

Your Rights. Your Language.

Backgrounder

CLEO (Community Legal Education Ontario/ Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario) is a community legal aid clinic that specializes in public legal education. By providing practical information about the law as simply and clearly as possible, CLEO helps people understand and exercise their legal rights. To better understand the legal information needs of low income people in Ontario who are not fluent in either official language, CLEO embarked on a research project. This research, which included consultations with community members and partner organizations, led to the development of a series of multilingual plain language legal information materials on key legal topics. This is known as **Your Rights. Your Language.**

These materials are available in six languages — Arabic, Chinese, Somali, Spanish, Tamil and Urdu — as well as Canada’s two official languages. In total, they cover eight topics, specifically, workers’ rights, refugee claims, sponsoring family members, child protection, criminal charges and immigration status, and youth justice, joined today by two additional resources, both in the area of housing law: **“Renting a Place to Live”** and **“Does your landlord want you to move out?”**. All materials are enjoying their official launch today.

These materials were developed by CLEO in close collaboration with a **Community Advisory Group**, comprised of representatives from 10 community agencies with expertise and day-to-day knowledge garnered from assisting new Canadians in their settlement process. The development of materials was rigorous — from the identification of topics addressing the most critical information needs, to the inclusion

of content responding to the most frequent concerns, to checking in with community members who speak the languages to make sure that the information was understandable to them. The Advisory Group contributed at every stage of the process from selecting priority legal topics, to reviewing draft materials and translations, to organizing the community focus groups, to ensuring that the information gets to those who need it most from those they trust the most.

Text and audio versions — for those who face barriers to reading in their own language — of all of the materials are available in all identified languages on CLEO’s website www.cleo.on.ca. These materials are designed to be printed and distributed by community organizations, or passed on by word of mouth in communities. Audio versions of the eight topics can also be heard on each language page, or can be downloaded and burned onto a CD. Alternatively, agencies can order print or audio materials directly from CLEO.

People who speak these languages will be able to find this information in a variety of ways, such as through their local settlement agency or community centre, community radio and newspapers, and online. In addition, through an agreement between CLEO and **Findhelp**, trained information and referral specialists at Findhelp provide a 24/7 toll-free multilingual information and referral service to help people across Ontario get the referral information they need to follow up on their legal problems. For more information, call **1-866-667-5366** or **1-888-340-1001** (TTY).

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