

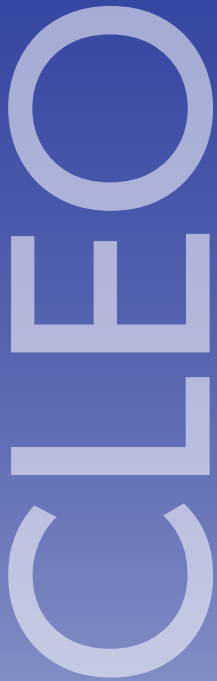


CLEO

Community Legal Education Ontario
Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario

2023/2024

Annual Report



Message from the Chair of CLEO's Board of Directors

As we reflect on the work we've accomplished at CLEO this year, we're reminded of the importance of listening to the people we serve. We develop clear, accurate, and practical legal rights education and information to help people understand and exercise their legal rights. But providing accurate and accessible information is only part of the equation.

Our work focuses on providing information to people who face both individual and systemic barriers to accessing the legal system. To truly serve our community, we must ensure that the tools and resources we offer are both relevant and practical for our users.

Staying connected to the community is at the heart of everything we do. This is why we created advisory committees as they actively connect us with people across Ontario, and help us gather feedback and continuously improve.

This year, we tried new ways of gathering user feedback. And we fine-tuned existing practices to gain insights on the accessibility and clarity of our public legal education and information.

For example, we partnered with a digital media specialist to conduct comprehensive, one-on-one user testing of our [Steps to Justice \(S2J\)](#) and [Justice pas-à-pas \(JPP\)](#) websites. This allowed us to better understand areas of our sites that benefit the end user while creating a plan for improvements.

These findings, combined with the statistics we collect through WordPress and Google Analytics, annual surveys, and live chat, will guide this work over the next year.

CLEO's [Guided Pathways](#) collected user feedback through surveys and tracked usage of the pathways to identify areas for improvement. We monitored user journeys and demographic data to help us better understand the needs of our audience.

We've also taken significant steps to improve our [CLEO Connect](#) webinars for community workers through the feedback received from our surveys. We adjusted the length of our webinars, focused on legal topics that are most needed, and created new online courses for community workers.

Listening is a core value of CLEO. And we're deeply committed to learning from those who use our services, as well as from our colleagues. By fostering strong relationships with justice stakeholders, community workers, legal professionals, and those directly affected by the legal system, we ensure that we remain a trusted and responsive resource for Ontarians.

Rami Shoucri, Chair

Steps to Justice / Justice pas-à-pas

Steps to Justice (S2J) and Justice pas-à-pas (JPP) are the primary vehicles for providing practical, easy-to-understand information about common legal problems.

Visits: **2.57 million**

Page views: **5.27 million**

Questions in English and French: **1,600**

Legal topics: **17**

New questions added this year

- How do I reclaim my traditional Indigenous name?
- I was the victim of a crime involving gender-based violence. What can I do?
- What is rent-gear-to-income housing? How can I apply for it?
- I can't go to my eviction hearing. Can I change the hearing date?
- Am I eligible for the Canadian Dental Care Plan?
- What are my rights if I live with roommates?

New interactive tools

We continue to explore and develop interactive tools to make the information on S2J and JPP more accessible and engaging. This year we added:

- charts about:
 - leaves and benefits for new and expecting parents
 - sending documents for your LTB hearing
- tipsheets on:
 - preparing your will
 - power of attorney for property
 - power of attorney for personal care

Preparing your will

This tip sheet helps you gather the information you need to make a **will**. A will is a legal document that says what happens to your property after you die.

If you die without a will, the law says what happens to your property.

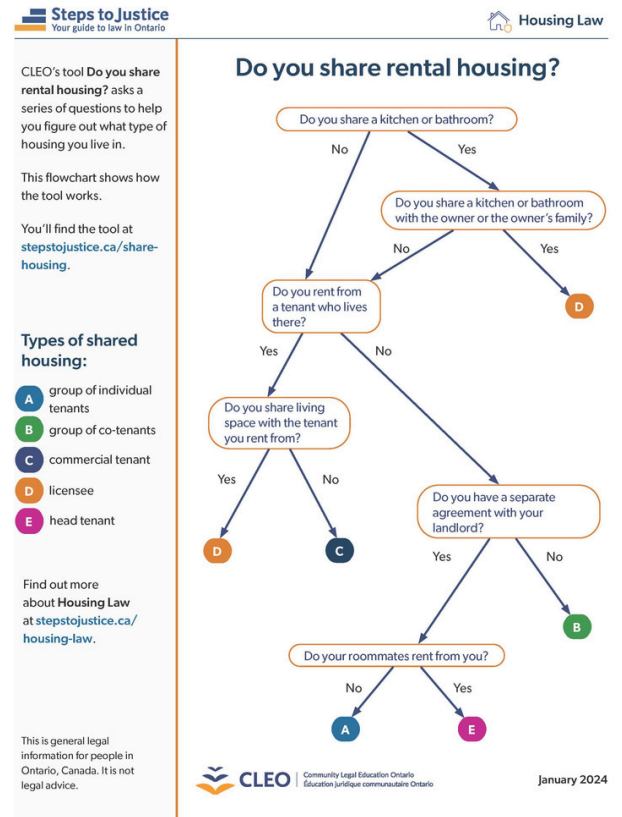
Talk to a lawyer about any questions you have.

