

I am getting increasingly frustrated that lawyers who take Legal Aid are seen as “less than”. It is ridiculous that “Legal Aid lawyers”, who are committed to access to justice and keep courts from being flooded with under-represented, are struggling.

OCJT, with chronic understaffing, is hitting those with legal aid practices the hardest.

- Why aren't court closures and traversals communicated to defence?
- Why do crowns have access to the judicial pretrial schedule and defence don't?
- Why aren't zoom links still not readily and easily available?
- Why aren't OCJT policy changes communicated with defence?

I have been a lawyer for over 20 years. My practice is all LAO, and always has been. For the last 15 years, I focused on representing youth. I've recently begun to do some per diem duty counsel work so I understand the issues at TRBC.

We need support, and we need it from all stakeholders. We need to support lawyers that take LAO so OCJT does not fall apart. I'm committed to these issues as I've shown through the volunteer work I have done for the CLA for over a decade:

- CLA rep for 311 Jarvis, including YCJA Education, Community Youth Court, Aboriginal Youth Court, and Cross-Over Youth Court representative
- Member of LAO's Criminal Law Advisory Committee

Often, experienced counsel stop taking certificates. I will represent Toronto area CLA members so that the realities of a legal aid practice and the toll the OCJT has taken on defence counsel with legal aid practices is understood.