

# Mental Health Initiatives

The Law Society is committed to supporting the well-being of Ontario's lawyers and paralegals. Preserving, enhancing, and investing in personal health, particularly mental health, is critical to the success of any legal practice and protects and serves the public interest.

Over the years, the Law Society has developed and provided a number of resources to support licensees, as outlined below.

## Member Assistance Program (MAP)

MAP provides licensees with personal access to a full range of professional, confidential services, including counselling, peer-to-peer support, crisis management services, substance abuse counselling, lifestyle and specialty counselling, as well as interactive online resources and peer resource tools.

MAP counselling services are offered in person, by telephone, or online — based on preference. Professional counsellors are available throughout the province to help with practical and effective steps to improve well-being.

Provided by Homewood Human Solutions to all lawyers, paralegals, law students, licensing candidates and judges in Ontario, as well as their family members, MAP is funded by the Law Society.

The program can be accessed at 1-855-403-8922, or visit the [MAP website](#).

## Discrimination and Harassment Counsel (DHC)

Established by the Law Society in 2000, this program provides assistance to licensees, licensing candidates and members of the public, who experience discrimination and/or harassment from lawyers or paralegals because of mental health or any other issues.

The DHC will listen to concerns and review a person's options, which may include filing a complaint with the Law Society or an application with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario.

The service is available at 1-877-790-2200 or via email at [assistance@dhcounsel.on.ca](mailto:assistance@dhcounsel.on.ca).

## Personal Management Practice Management Guideline

This [online guideline](#) helps lawyers and paralegals recognize the signs of stress and depression and provides basic suggestions, strategies and resources to manage personal well-being.

## Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

A number of programs focusing on licensee and client mental health have been and continue to be offered by the Law Society, including those in the Six-Minute Lawyer series.

To access CPD resources and purchase on-demand webcasts, PDFs or MP4 materials, go to the [CPD calendar](#).

## Duty to Accommodate

Like any employers, lawyers and paralegals have a duty to accommodate employees and members of their firms with mental health issues. This is a requirement under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

Model policies developed by the Law Society to help licensees understand these obligations are available online, including:

- [Guide to Developing a Law Firm Policy Regarding Accommodation Requirements](#)
- [Students and Lawyers with Disabilities — Increasing Access to the Legal Profession](#)
- [Preventing and Responding to Workplace Harassment and Discrimination: A Guide to Developing a Policy for Law Firms](#)
- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 — Guide to Developing a Customer Service Accessibility Policy](#)

To access these guides and other related materials, visit the Equity & Diversity section of the Law Society [website](#).

## Client Service Centre (CSC)

As the frontline information source for licensees and the public, the CSC advises licensees of available resources, including MAP. CSC staff can also provide information about the exemption process if a lawyer or paralegal indicates that they are unable to work because of mental health or addiction issues.

The CSC is available at 416-947-3315 or 1-800-668-7380, ext. 3315.