This tip sheet gets you started. You will need more information about wills. Visit stepstojustice.ca/wills.

And there are different ways to make a will. Check out CLEO's Guided Pathway for making a will at stepstojustice.ca/GP-wills.

Choose an estate trustee	Tips
<input type="checkbox"/> Choose a suitable person. Ask if they agree to be your estate trustee.	Your estate trustee carries out the directions in your will. They may also be responsible for other things that must be done when you die, like arranging your funeral and paying your debts and taxes.
<input type="checkbox"/> Decide if you want more than one estate trustee. If you do, say how they will	There are rules your estate trustee must follow. For example, if they do not manage the estate properly,

We also revised and updated the technology of our Roommates tool: *Do you share rental housing?* to better help people understand their rights and responsibilities.



User testing

In 2023, we hired Agentic Digital Media to do user testing on the S2J and JPP websites. Our goal was to find out how easy it is to find, use, and understand the information.

We're reviewing the report, along with our statistics, survey results, feedback emails, committee input, and live chat. Based on this, we'll make improvements to the S2J and JPP websites in the next fiscal year.



Live chat

We offer live chat to help people find legal information and refer them to services for more help. Our live chat in English operates Monday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and 2 to 4 p.m. We also have live chat in French Monday to Friday from noon to 1 p.m.

People served live: **4,041**
Questions answered offline: **6,663**

Live chat is an important way to gather direct input about S2J and JPP content, as well as ideas for CLEO Connect training and Guided Pathways. We can see where users have difficulty finding or understanding content. And we hear about gaps, which we can address with new questions and interactive tools.

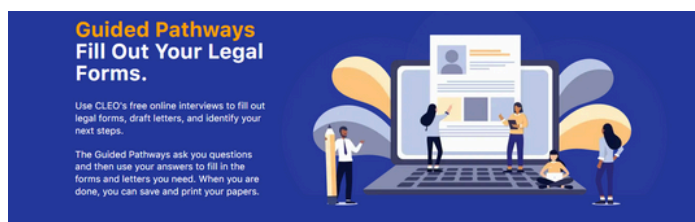
CLEO website and print publications

CLEO's website is a vital source of legal information as it houses our print publications in English and French, and other languages. Our publications are aimed at people with lower literacy skills, and those who are not comfortable accessing information online or do not have reliable internet access.

Visitors to the CLEO website: **709,998**
Page views: **over 3.1 million**
CLEO pamphlets distributed: **258,351**
Organizations and individuals who ordered: **927**

Guided Pathways

CLEO's Guided Pathways are free online interviews that help people fill out legal forms, draft letters, and identify next steps. They offer innovative tools that streamline the process of assembling multiple documents.



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 Violence	 Family Law	 Housing Law
Make a safety plan for elder abuse, or apply for a private prosecution for gender-based violence.	Fill out the court forms you need for your family law case.	Fill out the Landlord and Tenant Board forms you need for your rental housing case.
 Immigration Law	 Income Assistance	 Nongrprofit Bylaws

English pathways: **101**
French pathways: **73**
Visits: **5,906**

This year, we launched the following pathways in English:

Guided Pathway for making a Plaintiff's Claim: This pathway helps people learn about and start the process to sue someone in Small Claims Court and complete a Form 7A: Plaintiff's Claim. It also produces a personalized checklist with an instruction booklet outlining next steps. Funded by the Department of Justice Canada.

Guided Pathway for enforcing your Small Claims Court judgment: This pathway helps people enforce judgments made in Small Claims Court. It provides information on enforcement options, necessary forms, interest calculations, and next steps. Funded by the Department of Justice Canada.

Guided Pathway for making an emergency motion: This pathway was developed with Luke's Place and helps people seek emergency family law orders when their safety is at risk. Users complete forms for emergency motions. And it creates a safety plan and booklet with next steps. Funded by Ontario's Ministry of the Attorney General.

