

FOLA Fall Plenary 2025

November 12 to 14
Ottawa, Ontario



Federation of Ontario
Law Associations

Fédération des associations
de barreau de l'Ontario



Federation of
Ontario Law
Associations
Organization Sponsor of

Welcome to Ottawa!

On behalf of the Board and Executive of the Federation of Ontario Law Associations, welcome to our Fall Plenary. Twice each year, our community gathers to reconnect, learn, and advocate together on the issues that matter most to Ontario's legal profession.

This plenary comes at a moment when the justice system and our profession face tremendous change, from the Law Society's ongoing reforms and the modernization of Ontario's civil rules, to the increasing role of AI in practice and the pressures of recruitment and retention across the province. FOLA is proud to be a strong and credible voice advancing these conversations.

Over the next two days, we'll share insights on key challenges in civil, criminal, family, and estates law, and explore new tools and approaches to strengthen our associations and our practices. We are especially proud to highlight our role as an intervener at the Supreme Court of Canada.

We thank all the presidents, directors, and staff of Ontario's law associations for your leadership and dedication. Together, we build the networks, share the ideas, and create the momentum that improve access to justice and strengthen our profession. And last but not least, thanks to the plenary planning committee who have helped make this all happen: Katie Black, Kelly Lovell, Curtis Pineiro, Karen Seeley, Danielle Vincent.

We look forward to connecting with you throughout this plenary, and to carrying forward our shared mission of supporting Ontario's lawyers, law associations, and the communities we serve.

Sincerely,

Allen Wynperle

Allen Wynperle, Chair

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 <p>LAW SOCIETY OF ONTARIO accredited EDI</p>	Total Professionalism Hours	4 hours
	Total EDI Professionalism Hours	35 minutes

 <p>APPROVED FOR LawPRO RISK MANAGEMENT CREDIT</p>	<p>This program qualifies for the LAWPRO Risk Management Credit. To encourage participation in CPD programs that include risk management content, LAWPRO offers a \$50 premium credit (to a maximum of \$100) for each qualifying program completed by mid-September. The maximum \$100 credit will be applied to next year's insurance premium. The Risk Management Credit is applicable to standard coverage, and cannot be applied to Run-off or Excess policy premiums. It can only be claimed by lawyer insureds.</p>
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WIFI Network: Brookstreet_Meeting

Wifi Code: Brookstreet2025

Wednesday, November 12

7:40 PM - **Welcome Reception - Pub Night @ Calabogie Brewing**
10:00 PM **(Kanata)**

Join your fellow Presidents and delegates for a casual pub night!

Shuttle will depart hotel at 7:50 PM.

Calabogie is at Unit 130, 105 Schneider Rd

Shuttle will return at 10:00 PM



Thursday, November 13 - Brookstreet Hotel

7:30 AM - 4:30 PM	Registration Open Collect your nametag at our registration table. Newbridge I & II – 2nd Floor Brookstreet Hotel, 525 Legget Drive
7:45 AM - 9:00 AM	Breakfast and Networking Buffet breakfast is included with your registration.
9:00 AM - 9:15 AM	Call to Order, Welcoming Remarks from the Chair, and Roll Call of the Presidents Opening remarks from Allen Wynperle, Chair of FOLA, and, in a time-honoured tradition, presidents are invited to introduce the members of their delegation.
9:15 AM - 9:20 AM	Welcoming Remarks from the County of Carleton Law Association CCLA President Katie Black welcomes us to Ottawa!
9:20 AM - 10:25 AM	Committee Chairs' Reports Reports will be presented from FOLA's Real Estate, Family Law, Legal Aid, Estates and Criminal Law committees. For follow-up purposes or feedback, you will find their contact information printed on the last page of this document.
10:25 AM - 10:40 AM	Break



