

Connecting Ottawa Communiqué November 16, 2022

We are pleased to provide this information for front-line workers to support the information and referral needs of clients. Connecting Ottawa education sessions that may be of interest to workers are listed first followed by information and updates from our lawyers and partners related to services and programs relevant to clients who have a communication barrier due to language or sensory disability. Please feel free to share this email widely among your networks.

Upcoming Connecting Ottawa education sessions:

**** Tomorrow ** Attending an Eviction Hearing - What to Expect (English) ** Tomorrow****

(in conjunction with Reach Canada as part of the Housing Education Series)

Date: November 17, 2022

Time: 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: Melissa Bramson, Community Legal Services of Ottawa

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82786223746?pwd=M2ZMcXVUbFQzaDQ3TzNHQmxiMTBhUT09>

Meeting ID: 827 8622 3746

Passcode: 050239

Ottawa's Essential Health and Social Supports/Home Support Services Program - What front-line workers need to know to support clients

Date: November 22, 2022

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Speakers: Rachel Gravelle and Maurice Findlay, City of Ottawa

Join Zoom

Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81063349023?pwd=Ym4vWE9ra09sd0J2Wm5uY3FIWjAxQT09>

Meeting ID: 810 6334 9023

Passcode: 903991

This session will answer the following questions: (1) What is the difference between EHSS and Emergency Assistance? (2) Can a person file an Internal Review request and appeal a decision about Emergency Assistance and/or HSS? (3) Are interpretation services available for non-English and non-French speakers who apply for these supports? If so, how can they request this kind of help? (4) What is the eligibility criteria for Emergency Assistance? (5) How much can I expect to receive if I apply for Emergency Assistance? (6) How often can I apply for Emergency Assistance?

Vous êtes convoqué à une audience où l'on demande votre éviction ? À quoi pouvez-vous vous attendre ? (en Français) (in conjunction with Reach Canada as part of the Housing Education Series)

Date: November 24, 2022

Time: 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: Éric Cabana, Clinique juridique francophone d'Ottawa

Join Zoom

Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89062508978?pwd=aURLLzFrek1JVzhJbEQ3T0ZIUTZjUT09>

Meeting ID: 890 6250 8978

Passcode: 716805

Landlord and Tenant Board forms for front line workers - An in-depth look at the N7 form

Hosted by Connecting Ottawa & Reach Canada

Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022

Time: 11:00 a.m.- 12:00 noon

Speaker: Sylvia Chapman, Community Legal Services of Ottawa

Via

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82241958696?pwd=cENnOFJ6UThXQ1JxQ1dRV0xYRUtUZz09>

Meeting ID: 822 4195 8696

Passcode: 321991

Legal information and updates:

New tips sheets for tenants

The Community Advocacy and Legal Centre (CALC) in Belleville, Ontario created three new tip sheets for tenants:

- **Ending Your Tenancy** - <https://communitylegalcentre.ca/tcod.../ending-your-tenancy/>
- **Pet Rights** - <https://communitylegalcentre.ca/.../pet-rights-in-a-tenancy/>
- **Human Rights (Duty to Accommodate)** - <https://communitylegalcentre.ca/.../human-rights-for.../>

All of CALC's tip sheets can be found here: [Housing Problems – More legal information - CALC \(communitylegalcentre.ca\)](https://communitylegalcentre.ca/Housing-Problems-More-legal-information-CALC).

Ukrainians receiving inaccurate advice to make a refugee claim to qualify for social assistance

It has come to our attention that some Ukrainians who have temporary resident status through the CUAET program have been told to make a refugee claim simply to qualify for social assistance. These individuals are being provided inaccurate information that they can eventually withdraw a refugee claim without any negative consequences once they no longer need social assistance. This is INCORRECT. Once a Ukrainian with temporary status makes a refugee claim, they can never return to visitor, worker or student status. They now have a conditional removal order

against them. If they are denied refugee status or they withdraw their claim, they cannot return to any legal temporary status (visitor, student or worker). Their only option may be an application for permanent residence on humanitarian grounds, an application which may or may not succeed. If a Ukrainian is considering making a refugee claim, please discuss their situation with us at Connecting Ottawa or contact a legal clinic. For more information concerning Ukrainians and refugee claims, see answers 20 and 21 in the Connecting Ottawa Ukraine Q&A document posted at https://connectingottawa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Ukraine-info_June-23.pdf

