



PARALEGAL | **FIELD PLACEMENT HOST PACKAGE**

Paralegal Field Placement Host Supervisor Guidelines

Creating a Safe Work Environment for Licensing Candidates, Law Society of Ontario

PARALEGAL & PARALEGAL ACCELERATED DIPLOMA PROGRAMS



IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

The paralegal field placement program currently offers two types of work placement models: in-person and hybrid. An in-person placement involves the students attending in-person at the licensee's office to complete the work delegated by a licensee. A hybrid placement involves a combination of the students working in-person in the licensee's office and remotely from home to complete work delegated by a licensee. Seneca has changed its Vaccination Policy. Students participating in off-site field placements are no longer required to be vaccinated.

FIELD PLACEMENT HOST SUPERVISOR GUIDELINES

Thank you for your participation in the School of Legal, Public and Office Administration's Paralegal field placement program! The experience provided by you and your organization round-out the education of our Paralegal students. The Paralegal programs are accredited by the Law Society of Ontario as meeting the educational and placement requirement for the student to qualify to write the paralegal licensing examination.

Upon completion of the academic requirements of the program, students are required to complete a minimum of 120 hours of field placement. The placement requirement is mandatory and cannot be waived.

FIELD PLACEMENT OBJECTIVES

The School of Legal, Public and Office Administration (SLPOA) offers diverse and challenging programs that provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary for a variety of legal careers in the private and public sectors, including training to work as an independent paralegal. Students learn the general principles of law, and receive theoretical and practical training in specific legal subjects, ethics and professional responsibility, and business practices. At the end of their studies, students are required to complete a period of field placement - where they apply their knowledge and skills in a real-world environment - as a pre-requisite to graduation. It also gives students an opportunity to learn the importance of team work, reliability, punctuality, attendance and professionalism in demeanour and attitude. In addition, an opportunity is provided for the student to gain experience in the practical application of the theoretical learning in the classroom and to develop professional contacts to give them an edge in an increasingly competitive and demanding job market.

Field Placement Host Guidelines 2024

The main objectives of field placement are to provide students with:

1. An opportunity to obtain practical hands-on experience for students to apply their legal knowledge in a real-world environment such as:
 - Attending and speaking in court under direct supervision by a licensee
 - Sitting in on client interviews
 - Sitting in on settlement conferences, mediations, etc.
 - Drafting documentation within the paralegal scope of practice
 - Performing legal research
2. An opportunity to acquire professional work behaviour patterns such as: attitude, reliability, attendance, punctuality, demeanour, and appearance;
3. An opportunity to understand the operations and functions of various components of a paralegal office, law firm, legal or government department or tribunal;
4. An opportunity to become familiar with the legal profession and the role of paralegals, lawyers, law clerks, legal assistants, legal secretaries and various other legal personnel;
5. Working knowledge of various legal departments, court offices, registry offices, corporate offices and various other government offices;
6. Exposure to legal precedents, files and law libraries and to participate in various law office/legal department procedures to assist in the learning process;
7. An opportunity to use and increase important required skills such as research skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, human relations skills, organizational skills, information obtaining skills and case management skills.

DURATION AND TIME COMMITMENT

Field placement is a minimum of 120 hours usually over a field placement period of 20 business days.

Traditionally, students are asked to complete all of their placement days consecutively if possible, in a block of three to four weeks, either beginning mid-April (to mid-May) or beginning mid-August (to mid-September).

Some students find employment in law firms, paralegal offices, or the legal departments of corporations and government departments or with tribunals prior to graduation. In these circumstances, students may be allowed to complete their field placement requirements at their place of employment if their duties are those which are within the scope of practice for a paralegal, and if they work under the supervision of a licensee.

SUPERVISION

Students must be supervised – directly or indirectly - by a licensed member, in good standing with the LSO or the CICC.