10:40 AM – 11:10 AM	LiRN Update Discover what's new at the Legal Information & Resource Network, from collections to physical spaces and the development of the network.	Speakers: • Theresa Leitch, LiRN Managing Director
11:10 AM - 11:30 AM	FOLA as Intervener at the SCC: <i>English Montreal School Board</i> FOLA steps onto the national stage as an intervener in the landmark English Montreal School Board case. The Saskatchewan UR Pride appeal may also be heard at the same time. This session will explore the issues at stake, FOLA's role, and what the outcome could mean for justice and the relationships between governments and the courts in Canada.	Speakers: • Katie Black, Black & Associates, CCLA Chair • Allen Wynperle, Chair, FOLA
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM	LAWPRO	Speakers: • Dan Pinnington, CEO, LAWPRO
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Lunch Sponsored by our gold sponsor, Closer	
1:00 PM - 1:20 PM	Law Society of Ontario Update Hear directly from the Law Society of Ontario on the latest developments impacting the profession.	Speakers: • Priya Bhatia, Interim CEO, LSO
1:20 PM - 1:50 PM	Federation of Law Societies of Canada The Federation of Law Societies of Canada will provide a nation-wide perspective on justice issues and the profession.	Speakers: • Teresa Donnelly, President, FLSC
1:50 PM – 2:30 PM	Transitioning Into a Practice How do you take over an established practice? This session will explore practical strategies for taking over a practice, transitioning files and clients, and ensuring continuity. Also covered will be the flip side, that is, transitioning out of a practice.	Speakers: • Curtis Pineiro, Central East Representative, FOLA • Nathan Higgins, EDH Law • Nicole Truman, Fox Law



2:30 PM –
3:00 PM

Executive Performance Skills for Lawyers

Excellence in practice requires more than legal expertise. This session explores the executive-level skills that can help you become a partner or flourish as a sole practitioner: leadership, business development, communication, and professional presence. Gain insight into how to cultivate these abilities to elevate your practice and strengthen your impact within the profession.

Speakers:

- Karen Seeley, Northwest Representative and Criminal Law Committee Chair, FOLA
- Oliver Gleeson, President, Salient Map Executive Consultancy

3:00 PM –
3:10 PM

Break: Go to the next Breakout session!

3:10 PM –
3:45 PM

Breakout Sessions

Speakers:

A:

Newbridge I & II – 2nd Floor

Real Estate Law Roundtable

From identity-fraud red flags to title insurance trends, join practitioners and stakeholders to trade tactics for smoother closings. We'll cover pain points, closing issues, trust-account compliance, remote commissioning, and practice management risks and tips.

- Mark Giavedoni, 2nd Vice Chair and Real Estate Committee Chair, FOLA

B:

Newbridge IV – 2nd Floor

Civil Rules Roundtable

With significant changes to Ontario's civil rules underway, this roundtable offers an opportunity to hear updates, share perspectives, and discuss the practical impact on lawyers and their clients. Join colleagues from across the province to consider how these reforms affect daily practice and what further improvements may be needed.

- Kevin Cooke, Ad Hoc Civil Litigation Committee Chair, East Region Representative, FOLA

C:

Newbridge V- 2nd Floor

People-Centred Ethics & Practice in Ontario Family Law

Ontario's family law practitioners face cases shaped by trauma, cultural complexity, systemic barriers, and family violence—realities that challenge traditional models of professionalism. This session, based on findings from the 2025–26 OBA Foundation Chief Justice of Ontario Fellowship in Legal Ethics and Professionalism, draws on the lived experiences of more than 90 lawyers. It offers trauma-informed, people-centred strategies to navigate ethical dilemmas, support diverse clients with dignity, and reimagine professionalism in ways that strengthen both access to justice and lawyer well-being.

- Archana Medhekar, AM Law Office

3:45 PM –
4:00 PM

Break - Go to next Breakout session!