Enhanced legal support in the area of human rights and education law for families experiencing anti-Black racism in schools (update)

The Black Legal Action Centre (BLAC) has partnered with Ontario's 17 Black-led Student and Family Advocate Programs to support and empower Black children in schools across Ontario. This initiative enhances BLAC's existing services in education law by allowing BLAC to help families seeking legal support, regardless of their income: "Because BLAC receives most of its funding from Legal Aid Ontario, we can generally only represent people who make below a certain income. The problem is that families that make \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year make too much to qualify for legal aid but not enough to pay a lawyer," said Moya Teklu, executive director and general counsel at the Black Legal Action Centre. Nonye Okenwa is the new lawyer hired through this initiative. She joins BLAC staff lawyer Piera Savage, in providing legal services for Black families seeking assistance with issues in the education system such as challenging or negotiating Individual Education Plans, appealing suspensions or expulsions, and bullying or harassment. For more information visit: [Black Legal Action Centre partners with Ontario's Student and Family Advocates | Black Ottawa Scene](#).

Ontario Energy Board announces decrease in the cost of electricity for residential and small business customers

Prices for both time-of-use and tiered plans decreased at the beginning of November, according to the province's electricity and natural gas regulator. This change will remain in effect until the end of April next year. Note that there is a disconnect ban between November 15 and April 30, so that Ontarians who fall behind on their bill payments will never have to worry about having their electricity turned off during the winter. For more information visit: <https://www.oeb.ca/newsroom/2022/ontario-energy-board-announces-changes-electricity-prices-households-and-small>

GST/HST tax refund/credit scam

Scammers are targeting individuals by text message or email, claiming that the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is sending them a GST/HST tax refund or credit, and are requesting personal information to proceed. In particular, scammers are asking people to reply or click on a link to complete an attached application form by an urgent deadline to receive their refund or credit. Please warn your clients of this scam! The CRA will not use text messages or instant messages to start a conversation about your taxes, benefits, or My Account. If you are eligible, the additional one-time GST credit payment will automatically be mailed or direct-deposited to your account.

OW/ODSP treatment of "Catch Up Payment" benefits

At the end of October, the Ontario government announced the new "Catch Up Payment" benefit to help pay for student learning supports to help fill gaps that may have emerged because of COVID-19. MCCSS has advised that the new COVID-19 "Catch Up Payments" being issued through the Ministry of Education to address learning gaps due to the pandemic will not be considered income for purposes of determining eligibility for social assistance. Eligible applicants (parents/guardians or secondary students aged 18) can apply from now until the end of March 2023 for one-time payments of:

- \$200 for each student between kindergarten and Grade 12, up to age 18
- \$250 for each student with special education needs between kindergarten and Grade 12, up to age 21

Connecting Ottawa recently published Connecting Ottawa Info-Sheet on this new benefit prepared by lawyer Liz Majic. You can view the info sheet at: https://connectingottawa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/CatchUpPayments_Nov-1.pdf For further details and to access the application form, see <https://www.ontario.ca/page/catch-up-payments>.

Christmas Exchange Program and Toy Mountain

Employment and Social Service is accepting registrations for the Christmas Exchange Program and Toy Mountain:

- **Christmas Exchange:** The Christmas exchange provides clients with a food voucher or a food hamper. Food vouchers are mailed. Clients will be called for delivery of food hampers. To be referred, clients should call their Ontario Works case worker before November 25. Please note: supply is limited, so food vouchers and hampers are not guaranteed.
- **Toy Mountain:** Toy Mountain can help with unwrapped new toys for this holiday season for children 12 years and younger. Clients should call 2-1-1 to access the Toy Mountain registration line. Please note: callers must be the legal guardian of the child(ren).

Free computer training for newcomers

Wired: Evaluating Settlement Online (WESO) is conducting a free 3 hour computer training for newcomers that offers clients an honorarium for completing the program. The training will start in December and will be limited to 40 clients. The program will include follow-ups until the month of March that will be done to ensure clients are able to use online settlement services. In order to register your clients for this training, please have them answer this form: <https://forms.office.com/r/vygjrscL2h> To be eligible for this training, clients need to be a permanent resident or convention refugee or CUAET who resides in Ottawa and have low digital literacy skills, meaning clients are unfamiliar with the computer/internet and how it works.