Important: The Law Society of Ontario requires that a field placement supervisor supervises ***no more than two paralegal students a time for each period.***

Indirect supervision can mean that the lawyer or licensed paralegal does not have day-to-day, direct contact with the student during the field placement. In fact, it might be another individual who is not a licensed member who is the direct supervisor; but somewhere in the chain, there absolutely must be a licensed member in good standing with the LSO or the CICC who could speak to the type of duties that were performed during the placement. It is understood that many government and tribunal offices for example do not necessarily have a direct reporting structure for students in a straight line to a licensee. However, ***it must be a licensee whose name and signature is being put on both the Attendance Form 2 and the Employer Evaluation of Student Form 4*** (which must be returned to the Field Placement Coordinator at the end of the student's placement). In addition, that licensee should be comfortable speaking to those job requirements and about what duties the students were performing during the placement period.

DRESS CODE

Professional business dress is required and expected of the students.

REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

Students do not receive any financial remuneration for their field placement work. With respect to petty cash expenses, you should provide the student with a cheque or cash as necessary to cover anticipated expenses. In addition, we ask that you reimburse students on a per kilometre basis mileage at the firm's or organization's usual rate.

ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND MISSED DAYS

Regular attendance, punctuality and reliability are vital components of the field placement program. Each student is required to work a full normal business day according to your policies.

100% Attendance

The student is required to maintain 100% attendance at the field placement organization. Whether for valid medical or compassionate reasons or not, the student will be required to make up missed days/hours at your convenience. The student is required to e-mail the Field Placement Coordinator before any absence.

Documentation of absences

Please record the reasons for missed days on the Student Attendance Record (Form 2). These will be reviewed by the Field Placement Coordinator.

Examples of valid and invalid reasons

Examples of valid reasons include: student's illness or a death or serious illness in the student's family. However, non-emergency medical appointments, studying for tests, completing assignments or other school work are not valid reasons for missing field placement; the Field Placement Coordinator must be advised. The student is required to make up any missed days.

ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY ABSENTEEISM

In case of illness or emergency requiring the student to be absent from field placement, the student must telephone you personally on the relevant day as soon as possible (and in any event within 30 minutes of the usual starting time of the field placement employer) to advise of the absence and give reasons for it.

EVALUATION AND ATTENDANCE RECORDS

The student is evaluated on the field placement component in the legal programs at the end of the placement period through your evaluation of the student and the student's attendance record. The student should provide you with both forms.

Please email the host evaluation form to derek.kan@senecapolytechnic.ca within two business days after the student completes field placement.

CONTACT

You can always contact the paralegal field placement coordinator to discuss the student's progress and performance in particular and the legal programs in general. Your suggestions and opinions are always appreciated. If there are any problems with or questions concerning the student of the field placement program, please contact a Field Placement Coordinator as soon as possible.

FIELD PLACEMENT COORDINATOR

Professor Tasneem Jivanji

tasneem.jivanji@senecapolytechnic.ca

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Professor Randa Mouammar

randa.mouammar@senecapolytechnic.ca

FIELD PLACEMENT ASSISTANT

Derek Kan

derek.kan@senecapolytechnic.ca

Creating a Safe Work Environment for Licensing Candidates

Know Your Obligations:

Articling Principals, Paralegal Field Placement Supervisors and Work Placement Supervisors are expected to act as teachers, mentors and role models for licensing process candidates. Integral to these roles is the obligation to create and maintain a work environment that is free from harassment and discrimination.

This includes the duty to not engage in such behaviour yourself, but to also prevent and address such behaviour from other individuals in the workplace setting including other lawyers, paralegals, office staff and/or clients. Discrimination related to the candidate's race, sex, creed, disability, age, ancestry, citizenship, colour, ethnic origin, place of origin, family status, marital status, gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation is prohibited, as well as unwanted sexual actions, comments or harassment.

The source of these duties, responsibilities and obligations is found in the Law Society of Ontario's *Rules of Professional Conduct*, the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*, among others.

A Safe Workplace:

Creating and maintaining a safe workplace that is free from harassment and discrimination is essential to supporting a candidate's success in a placement. Articling, work and field placements are a continuation of the learning process for candidates, as well as a formative step in their entry into the profession. Accordingly, it is expected that licensing candidates will be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness in a workplace setting.

Below are examples of unacceptable behaviours in the workplace:

- Sending suggestive letters, notes, or e-mails
- Displaying inappropriate sexual images or posters in the workplace
- Telling lewd jokes, or sharing sexual anecdotes
- Making sexual comments about appearance, clothing, or body parts
- Inappropriate touching, including pinching, patting, rubbing, or purposefully brushing up against another person
- Asking sexual questions, such as inquiries about someone's sexual history or their sexual orientation
- Making offensive comments about someone's sexual orientation or gender identity
- Making negative comments about a person's personal religious beliefs
- Making remarks about an individual's skin colour or other physical characteristics
- Making offensive gestures
- Making offensive reference to an individual's mental or physical disability
- Making derogatory age-related comments

This list is not exhaustive.

Please find information on the Human Rights and Diversity Policy and a list of important resources on the following page.



Important Resources

Human Rights and Diversity Policy:

In accordance with the recommendations set out in the final report of the Challenges Faced by Racialized Licensees Working Group, if your workplace has at least 10 licensees, you are required by the Law Society of Ontario to develop, implement and maintain a human rights/diversity policy that, at minimum, addresses fair recruitment, retention and advancement. If your workplace has nine or fewer licensees, it is recommended that such a policy be created. In addition, your legal workplace, regardless of size, must prepare and review a policy on workplace violence and harassment at least annually, under the *OHSA*. These obligations are in addition to the general prohibition against discrimination under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

Important Resources:

- 1. Rules of Professional Conduct, Chapter 6:**
www.lso.ca/relationship-to-students-employees-and-others
- 2. Human Rights Code:**
www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h19
- 3. Occupational Health and Safety Act:**
www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o01
- 4. The Law Society's Human Rights and Diversity Policy:**
www.lso.ca/with.aspx?id=2147504037



Have you experienced or witnessed HARASSMENT or DISCRIMINATION?

Know Your Rights:

Harassment and discrimination have no place in our professions. As a licensing candidate, you have the right to be free from harassment and discrimination in your workplace setting. This right is expansive, and includes protection from such behaviour whether enacted by an articling principal, paralegal field placement supervisor, other lawyers, paralegals, office staff and/or clients. This protection flows from overlapping responsibilities, duties and obligations that are owed to you as a licensing candidate, such as those found in the Law Society of Ontario's *Law Society's Rules of Professional Conduct*,¹ the *Ontario Human Rights Code*,² and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHS)*,³ among others.

Part of these protections include the duty enacted by the Law Society that each legal workplace of at least 10 licensees develop, implement and maintain a human rights/diversity policy that, at minimum, addresses fair recruitment, retention and advancement. Legal workplaces with nine or fewer licensees are also encouraged to create such a policy. In addition, every legal workplace, regardless of size must prepare and review a policy on workplace violence and harassment at least annually, under the *OHS*. These obligations are in addition to the general prohibition against discrimination under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

Examples of Unacceptable Behaviours:

Despite the above, you may find yourself the subject of harassing or discriminatory treatment. Such treatment includes but is not limited to being the recipient of:

- Belittling or condescending comments or jokes in verbal or written form.
- Unwanted sexual behaviour. This includes unwanted sexual actions and comments.
- Discrimination related to your race, sex, creed, disability, age, ancestry, citizenship, colour, ethnic origin, place of origin, family status, marital status, gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation.
- Criticism about your personal characteristics, including your appearance.

Available Resources:

If you have experienced or witnessed any instances of harassment or discrimination during your articling placement, LPP work placement, or paralegal education field placement, you are not alone. Resources are available to help you clarify and navigate these issues and to provide you with individual support. Please find a list of available resources on the following pages.