4:00 PM - **Breakout Sessions**
4:35 PM

A:

Newbridge I & II – 2nd Floor

AI Tools: LiRN & CanLII

CanLII will have a huge announcement introducing AI tools. LiRN will discuss what AI services are offered for lawyers. Hop in and learn how to use and access these AI services best, and find what lawyers across Ontario are finding most useful so far. Learn what's working, what's popular, and how these tools can support your day-to-day practice.

Speakers:

- Theresa Leitch, LiRN Managing Director
- Curtis Pineiro, Central East Representative, FOLA
- Ivan Mokanov, President, Lexum

B:

Newbridge IV- 2nd Floor

Estates Law Roundtable

With estates practice evolving alongside demographic shifts, legislative change, and increasing client needs, this roundtable offers a chance to share experiences and explore emerging challenges.

- Andrew Keesmaat, Estates Committee Chair, FOLA
- Liam Rafferty, Rafferty Law

C:

Newbridge V- 2nd Floor

Criminal Law Roundtable

Karen Seeley and Danielle Vincent

From security at courthouses to evolving trial practices, criminal lawyers face a rapidly changing landscape. This roundtable brings together practitioners to exchange insights on current issues, share practical strategies, and discuss how to better support clients and colleagues in Ontario's criminal justice system.

- Karen Seeley, Northwest Representative and Criminal Law Committee Chair, FOLA
- Danielle Vincent, Northeast Representative, FOLA

4:35 PM - **Free Time**
6:30 PM



6:15 PM - 9:00 PM	Law Society Treasurer's Reception and Dinner Dinner at Marshes Golf Club A time-honoured tradition at FOLA plenaries is the dinner hosted by the Treasurer of the Law Society.	Speakers: • Natalia Rodriguez, Bencher • Michael Geist, Canada Research Chair in Internet and E-commerce Law, University of Ottawa
	Shuttle will depart hotel at 6:25 PM Marshes is at 320 Terry Fox Drive Shuttle will return at 9:15 PM	Sponsor: • Law Society of Ontario
9:00 PM - 12:00 AM	Hospitality Suite Celtic Ballroom, 1st Floor Brookstreet Hotel Our hospitality suite is generously provided by LAWPRO, our platinum sponsor.	Sponsor: • LAWPRO

Friday, November 14

9:00 AM - 9:55 AM	Regional Breakfast Meetings Newbridge I & II – 2nd Floor Brookstreet Hotel Start the day with breakfast with the delegates from your region of Ontario. Your breakfast is included with registration.
9:55 AM – 10:00 AM	Plenary Survey!
10:00 AM – 10:15 AM	FOLA General Meeting The General Meeting brings together association leaders to review FOLA's business, discuss key priorities, and chart the path ahead. This session ensures members have a voice in shaping the direction of the organization and advancing the interests of Ontario's legal community.



10:15 AM -	LDD	Speakers:
10:30 AM	A word from our organization sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valerie Ryan, LDD
10:30 AM -	LiRN's Library Operations Policy (<i>in camera</i>)	Speakers:
10:45 AM	LiRN has proposed a new Library Operations Policy. We want to hear from you so we can provide meaningful feedback. Please bring your ideas!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allen Wynperle, Chair, FOLA • Jennifer S. Rooke, 1st Vice-Chair, FOLA
10:45 AM -	Break – Check out now then come back for our final panels!	
11:15 AM		
11:15 AM -	Lawyers Financial	Speakers:
11:30 AM	A word from our platinum sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doug Judson, Past Chair, FOLA • Katie Black, Black & Associates, CCLA President • Tanya Jenkins, Executive Director, CCLA • Jordan Lester, TBLA President • Corey Wall, Treasurer, FOLA
11:30 AM -	30 Tips in 30 Minutes	
12:00 PM	Looking for quick wins you can put to work right away? This high-energy session delivers a burst of practical advice drawn from the real-world experience of our expert panel. From smarter workflows to client care and courtroom strategies, you'll walk away with actionable ideas to make your practice sharper, faster, and more effective.	
12:00 PM	Final Remarks, Lunch, and Departure	Speaker:
	A final word to wrap-up before lunch and departure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allen Wynperle, Chair, FOLA