Reminder: New rules will permit some study permit-holders to work more than 20 Hours a week off campus as of November 15, 2022

Until now, international students in Canada were only permitted to work up to 20 hours a week while studying. They could only work full-time hours during scheduled breaks like holidays and summer. However, as of November 15th 2022, students who have a study permit and are studying at a Designated Learning Institution may work full-time while studying until December

31, 2023. This will make it easier for some international students to pay for their studies. To be eligible for these expanded work hours:

- An individual must hold a study permit and be studying full-time at a Designated Learning Institution (or part-time if it is their final semester).
- Their application for a study permit or for a study permit extension was received by IRCC before October 7, 2022.
- The individual has an off-campus work authorization on their study permit.
- The individual must be inside Canada or be arriving in Canada before December 31, 2023.

For complete information, see the following IRCC web page:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/work-off-campus.html>. If you have questions concerning particular client scenarios, contact info@connectingottawa.com

Colour of Poverty employment survey

OCASI is looking for clients who are Indigenous, Black or racialized, residing in Durham, Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Peel, Quinte, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Windsor-Essex, and York Region to share information about employment barriers and race-based and other forms of discrimination. Responses will help inform OCASI's efforts for systemic change. Please share with your clients. For a paper copy of the survey contact Namrata Tilokani at namrata@ocasi.org. The survey link is available at: <https://bit.ly/3hOKbxT>

Welcomeontario.ca website updated

As shared by our friends at OCASI, The WelcomeOntario.ca / AccueilOntario.ca website has had a facelift! Settlement service providers, private sponsors and sponsored refugees can find everything they need to know about the settlement of privately sponsored refugees in Ontario. To view the new site, visit: welcomeontario.ca

Refugee 613 multilingual resources for verifying information

Refugee 613 has put together a list of websites that individuals can use to check the facts before sharing information with others. This helpful resource is available in multiple languages: [Arabic](#), [Chinese \(simplified\)](#), [Chinese \(traditional\)](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Hindi](#), [Punjabi](#), [Spanish](#) and [Urdu](#).

Employment Insurance (EI) premium rate for the year 2023 announced

Each year, the Government of Canada gives the maximum insurable earnings and rate for employers to calculate the amount of EI to deduct from their employees. The EI premium rate for the year 2023 is \$1.63 per \$100 of insurable earnings.

City of Ottawa International Day of Persons with Disabilities - December 1, 2022

The City of Ottawa is inviting you to join the celebration for the [2022 United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#) on December 1, 2022. The UN theme for 2022 is "Transformative solutions for inclusive development: the role of innovation in fuelling an accessible and equitable world". The online event will be held on December 1, 2022 from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. To register, complete the [Registration Form](#). Accommodations are available.

CBC/Radio Canada wants to engage Canadians with disabilities

CBC/Radio-Canada wants to hear from Canadians with disabilities to better understand their expectations of the public broadcaster. CBC/Radio-Canada has scheduled 20 engagement discussions across the country in English, French, ASL (American Sign Language), and LSQ (Quebec Sign Language), from November 2022 to January 2023. For more information on participating, visit: [Let's Discuss Accessibility! - CBC/Radio-Canada](#) or complete a survey if you are unable to attend: [Qualtrics Survey | Qualtrics Experience Management](#).

Connecting Ottawa 2022 conference resources available online

Thank you to all who supported the 2022 Connecting Ottawa Conference Series *Employment and Vulnerable Populations: Supporting Clients*. Connecting Ottawa has developed an information sheet identifying local and provincial resources available to front-line workers to help them address clients' employment legal needs. The bilingual resource sheet is available at:

- English: https://connectingottawa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Employment-Resource-Sheet_Oct-31.pdf
- French: <https://connectingottawa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Employment-Resource-Sheet-FR.Oct2022.pdf>

We have also made available (with permission) the videos and ppts from each session. Please feel free to share with your networks:

- **October 25 *Unsafe workplaces and low pay* with Chetan Muram:** Video and ppt slides: <https://cleoconnect.ca/resource/yourlegalrights/unsafe-workplaces-and-low-pay-the-law-and-health-and-safety-issues-faced-by-low-income-workers-in-ontario/>
- **November 1 *FAQ Employment Law: Part 1* with Jaime Lefebvre:** Video: <https://youtu.be/g9CjwJmX92o> Ppt Slides: <https://connectingottawa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2022-Conference-Deck- Nov-1.pdf>
- **November 8 *FAQ Employment Law: Part 2* with John No:** Video: https://youtu.be/h-oP_qweEuA Ppt Slides: <https://connectingottawa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2022-Conference-Deck- Nov-8.pdf>

CLEO Connect webinar: Navigating the Ontario Disability Support Program

Date: Thursday, November 24, 2022,

Time: 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.