This year we launched the following pathways in French:

Parcours guidé sur la demande de poursuite privée: This pathway helps people learn about private prosecution and types of gender-based crimes. It can also help people prepare to talk to the police and apply for a private prosecution. Funded by the Department of Justice's Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund.

The Parcours guidé sur le règlement des différends en droit de la famille: This pathway helps people navigate issues during separation or divorce, explore dispute resolution options, and find the correct court location. It also creates a personalized tip sheet. Funded by the Department of Justice's Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund.

Parcours guidé pour demander un réexamen ou faire appel d'une décision liée à la prestation d'invalidité du Régime de pensions du Canada: This pathway was developed in consultation with the Social Security Tribunal. It's for people who've been denied Canada Pension Plan disability benefits. And helps them complete forms to request a reconsideration or make an appeal to the Tribunal.

Research

We're improving our pathways with [research from the University of Ottawa and Western University](#). These research efforts help us understand how people use the Guided Pathways, identify potential obstacles, and continuously make improvements.

In partnership with McGill University and the Montreal Cyberjustice Laboratory, we developed the [Guided Pathways Legal Narrative Assistant](#). This is a Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) prototype to enhance affidavit narratives, user support, and data analysis. Our goal is to understand the potential of GenAI to improve document assembly applications, which prompt users for information and choices, and create electronic documents. To do this, we're carefully evaluating whether GenAI can be successfully integrated into the Guided Pathways.

CLEO Connect: Empowering community workers

CLEO Connect offers timely training, tools, and resources for community workers to support their clients' legal needs.

Webinars: **20** in English and **9** in French
Participants: **4,240**

Our [Hot Legal Topics](#) webinar series continues to grow. This year we covered topics ranging from Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) repayments, navigating the Landlord and Tenant Board, Employment Insurance, family law, and immigration.

Participants who said the webinars helped them better support their clients: **98%**

"I've attended several CLEO Connect webinars and have left each one feeling more knowledgeable and empowered to help my clients and the community."
— Participant in a CLEO Connect webinar

We delivered 11 skills-building workshops on [navigating the Steps to Justice website](#) and [building legal help skills](#). We also provided training on how to use our [Immigration & Social Assistance clinic template](#), in collaboration with community legal clinics.

New legal help skills and housing law course

This year, we launched a 2-part course on legal help skills and housing law, developed in collaboration with the Steps to Justice team. We delivered the course virtually to 2 groups. And we plan to offer an in-person version in the future.

Study on legal help learning needs

We conducted a study to assess the legal help learning needs of community workers who support racialized clients. We did this in collaboration with an advisory group of 10 community workers from diverse sectors across the province. The study included surveys in both English and French.

We received 192 responses and interviewed 15 community workers from across Ontario. The insights gathered will guide our future planning and initiatives.

Libraries and Justice Resource Hub

CLEO Connect developed the [Libraries and Justice Resource Hub](#) to support public library staff who help service users with legal inquiries. The hub offers valuable resources on providing legal help, understanding the law, accessing affordable legal services, training opportunities, and collaborating with the legal sector.

Libraries and Justice Resource Hub

Supporting library users with questions about the law

Are you a public library staff member who fields questions about the law from service users? Are you curious about resources you can draw on and services in your community?

This information is designed to highlight legal information and services available to you and your library users. It is meant to support you in your day-to-day work and help you establish partnerships with the legal sector and others in your community.



Providing help



Information about the law



Affordable legal services

Revenue and Expenses

for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024.

Revenue

Legal Aid Ontario	1,719,202
Department of Justice Canada	761,293
The Law Foundation of Ontario	446,597
Ministry of the Attorney General	352,000
Other	55,783
Total revenue	3,334,875

Expenses

Personnel	2,511,606
Projects, production, and distribution (includes online and print content)	448,665
Occupancy and office	272,250
Professional, audit, and other services	58,726
Conferences and membership fees	21,745
Communications, outreach, and travel	2,859
Total expenses	3,315,851
Excess of revenue over expenses *	19,024

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 2022-2023 was carried forward and used to cover expenses in 2023-2024. CLEO held net assets at March 31, 2024 of \$546,519. (In 2023, this was \$527,495.)

Thank you to CLEO's Board of Directors

Rami Shoucri, Chair
Kylie Stanners, Vice-Chair
Prem Lobo, Treasurer
Aiman Flahat
Elizabeth Goldberg
John No
Barbara Wiktorowicz

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 and face systemic or other barriers.

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

We are grateful for ongoing funding support from:

