Paula Callaghan
Chair of the Paralegal Standing Committee
Elected Paralegal Bencher

Law Society of Ontario Update

November 2025

Law Society of Ontario | Barreau de l'Ontario

Overview

- Governance Review Task Force
- Great Library
- Initiatives, consultations & focus groups
  - LSO Connects
  - Paralegal Future Vision Working Group
  - Trust account management and enforcement project
  - *Pro bono* services CPD eligibility pilot project
- Resources and supports for lawyers and paralegals

Governance Review Task Force update

- Implementation of the recommendations in O'Connor report
- Improved policies and procedures
- Clear and unambiguous approval process for CEO compensation
- Enhanced accountability and transparency

Changes to the Great Library

- The Law Society will be transitioning out of certain provincially-owned spaces within Osgoode Hall that have historically supported aspects of the Great Library's operations.

- We are working closely with the Province to help facilitate this transition in a way that maintains continuity of service.

Initiatives, consultations & focus groups
Listening to you

- LSO Connects
- Paralegal Future Vision Working Group
- Trust account management and enforcement project
- Piloting some *pro bono* services as an eligible activity for Continuing Professional Development

Initiatives
LSO Connects

- Enhanced navigation and system improvements

Coming soon:

- Streamlined process for generating and paying your annual fee
- Updated invoice printing
- Additional option for multifactor authentication

Initiatives
LSO Connects

Our goal:

To enable self-service to minimize the time you spend on the administration of your licence.

Focus Groups & Consultation

Paralegal Future Vision Working Group

Established in November 2024 to explore long-term challenges facing the paralegal profession and develop recommendations for its sustainability and growth.

- **Phase 1:** Information Gathering – *Complete*
- **Phase 2:** Stakeholder Engagement
  - Focus groups with individual paralegals – *Complete*
  - Consultations with organizations and equity associations – *Upcoming January 2026*
- **Final report:** Fall 2026

Initiatives
Trust account management and enforcement project

- Enhancing Law Society oversight of trust account records
- Facilitating early identification of account management issues
- Improving Law Society's ability to intervene quickly and effectively
- Reducing burdens for licensees where possible

Initiatives
Trust account management and enforcement project

By-law 9 amendments

- Update language to clarify requirements
- Remove outdated provisions
- Enhance public protection by narrowing unnecessary exceptions
- Update method by which client funds can be moved from trust

By-Law 11 amendments

- Enhance efficiency of the practice review program
- Provide more flexibility in the form of the final report

Authorization and direction requirement

- Authorize release of trust account records to Law Society in certain circumstances

Consultation

Piloting some *pro bono* services as an eligible activity for Continuing Professional Development

- Meaningful incentive to engage in eligible *pro bono* work, particularly for sole practitioners and those without employer support
- A practical way for both the Law Society and licensees to support access to justice, while advancing professional competence

Provide input by **November 28**

Practice supports and resources

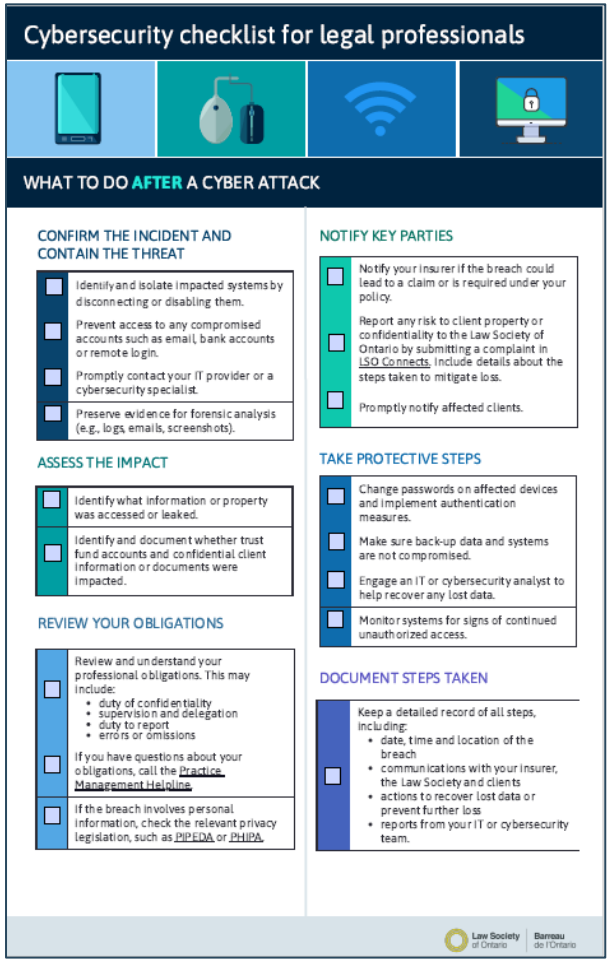
- Cybersecurity
- Client contingency planning
- Bridge to Practice
- Foundations of Sole Practice Course
- Great Library

