

## Connecting Ottawa Communique November 1, 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:

#### **Frequently asked Employment Law Questions Part 1: Employment contracts, cash payment and penalties, overtime, sick leave and harassment**

**Date:** November 1, 2022

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

**Speaker:** Jaime Lefebvre, Employment Lawyer, Jewitt McLuckie

**Registration link:** [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_4dJzttqsT96WT\\_YV-J2Vag](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_4dJzttqsT96WT_YV-J2Vag)

*Second in our three part conference series on **Employment and vulnerable populations:***

***Supporting clients.** For more information on this session visit:*

<https://connectingottawa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Connecting-Ottawa-2022-Conference-Promo.pdf>

#### **Frequently asked Employment Law Questions Part 2: Vacation, termination and references, recruitment, work permits, injury, accommodation**

**Date:** November 8, 2022

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

**Speaker:** John No, Staff Lawyer, Parkdale Community Legal Services

**Registration link:** [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_w-RBgPQQCaGtxTfGp1M-A](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_w-RBgPQQCaGtxTfGp1M-A)

*Third in our three part conference series on **Employment and vulnerable populations:***

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

## **One-time provincial Catch Up Payments for parents and guardians now open for application**

The provincial government is providing parents and guardians with [Catch Up Payments](#) to help fill student learning gaps that may have emerged during COVID-19. Parents or guardians can use this one-time funding for things that best suit their child's needs, like tutoring services, supplies, and equipment. **The deadline to apply is March 31, 2023 at 11:59 PM EST.** Connecting Ottawa created an information sheet on Catch Up Payments for your reference available at: <https://connectingottawa.com/about-us/connecting-ottawa-resources/>

## **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.](#)

## **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](mailto:info@connectingottawa.com)

## **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>

### **Letter writing tool for tenants wanting to assign their unit**

[Steps to Justice](#) now has [a tool](#) that tenants can use to write a letter asking their landlord if they can [assign their rental unit](#). The tool collects basic information about the tenant and landlord, and details related to assigning, such as (1) when it would start, and (2) the name of the person who would take over the unit. After answering some questions, the tenant gets an email with the letter. They can review the letter and make changes before sending it to their landlord.

### **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](#).

### **Free phone pilot at Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) now permanent and expanded to other tribunals**

The “free phone pilot” at the LTB will be made permanent and expanded to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario and Social Benefits Tribunal. This program helps people attend their hearings by telephone if they do not have access to a phone or have a prepaid or pay-as-you-go plan with limited airtime talk minutes. You must complete and submit an [Accommodation Request Form](#) to access this service. If your request is approved, the LTB can loan you a basic phone so you can call into your hearing. If you have a prepaid or pay-as-you-go plan with limited airtime talk minutes, the LTB can provide you with a top-up voucher free of charge.

### **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](#).

### **Share your input on Ontario's portable benefits program**

The Ontario government is currently examining the feasibility of a portable benefits program that would provide benefits that are attached to a worker, rather than an employer. This would allow part-time, temporary, and contract workers to access benefits, even if they move from job to job. To provide input on issues related to a portable benefits program, the Ontario government is asking Ontarians to complete a [short survey](#) or email their feedback to the Portable Benefits Advisory Panel at [portablebenefitspanel@ontario.ca](mailto:portablebenefitspanel@ontario.ca). The consultation closes on December 16, 2022. For more information on the portable benefits program: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/consultation-portable-benefits-program>

### **No hearings at Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) during the week of December 26, 2022**

The LTB will not be scheduling hearings during the week of December 26, 2022. Hearings will resume on January 4, 2023.

### ***Unsafe workplaces and low pay webinar materials available online***

On October 25, 2022, Connecting Ottawa teamed up with Community Legal Education Ontario to present a webinar on *Unsafe workplaces and low pay: The law and health and safety issues faced by low-income workers in Ontario* with speaker Chetan Muram of the Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic. The webinar is posted for viewing. The full presentation and/or powerpoint can be viewed and downloaded at: <https://cleoconnect.ca/resource/yourlegalrights/unsafe-workplaces-and-low-pay-the-law-and-health-and-safety-issues-faced-by-low-income-workers-in-ontario/>

### **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?);
  - 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.