12:25 PM

Tour of the Supreme Court of Canada

Step inside Canada's highest court for a 1-hour guided tour that brings the institution to life. Learn about the Court's history, architecture, and role in shaping the country's legal landscape while exploring the chambers where landmark decisions are made. A unique opportunity to connect with the heart of Canadian justice

Shuttle departs hotel at 12:10 PM

301 Wellington Street, Ottawa

Shuttle will return at 2:30 PM

***NOTE: The shuttle does not have space for luggage.
Please store luggage at the concierge/front desk,
which can be picked up upon return.**



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Thank you to our speakers!

Priya Bhatia is the Acting CEO and Executive Director, Professional Development and Competence at the Law Society of Ontario. She is a senior leader with demonstrated experience in complex operational environments. Her previous roles at the Law Society include Executive Director, Professional Development and Competence, and Director of Licensing and Accreditation. Skilled in policy development, strategic management, public speaking, relationship building and credentialing, Priya has been actively involved in the regulatory sector and has served on a number of committees at the Federation of Law Societies of Canada and the Council for Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation. Priya was recently appointed to the board of the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators Regulation and has served as Chair of the Ontario Regulators for Accessibility Consortium and the Association of Continuing Legal Education Directors. Priya is a frequent presenter on topics of competence, licensing, and credentialing at a national and international level. Priya has a JD from the University of Ottawa and certifications in adult training and development, strategic leadership, and inclusion best practices.



Katie Black, a former clerk to the Chief Justice McLachlin, is a civil litigator in practicing in corporate commercial law and public law. She regularly appears before all levels of Court in Ontario and the Supreme Court of Canada. Clients also benefit from Katie's public policy and public relations experience. From September 2016 to February 2018, Katie served as the Judicial Affairs Advisor to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Jody Wilson Raybould.



Teresa Donnelly has been a lawyer with the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General since 1994.

As a Crown, Teresa has been dedicated to prosecutions involving violence against women and children – both domestic violence and sexual violence.

As the West Region Sexual Violence Crown with the Ministry's Sexual Violence Advisory Group, she is one of 7 full-time prosecutors in Ontario dedicated to enhancing the quality of sexual violence prosecutions and the victim's experience in the criminal justice system.

In addition, Teresa was elected as a Bencher with the Law Society of Ontario in 2015 and 2019. She was elected the Treasurer or President of the Law Society of Ontario from June 2020-June 2022. Teresa was the fifth woman Treasurer in the 223 year history of the Law Society of Ontario. As Treasurer her focus included the mental health of legal practitioners, EDI, women in law, reconciliation, the competence and ethical responsibilities of lawyers and paralegals, and the important role that paralegals play in access to justice in Ontario.

Teresa is the President of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada and a faculty member of the National Criminal Law Program where she has presented on various topics including dangerous offenders, sexual violence, human trafficking, and ethics. With Beth Beattie, LSM, she co-Chairs the Law Society of Ontario's Mental Health Summit that reaches thousands of legal practitioners each year. She is also the President of the South West Region Women's Law Association in Ontario. A member of the Advocates Society and the Huron Law Association

In June 2024, Teresa received an honorary Doctor of Laws from the Law Society of Ontario.

In the spring of 2025, Teresa travelled to Kenya with the Equality Effect as a volunteer to teach Kenyan prosecutors about the prosecution of sexual violence involving child defilement.



Mark Giavedoni is a partner in Gowling WLG's Hamilton office where he is the firm's National Leader of the Real Estate Industry and Sector Group, and also a member of the Construction/Infrastructure Law Group, Expropriation Law Group and Municipal Law Group.

