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# Law Society of Ontario Update

May 2026



**Law Society**  
of Ontario

**Barreau**  
de l'Ontario

# Overview

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- why the work of the Law Society matters
- a model regulator
- legal professionals and the economy
- governance review task force update
- Indigenous cultural training course
- increased transparency
- trust account management and enforcement
- consultations: lawyer licensing process & A2I
- the year ahead

# My path to the **Law Society**



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# Why the Law Society's work matters:

- public confidence in justice, the rule of law, democracy and the economy
- self-regulation depends on trust
- dual-role: regulator and steward
- public trust must be earned and renewed.



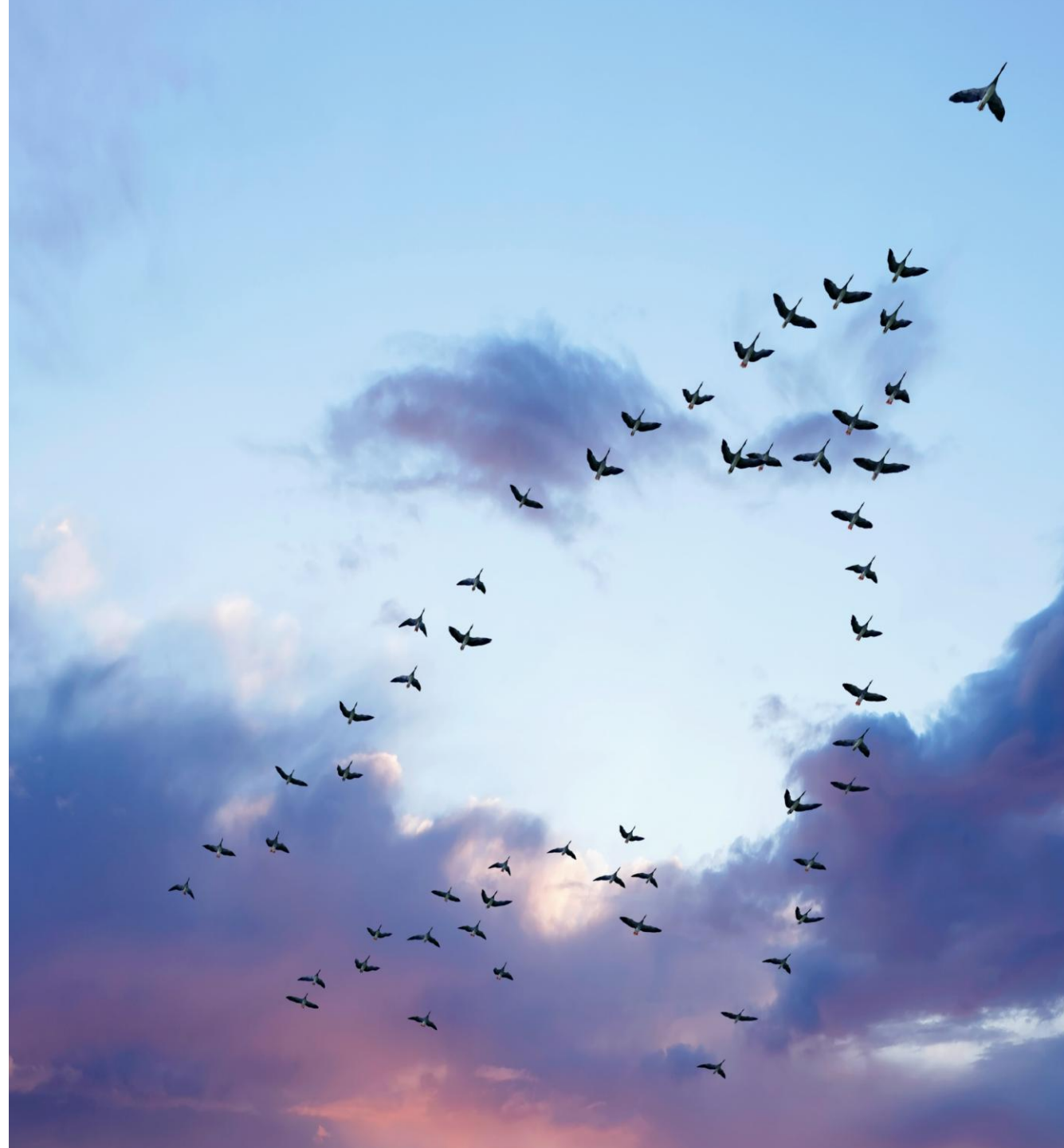
# A model regulator

Service orientation/excellence

Balanced compliance and discipline

Willingness to self-scrutinize

Forward thinking and future ready



# Legal professionals and the economy

- Lawyers and paralegals play a vital role in local economies.
- Strong legal services support business growth, fair markets and community stability.
- Access to justice challenges are most acute in smaller and underserved communities.
- Law Society and FOLA are working together to support recruitment, mentorship and succession planning.



# Governance Review Task Force update

*Recommendations from the Task Force that support more effective, responsive and timely oversight of the legal profession in the public interest.*

- reducing the size of the board from 53 to 37 benchers
- including three Law Society-appointed benchers that are all skills/merit based and include:
  - one Indigenous person
  - one Francophone licensee-representative.

# Indigenous cultural training

## *Shared Pathways: Legal Education About Indigenous Ontario*

- Convocation has approved this course as mandatory for all licensees who are subject to CPD requirements.
- Phased approach: anticipate a summer release date.
- The requirement will come into effect on January 1, 2027.
- Licensees will have two years to complete the free, six-hour, online course (between January 1, 2027, and December 31, 2028).
- Licensees will be able to apply CPD incentives toward their annual CPD requirements, including:
  - a two-for-one CPD credit allocation (up to 12 hours); and
  - the option to carry-over CPD Hours for use in up to three years.

