarging.

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Barriers to Accessing Gender-Affirming Surgery Through the Ontario Health Insurance Plan

For them, HRT would be inappropriate because it could increase their gender dysphoria. Also, not all forms of HRT are covered by public health insurance. This financial barrier that could prevent someone who would otherwise be eligible for OHIP-covered genital surgery, regardless of their desire to be on HRT.

A person seeking OHIP covered surgery also needs a healthcare worker, psychologist or social worker to confirm that they have been living as their identified gender for 12 continuous months, which raises questions about how this is being defined and assessed. Not only is everyone's experience of gender identity and gender expression different, but it may not be safe for a person to be living as their identified gender in every sphere of their life. Many Trans people are forced to remain closeted in areas like employment, housing, or in the family context for fear of transphobic discrimination or harassment. Proving this, a 2024 report from Egale Canada found that 74% of Trans and Two-Spirit people hid or minimized aspects of their identity while at work. Of those who were able to live as their identified gender at their workplace, 72% experienced discrimination because they were Trans or Two-Spirit. This requirement depends on the assessing healthcare worker, psychologist or social worker's understanding of the nuances and complexities faced by each individual Trans person. Plus, the aforementioned barriers to healthcare limit Trans peoples ability to access these professionals.

People who are not Trans do not face the same scrutiny when accessing similar gender-affirming procedures. For example, breast reconstruction surgery is available through OHIP after a woman who is not Trans has undergone a mastectomy for medical reasons. In this case, the breast reconstruction is a gender-affirming procedure because it allows for the woman to feel more comfortable in her body and gender, yet, she is not required to prove that she experiences dysphoria without breasts. This is just one example of the discriminatory double-standard against Trans people on the basis of sex and gender identity.

For the reasons above, we recommend that OHIP reform the requirements for gender-affirming surgery to emphasize self-identification, rather than medicalization. OHIP should reduce the overly restrictive criteria that places undue burdens on Trans people and improve access to GAHC overall. To do this, it is submitted that a diagnosis of gender dysphoria should not be required to access OHIP covered gender-affirming surgery, and instead, should require a self declaration indicating why their desired surgery is appropriate for them. Finally, it is submitted that a person should no longer be required to be on HRT and living as their identified gender for 12 continuous months or more before receiving genital surgery.

References

- [1] "What is Gender Affirmation?", Transhub, n.d. <https://www.transhub.org.au/101/gender-affirmation>.
- [2] Louis Bailey, Sonja Ellis, and Jay McNeil, "Suicide risk in the UK trans population and the role of gender transition in decreasing suicidal ideation and suicide attempt," *The Mental Health Review* 19, no.4 (2014): 215 <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1633967521/fulltextPDF/F8EC48DD19C5460APQ/1?accountid=14391&sourcetype=Scholarly%20Journals>.
- [3] Valeria P Bustos et al, "Regret after Gender Affirmation Surgery: A Systemic Review and Meta-analysis of Prevalence," *Plastic and Reconstruction Surgery – Global Open* 9, no.3 (2021): 7, doi: [10.1097/GOX.0000000000003477](https://doi.org/10.1097/GOX.0000000000003477).
- [4] "Gender Confirming Surgery," Health and Wellness, Home, Government of Ontario, last modified March 2, 2023, <https://www.ontario.ca/page/gender-confirming-surgery>.
- [5] Greg Davis, "32,000 residents in Peterborough area without family doctor; 63k by 2026: report," *globalnews.ca*, February 29, 2024, <https://globalnews.ca/news/10323892/peterborough-residents-family-doctor/>.
- [6] "Gender Confirming Surgery," Health and Wellness, Home, Government of Ontario, last modified March 2, 2023, <https://www.ontario.ca/page/gender-confirming-surgery>.
- [7] "Check Medication Coverage," Drug Coverage, Health and Wellness, Home, Government of Ontario, last modified June 11, 2024, <https://www.ontario.ca/check-medication-coverage/>.
- [8] Egale, *Working for Change: Understanding the employment experiences of Two Spirit, Trans, and nonbinary people in Canada: A Research Report*. (Egale, February 2024), <https://egale.ca/awareness/wfc/>.
- [9] "My mastectomy surgery," mastectomy, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, n.d, <https://sunnybrook.ca/content/?page=mastectomy-prostheses-reconstruction#:~:text=Breast%20reconstruction%20is%20covered%20by,have%20to%20pay%20for%20it>.
- [10] Theodore Schall and Jacob Moses, "Gender-Affirming Care for Cisgender People," *The Hastings Centre Report* 53, no.3 (2023) 15-24, DOI: 10.1002/hast.1486.