Mark prides himself on being a responsive and dedicated strategic adviser on all aspects of real property transactions: title repairs, financing, project structure and development, dispute prevention and resolution. As a Certified Specialist in Real Estate Law by the Law Society of Ontario, Mark has the expertise and personal touch to bring the right solution to task.

He is frequently consulted by municipalities, universities, school boards, utilities and other lawyers to advise on complex matters. His experience enables him to guide and represent clients on condominium structures and developments; commercial leases; financings and secured lending; purchase and sale transactions; land use planning and assembly; expropriations; construction contracts and facilities management.

Mark is a past president of the Hamilton Law Association. He is a member of the Real Estate, Municipal and Education Sections of the Ontario Bar Association and is the 2nd Vice-Chair and Chair of the Real Estate Committee for the Federation of Ontario Law Associations.



Nathan Higgins is a lawyer in Peterborough, Ontario. When not lawyering, Nathan can mostly be found parenting, cycling, building things, and generally trying to keep up...with varying degrees of success...depending on the week.



Theresa Leitch is LIRN Inc.'s inaugural Managing Director.

Early in her career, Theresa practiced municipal law as both a litigator and a solicitor. After leaving the practice of law, she served in positions in law firm and organizational management, knowledge management, continuing professional development and project management of strategic initiatives.

Throughout her career she has developed a superior understanding of the legal information and knowledge needs of the profession. She has demonstrated a collaborative approach to leadership and expertise as a communicator and relationship-builder, bringing vision and creativity to her work.

In the Managing Director role, Theresa is responsible for the strategic leadership and management of LIRN, including administration of funding to county law libraries, creation and implementation of appropriate business and operational protocols to support LIRN, establishing collaborative relationships with stakeholders, and governance, legal and other compliance obligations.

When she's not working, Theresa can be found traipsing the trails around the GTA with her hiking group, the Viking F'ing Warriors. She also sings in a punk rock choir, and has performed at such storied venues as the Horseshoe Tavern and the Bovine.

Archana Medhekar is a Certified Family Law Specialist and Accredited Family Mediator-Arbitrator with over 20 years of practice experience in Ontario. She serves as a panel lawyer for the Office of the Children's Lawyer and is a member of the Family Rules Committee of Ontario.

Her litigation and research focus on family violence, trauma-informed lawyering, and systemic barriers faced by clients with intersectional vulnerabilities. She is the 2025–26 recipient of the Chief Justice of Ontario Fellowship in Legal Ethics and Professionalism, supported by the OBA Foundation.

Archana has co-authored several books, including *Domestic Violence in Immigrant Communities: Case Studies, Breaking the Silence: The Untold Journeys of Racialized Immigrant Youth Through Family Violence, Childhood Experiences of Family*

*Violence Among Racialized Immigrant Youth: Case Studies, and the newly released *Understanding Family Violence in Family Court Proceedings: Providing Effective Responses for Victims, Children, and Perpetrators.**

A respected educator and public speaker, she trains professionals, mediators, and judges across Canada and internationally. Her work extends to the United Nations SDG 16+ agenda for peace and justice. Honoured with the Top 25 Canadian Immigrant Award, Archana is widely recognized for her leadership in social justice, access to justice, and community service.



Nicole Truman is a graduate of the Queen's University Faculty of Law. Before joining Fox Law, Nicole summered and articled on Bay Street in Toronto. She and her business partner purchased Fox Law from its sole practitioner founder in 2016. Over the past nine years, Fox Law has grown from a busy firm employing one lawyer and two legal assistants to an even busier firm that now employs three lawyers and 10 legal assistants, as well as summer and articling students. She and her business partner also purchased the building from which the business operates, as well as three additional law practices during this nine year period of time. Nicole's area of focus is business law, including the purchase and sale of businesses, incorporations, shareholder and partnership agreements, as well as working with her business clients in a collaborative fashion alongside their accountants, financial planners, bankers and others, to tackle succession planning for their businesses across a wide range of industries.