Practice supports and resources

- Coach and Advisor Network
- Practice Management Helpline
- Member Assistance Program

Practice resources
Cybersecurity

- Checklists with easy-to-follow steps aimed at preventing cyber-attacks and providing guidance on what to do if you are a cyber-attack victim
- Infographic explaining what you need to know about deepfake technology



Cybersecurity checklist for legal professionals

WHAT TO DO AFTER A CYBER ATTACK

CONFIRM THE INCIDENT AND CONTAIN THE THREAT

- Identify and isolate impacted systems by disconnecting or disabling them.
- Prevent access to any compromised accounts such as email, bank accounts or remote login.
- Promptly contact your IT provider or a cybersecurity specialist.
- Preserve evidence for forensic analysis (e.g., logs, emails, screenshots).

ASSESS THE IMPACT

- Identify what information or property was accessed or leaked.
- Identify and document whether trust fund accounts and confidential client information or documents were impacted.

REVIEW YOUR OBLIGATIONS

- Review and understand your professional obligations. This may include:
  - duty of confidentiality
  - supervision and delegation
  - duty to report
  - errors or omissions
- If you have questions about your obligations, call the Practice Management Helpline.
- If the breach involves personal information, check the relevant privacy legislation, such as PIPEDA or PHIPA.

NOTIFY KEY PARTIES

- Notify your insurer if the breach could lead to a claim or is required under your policy.
- Report any risk to client property or confidentiality to the Law Society of Ontario by submitting a complaint in LSO Connects. Include details about the steps taken to mitigate loss.
- Promptly notify affected clients.

TAKE PROTECTIVE STEPS

- Change passwords on affected devices and implement authentication measures.
- Make sure back-up data and systems are not compromised.
- Engage an IT or cybersecurity analyst to help recover any lost data.
- Monitor systems for signs of continued unauthorized access.

DOCUMENT STEPS TAKEN

- Keep a detailed record of all steps, including:
  - date, time and location of the breach
  - communications with your insurer, the Law Society and clients
  - actions to recover lost data or prevent further loss
  - reports from your IT or cybersecurity team.

Can you trust what you see and hear?

What legal professionals need to know about deepfake technology

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What is deepfake technology?

Deepfake technology uses artificial intelligence (AI) and deep learning to generate or alter images, voices, videos or text to closely resemble real content.

As generative AI technology advances, deepfakes are becoming increasingly sophisticated - making it harder to distinguish them from authentic content. This underscores the need for legal professionals to remain vigilant and informed.

Like other AI-driven technologies, deepfake tools have both beneficial and harmful uses. While they can drive innovation in areas such as entertainment, education and accessibility, their misuse is growing.

Common examples of malicious uses include:

- spreading deceptive or misleading content
- committing identity fraud
- forging official documents
- violating personal privacy.

How are deepfakes impacting legal practice?

Deepfakes are difficult to detect and can mislead even experienced professionals, creating real liability risks. Below are examples of how they are currently being used in the legal context.

Impersonating clients and others.

Criminal actors are using deepfake technology during video or phone meetings to impersonate clients and others. These impersonations enable sophisticated fraud and money laundering schemes.

Forging identities and other official documents.

Criminal actors are using AI-generated deepfake faces to create synthetic identities and falsify documents, including evidentiary materials, to facilitate fraud.

Cloning voices to facilitate fraud or money laundering.

Criminal actors are using deepfake technology to replicate the voices of clients, opposing licensees, and others to provide fraudulent payment instructions and launder money.