# Increased transparency

- Enhanced reporting requirements, re: personal and business information, effective March 31, 2026.
- Next steps: Convocation to consider recommendations on disclosure of criminal charges.
- Increased transparency on the Lawyer and Paralegal Directory summer 2026

# Trust account management and enforcement

## By-law 9 amendments:

- clarify and streamline trust account transaction requirements
- decrease repetitive reporting obligations
- reduce licensee burdens where possible.

## Trust Account Authorization Requirement:

- all licensees who keep a trust account must provide authorization
- designated licensee may provide authorization on firm accounts
- authorization must be provided within 30 days for new trust accounts, beginning **May 1, 2026**
- authorization for existing trust accounts must be provided by **March 31, 2027**.

# Consultation update

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## Modernizing the lawyer licensing candidate assessment process


- Between October 2025 and January 2026, the Professional Development & Competence Committee consulted on how to modernize the Bar Exams to reflect modern practice realities.
- The Committee received a significant amount of feedback, highlighting the important role that the Bar Exams play in ensuring entry level competence and providing public protection.
- The Committee is reviewing the feedback and considering the next steps that it should take to ensure the LSO has an effective entry level assessment for lawyers.

# Consultation

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## Next steps for the Access to Innovation (A2I) program

- The five-year pilot of this regulatory sandbox launched in 2021.
- The program has aimed to serve as a practical regulatory tool that allows the Law Society to observe, understand and respond to technology-enabled legal service models in a structured and supervised manner.
- The Futures Committee requests feedback by **August 28, 2026**.
- More information in the report to Convocation.



## Focus in the **year ahead**

### **Strengthening our foundation**

- Acknowledging recent challenges and rebuilding trust.
- Ensuring processes are efficient, fair and consistent.
- Developing meaningful performance measures that support accountability and demonstrate value of regulation
- Ensuring our risk management, governance support and communications are strong and transparent.

Learn more at **LSO.ca**  
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