

**CLEO**Community Legal Education Ontario
Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario

Annual Report 2021/2022

Message from the Chair and Executive Director

Last year, we wrote about coping with the unexpected pandemic. The 2021/22 year was ... more pandemic. CLEO staff worked hard to keep up with the many changes to laws and benefit programs over the year but, learning from the pandemic's first year, we operated more like a well-oiled machine.

Looking back on the past two years, it's been an incredible ride. CLEO published the first COVID-19 question on Steps to Justice and Justice pas-à-pas on March 17, 2020. By the end of that month, we had 68 COVID-19 questions and answers on a small number of topics. And by the end of March 2022, that had increased to 336 COVID-19 questions in over 15 legal topics.

Many families saw their financial situation worsen because of the pandemic. We responded with a new Family Law Guided Pathway to bring a motion to change support arrangements, and an Evictions Solution Explorer to help tenants identify possible solutions for rent arrears.

CLEO Connect worked with clinic colleagues and other legal professionals to deliver "hot legal topic" webinars that, by the end of the year, expanded beyond COVID-19 issues, and we reached almost 2,000 people.

We can't overestimate how much our colleagues in legal clinics and a wide range of community organizations contributed to our work: by telling us about the needs of their clients, they helped us determine where to focus our efforts on COVID-19 and other issues. That intelligence, coupled with the concerns we hear daily through live chat and email messages, informed our Steps to Justice and Justice pas-à-pas content, our Guided Pathways and our trainings for front-line workers. Legal experts from legal clinics, the courts, government, and the private bar helped ensure that we have the law "right".

The report that follows gives further details about CLEO's work last year on our three main programs

of work: Steps to Justice and Justice pas-à-pas, Guided Pathways, and CLEO Connect.

COVID-19 has changed working practices over the past two years, which has brought challenges relating to how to collaborate and problem-solve at a distance. Zoom and Teams have been a boon to locked down office workers, though we fear at some cost to creativity and collegiality. So we were pleased at year end to be contemplating a return to some in-person team collaboration at the office with appropriate safety measures in place.

Of course, CLEO is not the only organization whose working practices have been irrevocably altered by the pandemic. Tribunals and courts, for example, took advantage of technology to allow e-filing and scheduling, as well as online hearings — significant changes that assist many who can access the Internet and for whom travel is difficult. CLEO's online programs must continuously adapt to new and evolving processes. In our work, CLEO embraces the many advantages that technology and the Internet give us: reach, "updatability", customization, and interactivity.

But while we know that technology offers many opportunities to increase reach and usability, many people lack access or the digital literacy skills to participate fully in the online legal process. CLEO is aware that the digital delivery of information does not work for everyone, including many of the communities we serve. We strive to ensure that our programs respond to the needs of those who struggle with the digitization of access to justice, by providing a core set of print materials that can be given to clients; training and support for community workers who assist those who may lack digital access or digital literacy; and up-to-date, practical referral information for those needing in-person support. It is our job to ensure that people can access information in the manner that meets their needs.



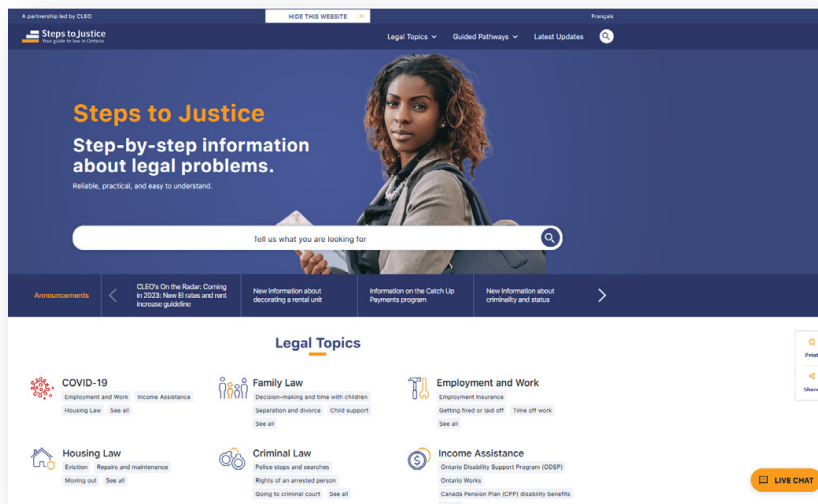
Paul Evraire, Q.C.
Chair



Julie Mathews
Executive Director

Steps to Justice / Justice pas-à-pas

The stats are in! Over 3.4 million people visited [Steps to Justice](#) and [Justice pas-à-pas](#) over the last fiscal year, with 6.6 million page views.