Healthcare workers and Workplace Harassment and Violence

This post is shared on the [Peterborough Community Legal Centre's Sexual Violence Projects](#) website.



A recent poll of 2,300 hospital workers conducted for CUPE reveals that “Ontario hospitals are increasingly toxic and dangerous workplaces, where violence against the workforce, which is 85 percent female, is not only tolerated but largely ignored.”^[i] More specifically, 63% of workers reported having experienced violence at work, and 36 % of those polled reported that they were sexually assaulted at work^[ii]. A further 78% experienced “name-calling, insults, threats and threatening gestures”^[iii]. Many of these reported having experienced violence and harassment on a daily or weekly basis.^[iv]

Sadly, hospital workers are not alone in facing violence and harassment in their workplaces. 64.1% of medical doctors report experiencing intimidation, discrimination and/or harassment from patients, their family members and staff.^[v] It can be very difficult for healthcare providers to know how to respond in this type of situation, particularly as most harassment policies only speak to harassment by a co-worker or supervisor and neglect to include reporting mechanisms for harassment by patients.^[vi]

As well, healthcare providers are often concerned about the impact that reporting the harassment might have on their clinical relationship with the patient. As one practitioner noted:

“They try to empathize with patients who may feel angry, frustrated, or powerless when interacting with the sometimes inefficient and bureaucratic health care system. They know patients are often stressed and frightened, and most physicians feel they have a duty to provide care, even when patients are difficult. So, when doctors feel harassed, they often just laugh it off in an attempt to diffuse the situation and avoid offending the patient.”^[vii]

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Healthcare workers and Workplace Harassment and Violence

As a result, some healthcare providers consider putting up with irate and inappropriate sexual behaviour as being just part of their jobs. Regardless, the impact of these experiences on their mental health is just as severe and can lead to reduced overall well-being and lower job satisfaction, which can adversely affect patient care. This type of toxic work environment ultimately leads to high turnover and increased absenteeism, which is costly to healthcare organizations as they have to invest heavily in recruitment and training new staff. High turnover is also disruptive to the quality of patient care.^[viii]

The impact of sexual harassment on employees is compounded in “environments where management is indifferent or inattentive to harassment contribute to a culture where perpetrators expect little to no consequences while victims feel discouraged from speaking up.”^[ix] Conversely, when leaders model respectful behaviour and prioritise a zero-tolerance approach to misconduct, they set a standard that permeates the entire organisation, reinforcing a culture where harassment is actively prevented and swiftly addressed”.^[x]

Here are some ways to prevent and address harassment and discrimination in healthcare settings, including:

- a) **Context specific training:** every employee should receive training that is specific to the context in which they are working and which explains the procedures for reporting as well as where the employee can go for help and support in dealing with the emotional impact.^[xi]
- b) **Harassment Policies:** every workplace in Ontario should have a comprehensive policy that addresses discrimination and harassment, including references to harassment by customers/patients and online harassment.^[xii]
- c) **Swift and Effective Intervention by Managers:** When an incident of harassment is reported, managers and HR departments should fully investigate and ensure serious consequences for those perpetrating the harassment, even if they are customers or patients.^[xiii]
- d) **By-Stander Intervention:** Employees should be trained to recognize when one of their colleagues is being harassed. and learn how to safely intervene in these situations.^[xiv]
- e) **Fostering Inclusive and Positive Work Culture:** A great deal of harassment could be prevented by ensuring that the workplace culture is inclusive and positive. It is important to build trust with employees so that they feel comfortable reporting incidents of harassment.
- f) **Hold Management Accountable:** Ensure that managers are actively monitoring the workplace to ensure staff are not being harassed. They must report, investigate, and respond to all incidents they observe, whether or not there is a formal report.

References

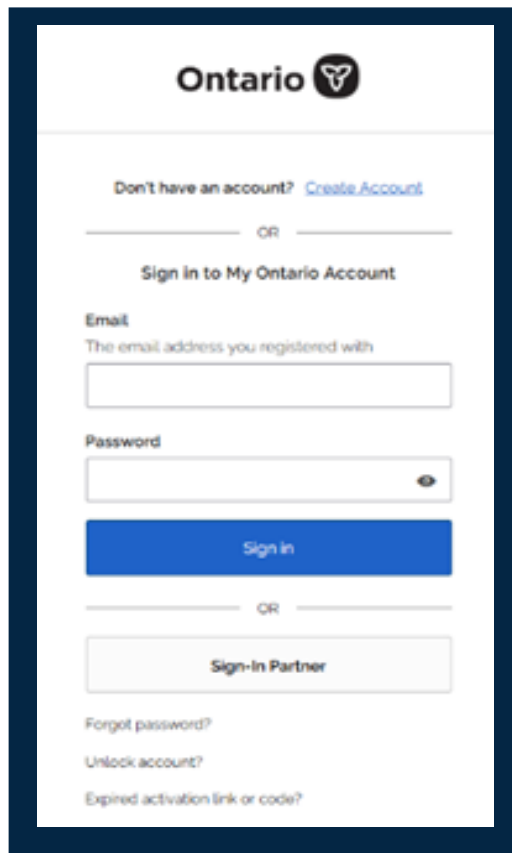
- [1] Draaisma, M. (2022, July 6). Physical violence “part of the job” for hospital workers, CUPE Poll finds | CBC News. CBCnews. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/cupe-poll-hospital-workers-ontario-violence-1.6511265> (« CBC Article ») at p.2.
- [2] *ibid.*
- [3] *Supra*, note 1 at p.2-3
- [4] *Supra*, note 1
- [5] Bahji, A., & Altomare, J. (2020). Prevalence of intimidation, harassment, and discrimination in resident physicians: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Canadian Medical Education Journal*. <https://journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/cmej/article/view/57019>.
- [6] Corley, J. (2021, November 18). It’s not just bosses who harass health workers: Hospitals start addressing patients’ “egregious” behavior. *STAT*. <https://www.statnews.com/2019/09/12/sexual-harassment-hospitals-start-addressing-patient-behavior/>
- [7] *ibid.*, p.2
- [8] *Supra*, note 8. p.2
- [9] How to prevent sexual harassment in healthcare. (n.d.). https://www.canadasafetytraining.com/Safety_Blog/how-to-prevent-sexual-harassment-in-healthcare.aspx.

How to Access Your LTB Portal

If you have a file before the Landlord and Tenant Board, and you have an email address and a device with access to the internet, the easiest way to monitor your file is to have an LTB portal and you can do this by setting up a My Ontario Account.

Your My Ontario Account provides access to Government services. You may have already set up a My Ontario Account before you had an LTB matter if you are in receipt of Ontario Works, or have a registered business.

If you don't have an account, you can start one through the LTB website. Look up the Landlord and Tenant Board on the internet (<https://tribunalsontario.ca/ltb/>) and click onto "Go to Ontario Tribunals Portal" inside a blue button on the screen.

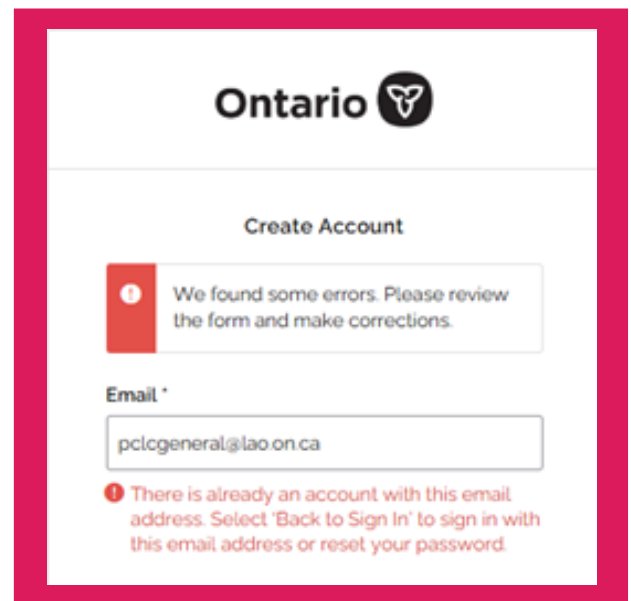


The screenshot shows the Ontario My Ontario Account sign-in page. At the top is the Ontario logo. Below it, there is a link for "Don't have an account? Create Account". A horizontal line with "OR" in the center separates this from the sign-in section. The sign-in section is titled "Sign in to My Ontario Account" and contains two input fields: "Email" (with a subtext "The email address you registered with") and "Password". Below these fields is a blue "Sign in" button. Another horizontal line with "OR" in the center follows, leading to a "Sign-In Partner" button. At the bottom, there are links for "Forgot password?", "Unlock account?", and "Expired activation link or code?".

Enter the email address that you will be using inside the first balloon and then enter a password in the second. A prompt will tell you what the password requirements are.

You will be sent a verification code to your email to finalize the set up.

You may receive a message that there is already an account associated with your email:



The screenshot shows the Ontario Create Account page. At the top is the Ontario logo. Below it is the title "Create Account". A red error message box contains the text: "We found some errors. Please review the form and make corrections." Below this is an "Email *" input field containing the address "pclcggeneral@lao.on.ca". A red error message below the field states: "There is already an account with this email address. Select 'Back to Sign In' to sign in with this email address or reset your password."

This is because you have already set up a My Ontario Account and you may not remember your password. You can try signing in with the email and password you were going to use **OR** sign in and click "change password."

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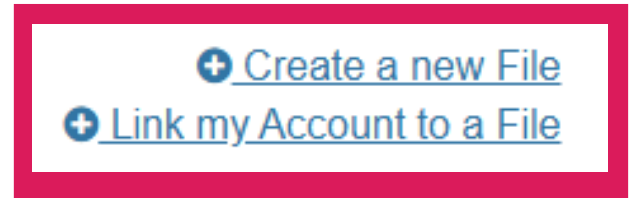
How to Access Your LTB Portal

When an application has been filed with the LTB regarding your address, the LTB sends a file number and a PIN to the parties.

USE THE INFORMATION BELOW TO ACCESS THIS LTB FILE ONLINE
PIN NUMBER: XXXXXXXXX
FILE NUMBER: XXXXXXXXX

When you sign into the My Ontario Account from the LTB website, you will be sent to your LTB portal.

In the top right corner you will see the following



Click on “Link my Account to a File”. A pop up will appear and you can enter the LTB file number assigned to your matter and the five digit PIN.

If you have not received the PIN by the time you have a Hearing scheduled, you should call the LTB at 1-888-332-3234, give them your file number and ask for a PIN.

Once you have one or multiple files linked to your account, you can monitor the status of your Hearing date, see what the other party has submitted to the LTB, and upload your own document including your evidence and LTB forms.



Signing a Joint Lease: Important Things to Remember



Image retrieved from iStock by Getty Images [5,743 Rent Agreement Form Stock Photos, Pictures & Royalty-Free Images - iStock](#)

With tight rental market and low wages, it can be difficult to find an affordable place to rent these days. On account of this, renters often pool their money to rent a house by signing a single lease. Such agreements where tenants sign one single lease to rent a whole house creates a **“joint tenancy”**. While students are more likely to enter into these kind of arrangements due to their limited budget, it is not uncommon for other low-income individuals to enter into joint tenancies.

Joint tenancies have the benefit of allowing a group of tenants to share the rent among themselves to fit their budget, but joint tenancies also have drawbacks. Typically, in a joint tenancy each tenant is jointly and severally bound by the agreement. This means in case of default by one of the tenants, the landlord may chose to come after that tenant or all of the joint tenants. As an example, if one tenant causes damage to the rental unit, the landlord may chose to bring an application for compensation before the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) against that tenant or against all the tenants, even those who were not responsible for the damage.

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Signing a Joint Lease: Important Things to Remember

This is different from a “**tenancy in common**” where multiple tenants rent individual rooms in a house, have their own individual lease or pay their rents individually to the landlord. In tenancy in common, tenants are individually liable for their rent arrears or damage they may cause to the unit. Other tenants in the house cannot be held accountable for rent arrears or damage that has been caused by another tenant.

The other downside of joint tenancies is that if a landlord has breached their obligations under the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 (RTA)* and the tenants wish to file an application against the landlord, all tenants will have to file a joint application against the landlord. A single tenant may not be able to bring an application against the landlord to seek a remedy.

Further complications arise in joint tenancies if one of the joint tenants wishes to move out of the rental unit prior to the expiry of the lease. Questions like what is the status of the remaining tenants if one of the tenants gives a notice of termination at the end of term when others wish to stay in the rental unit can be complicated and the legislation does not provide any clear answers to such questions. There are special rules that apply to specific situations in which tenants may be able to terminate joint tenancies if they or their child has experienced violence or another form of abuse in the house. Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) decisions in cases involving joint tenancies have been inconsistent and each case is decided based on its own facts and circumstances.

Unfortunately, many tenants sign joint tenancy agreements without understanding the implications of such agreements. Navigating situations that may arise out of such agreements can be complicated and frustrating for tenants.

If you are group of tenants thinking about entering into a joint tenancy or you are already joint tenants and have any questions relating to termination of a joint lease, it is best to seek legal advice before making any decision. The Legal Centre can assist and advise you in navigating such situations.

Please Note:

**This article provides general information only and does not constitute legal advice. Please contact the Legal Center directly to discuss your particular situation if you wish to seek legal advice.*

Medical Transportation Coverage for ODSP Recipients



Image retrieved from Freepik [Community Care Icons and Team help Illustration](#) | [Premium Vector](#)

Residents in Peterborough and the surrounding area are feeling the effects of a growing crisis: a severe shortage of family doctors. As of 2024, the Ontario College of Family Physicians reported that over 32,000 people in the region were without a family doctor—a number projected to nearly double by 2026 if significant action is not taken. Despite commitments from the City of Peterborough and the provincial government to address this crisis, many community members and health advocates are concerned that provincial funding cuts to public health care, alongside increased funding given to for-profit clinics, are worsening the shortage of family doctors and weakening Ontario’s health system.

The family doctor shortage is disproportionately impacting low-income, rural, and disabled residents, including many recipients of the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). Without access to local care, many of our clients are being forced to travel to places like Oshawa, Toronto, and Ottawa to access primary medical care and medical treatment. For many, travel costs are a major barrier to accessing health care. Some have even been unable to receive necessary medical treatment or services because they could not afford the cost of travel.

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Wondering how to get involved with the Peterborough Community Legal Centre? *Become a member!*

The Objects of the Legal Centre

The objects of the Legal Centre are:

- To provide legal services or paralegal services or both including activities reasonably designed to encourage access to such services or to further such services and services designed to promote the legal welfare of the low income residents of the County of Peterborough, on a basis other than fee-for-service;
- To provide legal information and education and to encourage awareness of legal rights; To provide legal representation to low-income residents of the County of Peterborough;
- To identify areas of law affecting low-income members of our society and to advocate reform.

Membership

The Centre is directed by its members. If you live in the City or County, and are 16 years of age or older, you can become a member. If you are a member, you can:

- Vote at the Annual General Meeting
- Stand for election to the Board of Directors if you are over 18.
- Get the Legal Centre's newsletter twice a year.

There is no fee to become a member. You do not need to be a member to get help from us. Membership is for three years and takes effect 30 days after approval by the Board of Directors. A letter will be sent to you confirming your membership.

How to become a member of the Legal Centre in 4 steps:

1

Call the Legal Centre at 705-749-9355 and leave a voicemail with your name, telephone number, and address.

2

We will mail you a Membership application with a stamped envelope addressed to the Legal Centre.

3

Complete the Membership application and insert it in the stamped envelope addressed to the Legal Centre.

4

Mail the sealed, stamped envelope addressed to the Legal Centre by dropping it in a mailbox or bring it to the Post Office. You will not need to buy postage.

Contact us!

www.ptbo-clcj.org

150 King St, 4th Floor East, Peterborough, ON, K9J 2R9

P: 705-749-9355 F: 705-749-9360

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