¹ www.lso.ca/lawyer-conduct-rules

² www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h19

³ www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o01

Available Resources

Resource	What it can do	What it cannot do	Contact information
Discrimination and Harassment Counsel	<p>A confidential and free service run independently from the Law Society that provides information and assistance to anyone who may have experienced or witnessed discrimination or harassment based on human rights grounds by a lawyer, paralegal, or student member of the Law Society.</p> <p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to your concerns • Clarifying the issues • Reviewing your options and avenues of recourse • Explaining the advantages and disadvantages of each option • Referring you to other resources that may be of assistance • Where appropriate, serving as neutral facilitator in mediation or conciliation to resolve complaints • Keeping all information confidential. This service does not share any information with the Law Society except for anonymous statistical data on the number and nature of contacts in the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide legal advice • Provide personal counselling services. 	<p>Website: dhcounsel.on.ca/en-ca</p> <p>Toll-free line: 1-877-790-2200</p> <p>E-mail: assistance@dhcounsel.on.ca</p>
The Articling Office	<p>Provides confidential guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articling related-issues • Finding a new placement • Terminating or transferring a placement • Seeking a compassionate abridgment • Understanding your rights and obligations under the Lawyer Licensing Process Policies • Where appropriate, contacting your Principal to address concerns constructively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide legal advice • Provide counselling services • Investigate a complaint about a Principal or other licensee. 	<p>Toll-free line: 1-800-668-7380 ext.3315</p> <p>General line: 416-947-3315</p> <p>E-mail: articling@lso.ca</p>
The Paralegal Education Office	<p>Provides confidential guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paralegal Education related issues • Understanding your rights and obligations under the Paralegal Licensing Process Policies • Where appropriate, contacting your Paralegal Education Program provider to address concerns constructively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide legal advice • Provide counselling services • Investigate a complaint about a field placement supervisor or other licensee. 	<p>E-mail: ParalegalEducation@lso.ca</p>



Available Resources

Resource	What it can do	What it cannot do	Contact information
Member Assistance Program	<p>A free, confidential service that provides access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional counselling Coaching Online resources Peer volunteers <p>Also available for issues related to addictions, mental or physical health, work-life balance, career, family and more.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide legal advice. 	<p>Website: myassistplan.com</p> <p>Toll-free line: 1.855.403.8922</p>
Distress and Crisis Ontario	<p>Distress Centres across Ontario provide listening support and referral services 24 hours a day, seven days a week through highly trained and committed volunteers.</p>		<p>For a list of local centres, please visit: dcontario.org/centres.html</p>
Complaint Services	<p>If you to choose to file a written complaint about a licensee, the Law Society will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and assess the complaint Provide you with a letter to let you know the complaint has been received Inform you if the Law Society cannot help with a complaint or deal with it as a professional conduct matter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide legal advice Address complaints that do not relate to the professional conduct of a licensee (either a paralegal, lawyer or articling student). 	<p>Website: Iso.ca/with.aspx-?id=644</p> <p>Toll-free line: 1-800-268-7568</p> <p>General Line: 416-947-3310</p> <p>TTY Line: 416-644-4886</p>
Ontario Human Rights Legal Support Centre	<p>Provides free legal advice and assistance to individuals who have experienced discrimination under the <i>Ontario Human Rights Code</i> including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filing an application at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTO), attending mediation at the HRTO, representing an individual at a hearing, and enforcing an order of the HRTO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide personal counselling Investigate complaints Address complaints that are not related to grounds covered by the <i>Ontario Human Right Code</i>. 	<p>Website: hrlsc.on.ca/en/welcome</p> <p>Toll-free line: 1-866-625-5179</p> <p>General Line: 416-597-4900</p>
Law Society Referral Service (LSRS)	<p>If you are seeking legal advice, the LSRS can help you find a lawyer or paralegal in a chosen area of law.</p> <p>Lawyers or paralegals participating in the service will offer you up to a half-hour free consultation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide access to free legal services Provide more than one referral for the same legal issue. 	<p>Website: lsrs.lsuc.on.ca/lsrs</p> <p>E-mail: lsrs@iso.ca</p>