2021/22

Visits: 3.4 million

Page views: 6.6 million

Question and answer modules in English and French: 1,731

New tools, charts, and checklists

Steps to Justice and Justice pas-à-pas now offer tools to help people draft a letter. Designed for people with language or literacy challenges, these tools ask a series of questions and produce a draft letter that can be sent by mail or email.

Last year, we developed these letter-writing tools:

- to ask for a Record of Employment
- to ask for an internal review of a decision by Ontario Works (OW)
- to ask for an internal review of a decision by the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- three letters for tenants writing to their landlords
- for consumers to complain about goods or services they have purchased.

Write a letter to get your ROE

General information Your information Employer's information Get the ROE letter

When your job ends, you need a [Record of Employment \(ROE\)](#) to apply for Employment Insurance (EI). If your employer has not given you an ROE, you can still apply for EI. But you'll have to [give Service Canada a copy of your ROE to keep getting EI](#).

This tool creates a letter you can send to your employer asking for your ROE.

[Read more about getting your ROE](#).

What you need to get started

To use this tool, you'll need:

- the name and address of the company you worked for
- your employer's name or the name of the person you're sending the letter to
- the last day you worked for your employer
- your email address and mailing address

After you answer a series of questions, you'll get an email with the letter to send to your employer.

Visual tools like flowcharts, illustrations, and checklists can help people who have difficulty accessing written content. Other tools we developed this year include:

- flowcharts that explain the steps to apply for or appeal a decision relating to [OW](#) or [ODSP](#)
- an illustration of a [criminal courtroom](#) that helps people understand the roles of the various people
- [checklists](#) that help tenants assess if they can fight an eviction when their landlord or a purchaser wants the unit for their own use
- a series of three interactive flowcharts that explain [what happens when a child is taken into protection](#)

Guiding people to complete complex forms

Ontario Attorney General Doug Downey visited CLEO's office in November to express his appreciation for our work on the [Guided Pathways](#) and to talk about our programs. The Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) has been extremely supportive of Guided Pathways from its inception. With MAG doubling project funding, CLEO can expand the pathways to help Ontarians seek legal protection from abuse and family violence, and to navigate Small Claims Court and family court.

Guided Pathways Fill Out Your Legal Forms.

Use CLEO's free online interviews to fill out legal forms, draft letters, and identify your next steps.

The Guided Pathways ask you questions and then use your answers to fill in the forms and letters you need. When you are done, you can save and print your papers.



Abuse and Family Violence

Family Law

Housing Law

CLEO's Guided Pathways are digital tools that help people complete court forms and legal documents, write letters, and identify next steps. CLEO now offers 67 Guided Pathways in six areas of law: abuse and family violence, family, housing, immigration, nonprofit bylaws, and wills and powers of attorney.

In a survey of all pathway users over a recent 16-month period, people expressed a high level of satisfaction with their experience. Of over 5,000 responses, over 75% were positive, 21% were mostly positive or neutral, and only 4% were negative, many related to technical issues.

Last year, CLEO developed many new collections of Guided Pathways, including tools that assemble multiple documents:

- Supporting families experiencing change**
 These pathways help users to fill out the documents they need to [request](#) or [respond](#) to a motion to change, or to bring a [motion to change on consent](#). Another pathway supports the creation of documents for a [trial management conference](#).
- Helping older adults recognize elder abuse**
 The [Guided Pathway for responding to elder abuse](#) helps older adults, and their families and friends, understand, prevent, and respond to elder abuse. Users can develop a safety plan, and a personalized checklist of important information and next steps.
- Helping tenants threatened with eviction**
 The [Eviction Solution Explorer](#) helps tenants being threatened with eviction because they owe rent. Users are guided through possible solutions and defences, and various documents can be generated: a tip sheet with possible defences; letters to send to a landlord; a form to help develop a repayment plan; and speaking notes for a hearing.
- Helping newcomers apply for a work permit**
 Six new pathways help people complete the draft forms they need to [apply for an open work permit in Canada](#).