This webinar will give community workers information about income and reporting obligations while on ODSP. It will also discuss how clients can deal with overpayment decisions and get support with the appeal process.

Register at:

<https://outreach.cleo.on.ca/civicrm/?civiwp=CiviCRM&q=civicrm%2Fevent%2Finfo&reset=1&id=341>

Centre d'information juridique Housing Series en français

[The Centre d'information juridique de l'Ontario](#) will be holding a series of housing education sessions for front-line workers en français. The schedule is as follows:

- November 30 – 12 to 1 pm - Small Claims vs LTB (**en français:** Cour des petites créances ou Commission de la location immobilière : par où commencer?); Inscrivez: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GD6RYcptTT6TVfIs4vMInA
- January 12 – 12 to 1 pm - N5 (**en français:** Survol du formulaire N5 : Avis de résiliation de la location en raison d’entrave à la jouissance raisonnable, de dommages ou de surpeuplement);
- January 26 – 12 to 1 pm - N12 (**en français:** Survol du formulaire N12: Avis de résiliation de la location parce que le locateur, un acheteur ou un membre de la famille veut occuper le logement locatif);
- February 9 – 12 to 1 pm - N13 (**en français:** Survol du formulaire N13: Avis de résiliation de la location parce que le locateur veut démolir le logement locatif, y effectuer des réparations ou l’affecter à un autre usage).

To receive information, sign up for their newsletter at: <https://centreinfojuridique.us14.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=e95fa42fb99bf101207155a7e&id=f3470650bb> or contact the Centre at 613-842-7462.

Affiche de Poste: Parajuriste

La Clinique juridique francophone d’Ottawa (CJFO) cherche à embaucher un-e parajuriste pour faire partie d'une équipe dynamique et engagée. Au sein de l’équipe multidisciplinaire du Centre des services communautaires Vanier, nous offrons un environnement de travail qui concilie le travail et la vie personnelle. La CJFO offre des services aux clients francophones dans les domaines du logement, des prestations sociales, de l’immigration, de l’emploi et de la famille. La personne sélectionnée s’occupera de recevoir et trier les demandes de services pour le programme de la Ligne d’information juridique, ainsi que pour la Clinique juridique francophone d’Ottawa. Information: <https://www.cscvanier.com/assets/files/jobs/20221109-clin-jur-parajuriste-pour-intake-et-lij.pdf>

Job Posting: Articling student

The University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic is hiring an articling student. Deadline to apply is November 18. A copy of the posting is available at: <https://connectingottawa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Advertisement-Articling-Student-ENGLISH-FRENCH-Final.docx>

Reminder: The 2022 Parent and Grandparent Sponsorship Program

In mid-October, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced that it will not accept any new applications to sponsor parents or grandparents this year. Instead, those who already submitted an interest to sponsor form in 2020 and who were not selected in 2021 may receive an invitation to submit their complete application this year. IRCC announced that the department will send invitations to apply to 23,100 randomly selected potential sponsors remaining in the pool from 2020. IRCC will then accept up to 15,000 completed applications from those sponsors. What this all means is that there is no opportunity to sponsor parents or grandparents at this time unless a potential sponsor already submitted an interest to sponsor form back in 2020. For those who hoped to sponsor parents or grandparents in 2022 and who had not applied back in 2020, the best existing option is to apply for the parent and grandparent super visa if eligible. This allows the parent or grandparent to remain in Canada for up to five years at a time. For complete information about the current parent and grandparent sponsorship program,

see: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2022/10/reuniting-families-across-the-country.html>

In case you missed it ... (we think the following information bears repeating)

Updated Connecting Ottawa information sheets

The following resources have been produced by Connecting Ottawa lawyers to provide front line workers and community members with information and referral resources for common legal issues. Please feel free to share with your clients and networks.