Quick red-flag screening questions

Answering **'yes' to any of the questions below** may suggest the use of deepfake technology and should prompt heightened scrutiny before proceeding:

1. Do the documents contain visual or metadata inconsistencies or information inconsistent with other sources?
2. Does the person's face on camera show any visual anomalies like glitches, unnaturally smooth skin, strange shadows or blurring, flickering edges or unnatural movements?
3. Do the person's spoken words fail to align perfectly with their lip movements or does their voice sound robotic, overly smooth or unnaturally pitched?
4. Is the source of the document or media unknown, missing metadata, lacking a verifiable origin, or without a clear chain of custody?
5. Is the client unusually urgent, vague, resistant to providing originals or meeting in person, or giving instructions that deviate from typical expectations for the transaction or client profile?

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Practice resources
Client contingency planning

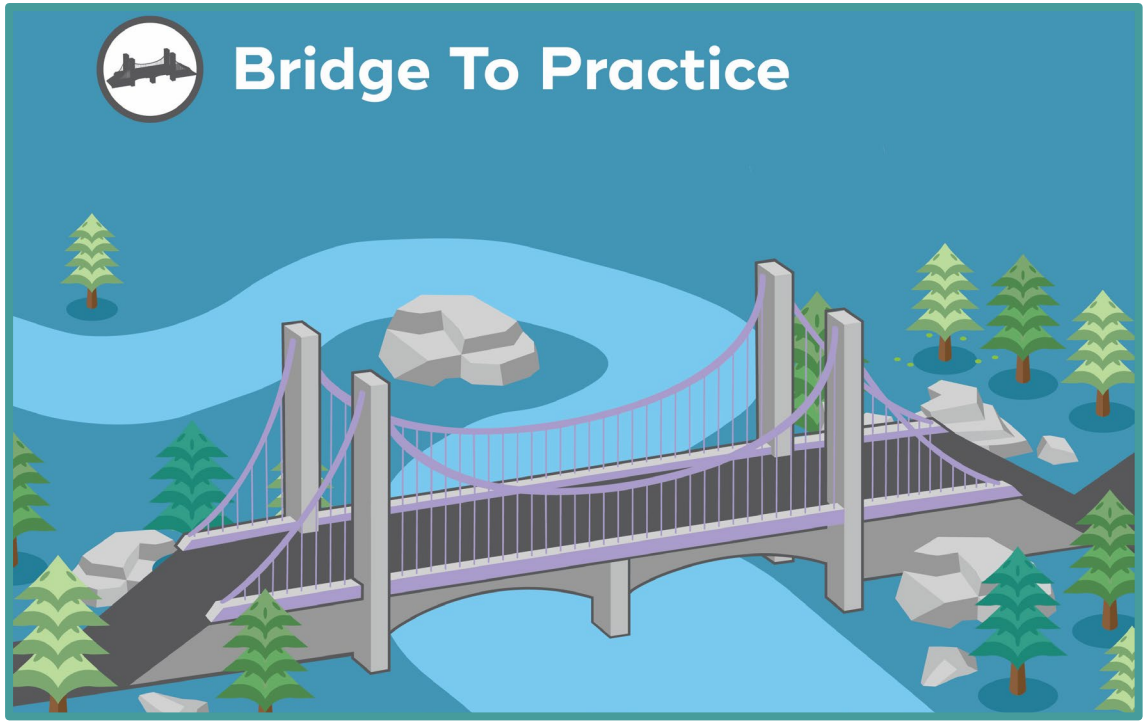
Resources, checklists, templates and additional support:
Client contingency planning - Paralegal | Law Society of Ontario

Watch:

- On-demand CPD Programs
- Short Videos on Youtube
- A2J Week 2025: Ready for Anything: Prepare for the Unexpected with Contingency Planning for Paralegals

Please email **contingencyplanning@LSO.ca** if you'd like to be included in a roster of licensees who are willing to serve as administrators.

Practice resources for paralegals and lawyers



Foundations of SOLE PRACTICE

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Practice resources
The Great Library

- Legal research support
- Document delivery service
- On-line databases and e-resources
- Central support hub for courthouse libraries across Ontario

Supports for paralegals and lawyers

CAN
Coach and Advisor Network

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT
Helpline

Member Assistance Program

140 years ans Homewood Health Santé

Learn more at **LSO.ca**

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