

2026 FOLA Spring Plenary  
General Meeting

CCLA Motion – Background

The Law Society of Ontario (“LSO”) requires all licensees to maintain a high standard of professional competence and ensure they possess the knowledge, skill, and capacity necessary for their law practice. This involves staying up to date on changes and developments in the law. This is of fundamental importance to the practice of law in Ontario as a common law jurisdiction.

Lawyers and paralegals must have access to legal research materials in order to stay on top of the developments of the common law and to adequately present the law to the Court, as required by professional and ethical requirements. The costs of maintaining up to date textbooks and online legal research databases are continually increasing. This may make it more difficult for some licensees, particularly sole practitioners or those in small firms, to have the resources available to maintain the high standard of professional competence the LSO expects of them. Access to county law libraries directly facilitates law licensees’ ability to maintain and grow their knowledge of the relevant and applicable law.

We strongly believe that county law libraries should be available to every person who is licensed to practise law in Ontario, either as a lawyer or a paralegal. There should not be barriers to gaining the legal knowledge necessary and required to represent clients as permitted by the LSO. Those who are licensed to practise law should have the tools to do so competently.

All lawyers in Ontario are granted access to county law libraries by paying the LSO library levy, as set out in By-Law 13(10). This motion seeks to advocate for an amendment to that By-Law to provide that every person *licensed to practise law* in Ontario be granted access to county law libraries in exchange for the payment of the library levy for the benefit of LiRN.