Hot Legal Topics webinars for community workers

Community workers continued to ask for and participate in training about timely legal topics that equips them to answer clients' questions. Working with partners in clinics and community organizations, CLEO Connect offered nine webinars to almost 2,000 community workers over the year. Participants came from a wide range of community organizations, including adult learning centres, YMCA offices, Canadian Hearing Services, women's crisis centres, public health units, settlement agencies, public libraries, Ontario Works, and MPP constituency offices. These webinars are all recorded and available on our [CLEO Connect](#) website.

Webinaires en français!

The CLEO Connect team now offers webinars in French for community organizations. We held five trainings last year, reaching 145 community workers.

Training for nonprofits

With the proclamation of Ontario's Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) in October 2021, CLEO's [Nonprofit Law Ontario](#) project stepped up its activities. Over the last fiscal year, CLEO staff delivered more than 60 information sessions and workshops on the ONCA, reaching over 3,000 participants. The sessions were typically hosted by an umbrella group of nonprofits or a nonprofit association.

Trainers' Guides for community legal clinics

Last year, CLEO launched a series of [Trainers' Guides](#) that can be used by staff at legal clinics to train local community workers. Developed in collaboration with clinic experts, the guides include instructions for clinic trainers, as well as customizable slide presentations, activity handouts, flyers, agendas, and evaluation forms. The guides cover evictions, youth rights, workers' rights, and powers of attorney.

“ I liked how specific scenarios that may be common to many people were discussed in detail. This type of interviewing format will be more helpful as the law on different legal areas evolves with the pandemic. The delivery was wonderful. ”

HOT LEGAL TOPICS
WEBINAR PARTICIPANT



Thinking more about community support

CLEO hosted a panel discussion, Justice on the Ground, as part of Access to Justice Week in October 2021. Four frontline community workers from across Ontario shared their experience “on the ground”, and more than 100 community workers, justice professionals, and academics participated in the lively discussion. One participant called it, “Real life ideas on how to promote access to justice.”

CLEO also published a report for the Department of Justice Canada (DOJ) that reviewed developments and programs related to the expansion of “community justice help”. The report, [Shifting the Paradigm: Exploring Opportunities for Community Justice Help](#), available on the DOJ website, was authored by Julie Mathews and David Wiseman, and builds on their earlier report, [Community Justice Help: Advancing Community-Based Access to Justice](#).

Thank you to CLEO's Board of Directors

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**Retired from CLEO's Board during the fiscal year*

Revenue & Expenses

for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2022

Revenue

Legal Aid Ontario	\$1,682,865
Department of Justice Canada	607,018
The Law Foundation of Ontario	432,865
Ministry of the Attorney General	325,000
Other	22,235
Total Revenue	3,069,983

Expenses

Personnel	2,650,303
Projects, production, and distribution (includes online and print content)	292,276
Occupancy and office	228,216
Professional, audit, and other services	69,864
Conferences and membership fees	12,872
Communications, outreach, and travel	3,976
Other operating	627
Total Expenses	3,258,134

Excess of expenses over revenue * **- \$188,151**

Full financial statements, audited by Chaplin & Co. LLP, Chartered Professional Accountants, are available from CLEO on request.

** CLEO follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions. Excess revenue from 2020/2021 was carried forward and used to cover expenses in 2021/2022. CLEO held net assets at March 31, 2022 of \$494,637 (2021 - \$682,788).*

CLEO provides clear, up-to-date information about the law to help people across Ontario understand and exercise their legal rights. We focus on reaching those in greatest need of this information: people who live on low incomes or with other disadvantages.

We also support other community organizations in their efforts to help people who come to them with legal problems by providing training, resources, and research, and helping them make connections.

We are grateful for ongoing funding support from Legal Aid Ontario, the Department of Justice Canada, The Law Foundation of Ontario, and the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General.