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### **CLEO Connect series: Powers of Attorney**

A power of attorney is a legal document in which one person gives another person the power to make personal and financial decisions for them when they are unable. CLEO Connect is offering a two part webinar series that outlines important issues that should be considered when preparing a power of attorney. Participants will also learn how to use [CLEO's Power of Attorney Guided Pathway](#), an easy-to-use interactive tool that helps people prepare a Power of Attorney.

- **Part 1:** Thursday, November 3, 2022. 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m. **Power of Attorney for Personal Care.** Register at: <https://outreach.cleo.on.ca/civcrm/?civiwp=CiviCRM&q=civcrm%2Fevent%2Finfo&reset=1&id=332>
- **Part 2:** Thursday, November 12, 2022. 12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m. **Power of Attorney for Property.** Register at: <https://outreach.cleo.on.ca/civcrm/?civiwp=CiviCRM&q=civcrm%2Fevent%2Finfo&reset=1&id=333>

### **ABLE2 Build Community program**

ABLE2's [Build Community](#) is a collaborative family-driven model that includes the person with a disability and their family members as part of the solution process. The goal of this process is to create a safe, fulfilling and purposeful life for the individual with a disability, where they can be active members of their community and share their gifts with others. The Build Community provides network opportunities, educational seminars, and recreational activities for individuals and their families. Eligible for Passport Funding. Currently being offered in a hybrid platform (virtual and in person). For more information, visit [www.able2.org](http://www.able2.org), or contact Program Coordinator, Lenka Stevanovic at [lstevanovic@able2.org](mailto:lstevanovic@able2.org)

### **Youth rights: New videos by the Centre for Resilience & Social Development**

[The Centre for Resilience & Social Development \(CRSD\)](#) has released a series of expert interviews to explain youth rights, with support from Crime Prevention Ottawa. These videos will be useful for families, educators, community workers and other professionals working with young people. The series has a particular focus on supporting racialized, refugee and newcomer families. The videos include:

- Navigating the youth criminal justice system – Michael Smith, Criminal Defence Lawyer. This video explains young people's rights when they're arrested and charged with a crime. It also looks at the support available to help youth rehabilitate. <https://youtu.be/3kXtRJgzMPQ>.
- Navigating the education system – Sabrina Teklab, Student & Family Advocate. Learn about the rights that protect and empower youth at school, as well as how parents can advocate for their child's needs. <https://youtu.be/VosERVwfTFk>.

- Navigating the education system – Nira Dookeran, Retired Educator. Nira spent 28 years working with newcomer families. She speaks about the challenges they face, from language barriers to systemic injustice. <https://youtu.be/W7JZQ7w6qGY>.

### **Report: National Advisory Council on Poverty**

[The National Advisory Council on Poverty](#) has released its third report on Canada's progress in reducing poverty in [English](#) and [French](#). The 2022 NACP Report states that the overall poverty rate, according to the Market Basket Measure, fell from 14.5% in 2015 to 10.3% in 2019 and to 6.4% in 2020, and Canada has therefore met its target of reducing poverty by 50% by 2030 relative to 2015 levels. However the Report cautions that "the full story of poverty in Canada is more nuanced". As emergency pandemic supports are being phased out, some groups are facing renewed precarity, and new pressures may impact poverty rates in the years to come. Further, despite a notable drop in overall poverty rates in 2020, many poverty indicators have stayed the same or worsened, including: unmet housing needs, chronic homelessness, unmet healthcare needs, food insecurity, low literacy and numeracy, and median hourly wages. The Report includes feedback from a series of engagement sessions held by the NACP in early 2022 with more than 1,000 stakeholders, including people with lived expertise in poverty, on both problems and possible solutions.

### **Reminder: Immigration Update: Sponsorship of Afghan refugees by groups of five and community sponsors**

As noted in our previous communique, under the new public policy to sponsor Afghan refugees without proof of refugee status determination, it is necessary for at least one member of the sponsorship group to undergo a training through the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program. The sponsor must obtain a certificate of attendance. This certificate must be included with the sponsorship application. As part of this training, the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program put together the following list of frequently asked questions and answers about the new sponsorship program: <https://www.rstp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/FAQs-on-Afgan-Public-Policy-RSTPOct16revised.pdf>. Anyone dealing with sponsorships under the new public policy should review this helpful document. For details concerning the program to sponsor Afghans, see: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/afghanistan/special-measures/sponsor-without-rsd.html>

### **Reminder: 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.

### **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 \(April 5, 2022\)](#)

#### **New credit card rules as of October 6, 2022 (does not apply in Quebec)**

Following a class action settlement between Visa, Mastercard, and merchants, as of October 6, businesses will have the option of adding a surcharge to your bill when you pay by credit card (up to 2.4%). Businesses must clearly disclose the surcharge to you at the point of sale before a transaction is completed. This will allow you to cancel the transaction before you pay. For more information: [How credit cards work - Canada.ca](#).

#### **Ontario employers with 25 or more employees now required to have electronic monitoring policy**

As of October 11, Ontario companies with 25 or more employees must disclose their electronic monitoring policies in writing. Beginning in 2023, and in the years that follow, employers that employ 25 or more employees on January 1 of any year must have a written policy on the electronic monitoring of employees in place before March 1 of that year. Note that these requirements do not establish a right for employees not to be electronically monitored by their employer and do not create any new privacy rights for employees. For more information: [Written policy on electronic monitoring of employees | Your guide to the Employment Standards Act | ontario.ca](#).

#### **Ontario minimum wage increased on October 1, 2022**

Minimum wage is the lowest wage rate an employer can pay an employee. Minimum wage rates in Ontario increased on October 1, 2022. The increase to the general

minimum wage is 50 cents, which will bring the new rate to \$15.50 per hour: [Minimum wage | Your guide to the Employment Standards Act | ontario.ca](#).

### **Lump sum child care fee rebates not deductible from earnings if reimbursed under the federal-provincial early learning and child care agreement**

The Ministry has issued a policy direction on the treatment of lump sum child care fee rebates received by parents under the federal-provincial early learning and child care agreement. Under the agreement, signed earlier this year, families with children 5 years of age and younger in participating licensed child care centres will have their fees reduced by up to 25%, retroactive to April 1, 2022. Rebate payments are now being issued for fees paid since April 1, 2022. Child care expenses are not deductible from earnings if they have been reimbursed under the federal-provincial agreement. Social assistance recipients who report deductions for licensed child care and who receive rebate payments will therefore have their deductions adjusted retroactively to reflect only the non-reimbursed portion of their child care fees. This may result in an overpayment.

### **Refugee claimants can renew expired refugee claimant ID documents**

Although refugee claimant ID documents (the one with the person's photo on it) technically do not expire, most service providers do not understand this. The expiration date on the document causes problems when using the document as a form of ID or accessing health care. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has finally instituted a process for claimants to renew their expired document. Please follow the following steps to renew a refugee claimant document by mail:

1. Complete the RPCD request form. Include any dependant who also needs a new refugee claimant document. The form can be found at: <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/documents/pdf/english/kits/forms/imm0168e.pdf>
2. Get 2 passport size photos for each person. The back of 1 photo must include the person's name and date of birth.
3. Mail the complete form and all photos in one envelope to: RPCD / DDA, IRCC  
Winnipeg, 269 Main Street, Suite 400, Winnipeg, MB R3C 1B2

After IRCC receives the request, they will send the new refugee claimant document in the mail or inform the individual to pick up the document at an IRCC office.

### **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](mailto: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)  
Project Manager  
Connecting Ottawa  
(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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