- [Catch Up Payments for Parents \(November 1, 2022\)](#)
- [Employment Resource Sheet \(October 31, 2022\)](#)
- [Paid Infectious Disease Emergency Leave \(July 25, 2022\)](#)
- [Work Permit Letter \(July 25, 2022\)](#)
- [Rights and Responsibilities of Refugees in Canada \(July 22, 2022\)](#)
- [Q & A about Ukraine Immigration status and access to benefits \(June 23\)](#)
- [Financial Assistance for Ukrainian Families \(June 6, 2022\)](#)
- [Transition Child Benefit \(May 31, 2022\)](#)
- [Wills & Powers of Attorney Resource Sheet \(May 17, 2022\)](#)
- [Canada Child Benefit \(May 17, 2022\)](#)
- [Newcomer Owned Small Businesses in Ottawa \(April 5, 2022\)](#)

Federal government announces one-time GST credit payment

Any person who was eligible to receive the goods and services tax (GST) credit in October 2022 will receive an additional one-time credit payment as part of the Government of Canada's Affordability Plan. Payments will be issued automatically starting November 4, 2022, and will be mailed or deposited into your bank account if you are signed up for direct deposit. The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) can apply your GST/HST credit payments to pay tax debts and other government debts. However, as a temporary measure in response to COVID-19, the CRA will not deduct your GST/HST credit payments to repay tax debts and other government debts, including amounts owing due to being ineligible for COVID-19 Canada Emergency or Recovery Benefits. In most cases, a person must file their taxes each year to receive the GST/HST credit, even if they have no income. New residents of Canada must follow these steps to apply:

[GST/HST credit – Apply - Canada.ca.](#)

Info Sheet on Emergency Assistance for CUAET visa holders in Ontario

The City of Ottawa has developed a resource outlining the emergency assistance available to CUAET visa holders in Ontario and how to apply for the support.. The resource is available in [English](#), [French](#), [Russian](#), and [Ukrainian](#).

Tribunals Ontario adds new digital literacy supports for virtual hearings

Tribunals Ontario has added the following digital literacy supports to ensure users have the skills and ability to participate in their virtual hearings:

- New video guides: Launching a series of short, user-friendly video guides that provide technical instructions for using Zoom to participate in a tribunal proceeding, including

[How to Join a Virtual Proceeding](#), [Basic Zoom Controls in a Virtual Proceeding](#), and [Additional Zoom Controls in a Virtual Proceeding](#).

- New website resources: Updating our website to consolidate all of our digital literacy resources on our Videoconferencing webpage, including our comprehensive [Zoom User Guide](#) and new [Tips for Connecting to your Zoom Proceeding](#).

Ontario Works Bridge Funding Pilot

Clients who meet certain criteria may be eligible for the new Ontario Works Bridge Funding pilot. This pilot provides funding to help single Ontario Works clients who are at risk of homelessness maintain their existing housing while they work towards housing stability, in order to prevent shelter entry. Eligible clients are:

- Current Ontario Works recipients (ODSP clients are not eligible for this pilot)
- Single adults or single youth
- Currently housed but are at imminent risk of homelessness (have housing arrears or have received an N4)
- Have an acceptable plan to afford their accommodations in the long-term

An acceptable plan may include ending of training and return to the job market, a shared accommodation costs plan within two months, financial support from family and friends, or other plans deemed suitable by the Case Worker. This Bridge Funding benefit will pay the difference, up to a maximum of \$900/month, between the Ontario Works shelter entitlement received by the client and the actual cost of the housing for a maximum of 6 months while a client actions their plan to achieve housing stability. This pilot will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis for eligible clients. If you have any clients who are at imminent risk of homelessness and meet the above-mentioned criteria, please refer them to their Ontario Works caseworker to discuss their eligibility for this pilot further.

Connect with us ...

Connecting Ottawa is available to support front-line workers in Ottawa to provide appropriate legal information and referrals to clients with communication barriers as a result of language or sensory disability. If you have a question or require a consultation, please send it to info@connectingottawa.com along with an Intake

Form: <https://connectingottawa.com/request-for-information-consultation/>. This will ensure the most efficient response to your request. As a reminder, we do not provide direct legal services to individuals

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Gina Grosenick, Ph.D. (she/her)
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(613) 862-7601

Please be advised that my standard hours of work are Monday to Thursday, 7:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

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