



Annual Report 2024-25

November 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 Greetings From Our Board Chair



As I approach my 5th year as chairperson of the board of directors of North Peel Dufferin Community Legal Services, I am honoured to reflect on the remarkable year we have had. North Peel and Dufferin Community Legal Services Clinic continues to be a lifeline for people facing complex challenges that threaten their housing, income security, health and dignity.

We are reaching more people than ever before!

As one of the fastest growing communities in Ontario, our region has experienced explosive population growth – 87% over the past 20 years and an estimated 19% since 2021. This growth includes more than 68,000 low-income residents who are statistically at higher risk of facing legal issues without the financial means to resolve them.

This year, the demand for our services surged once again. At the same time, staffing and funding have remained unchanged – a widening gap that creates an undeniable risk: when needs arise and resources do not, *access to justice becomes access denied*.

Despite these pressures, our staff sustained exceptional service quality, demonstrated by transformative client outcomes, high satisfaction and continued community trust.

I want to thank the magnificent board of directors for their ongoing commitment to the community. As a board, our primary role is to set clear policy objectives, ensuring that we continuously meet the evolving needs of the community. This year, we made important strides by continuing to prioritize anti racism and ant oppression both within the board and the clinic, ensuring those disproportionately impacted by poverty can access their legal rights without fear or barriers. As well as beginning our clinic strategic planning initiative.

This year's report continues to celebrate the skill empathy and creativity of all of the members of our team – while candidly acknowledging the challenges ahead.

Going forward, our focus is clear:

- Rebuild outreach in Caledon and Dufferin to address geographic inequalities
- Support and retain our exceptional staff through wage realignment and well being supports
- Advocate for equitable funding tied to actual community need

This time is pivotal – our impact is strong – and our responsibility to protect and expand that impact has never been greater.

Together, we can ensure that every resident in Brampton, Caledon and Dufferin County continues to have fair timely and compassionate access to justice.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our dedicated board and staff, our community partners and our clients for their continued trust in us.

1.2 Executive Director's Notes

Our success at North Peel & Dufferin Community Legal Services is due to the wonderful people working there and the talented and committed people on our board of directors.

Everyone at our community legal clinic is fuelled by a passion for social justice and committed to helping people with their most important needs. We have built efficient systems for delivering high quality services but that all comes from the abilities and commitment of the individuals on our staff and board.



Core values for us are high quality legal services **and** caring, thoughtful client engagement. Our clients say it best, in their responses to our file closing surveys and in Google reviews:

Great help, kind empathic people. Thanks!

Norma English helped my daughter for her ODSP payment. She is a wonderful person

They really know what they are doing, my caseworker Gail is good at what she does. Their services are top notch. I am very excited and happy because I got a positive decision even without going for my hearing.

I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for Norma English and the incredible support she provided throughout my ODSP case. From our very first interaction, Norma demonstrated genuine care, empathy, and professionalism that immediately put me at ease. Navigating the ODSP process can be overwhelming, but Norma's guidance made it feel far more manageable. She took the time to truly understand my concerns and always made me feel heard and supported. Her dedication and attention to detail played a key role in the successful outcome of my case. Thanks to her advocacy and hard work, I was awarded retroactive benefits dating back to June 2024—something I truly believe wouldn't have happened without her involvement.

Norma went above and beyond in every way. She not only helped me achieve a positive result, but she did so with kindness, patience, and unwavering commitment. Her work has made a meaningful and lasting difference in my life, and for that, I am

deeply grateful.

I would highly recommend Norma to anyone seeking support with their ODSP application. She is truly exceptional at what she does.

Jennifer is very amazing , she explained situations very well and she is very professional she is good at what she does. Keep it up my dear ... blessings upon you

I have good experience, and they are excellent at helping. I get good help for my son. Thanks so much, I will recommend them.

I had the pleasure of working with Norma English, Director of Legal Services/Lawyer at North Peel & Dufferin Community Legal Services, and she was absolutely wonderful. She helped us with everything from start to finish and made sure we got exactly what we needed done. You can instantly tell she knows what she's talking about — her experience and expertise really shine through. She's a true veteran in her field, and it shows in the confidence and care she brings to every step of the process. Highly recommend!

My experience with you restored my sense of hope and self-confidence, leaving a beautiful mark on my life



Many of our talented team at a bowling event this year

These are just a few of the many written comments we have received from clients. As I read these, I am struck by how many clients speak about our staff taking the time to make sure that clients felt supported and prepared. Clients consistently comment on not only being prepared for hearings in a technical way but also by calming anxiety and concerns. The client reviews speak of success in their cases – and I am very proud of that – but they also speak of success in our staff connecting with clients, calming their

fears and giving them hope. I am also very proud of our staff for those accomplishments.

We will continue to constantly review and revise our processes to better serve our clients and we will never lose sight of the fact that the beating heart of our community legal clinic is our dedicated, brilliant, compassionate and creative staff!

Jack Fleming
Executive Director

2. Who We Are

2.1 Vision, Mission & Values Statements

Vision: Equitable access to justice for everyone in North Peel & Dufferin

Mission: Improve the quality of life for persons with low income through outstanding legal services that advocate, educate, and empower

Values:

- ✓ **Client-centered** – The client is our first priority, and the focus of our efforts. We respect our clients' dignity as we work in non-judgmental, holistic ways to provide high quality customer service.
- ✓ **Diversity & Inclusion** – We ensure inclusivity and open access for all persons in the community and provide unbiased services which are respectful, empathetic, compassionate and empowering for clients.
- ✓ **Excellence** – We go the extra mile to provide exceptional legal services.
- ✓ **Innovation** – We embrace change and are willing to try new technology and methods. We actively look for better ways to serve our clients' needs, knowing that diversity of experience, expertise, culture, and perspective is a strength that sparks our creativity.
- ✓ **Collaboration** – We believe more is possible when we work together, and intentionally foster meaningful connections with clients, partner organizations, the community, our peers, and one another.

2.2 Staff

Our legal staff are specialized, as we find that this provides the highest quality, and the most efficient, service. They are organized in teams:

- **Housing Team**
- **DAU Team** (referring to the Disability Adjudication Unit): applications and appeals from disability denial of ODSP benefits, as well as medical reviews
- **Income Maintenance Team:** Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP other than disability denials), Ontario Works, Canada Pension Plan and OAS/GAINS
- **Immigration Team**
- **Employment Law Team** (including Employment Insurance, ESA, wrongful dismissal)

Jack Fleming	Executive Director	
Norma English	Director of Legal Services	
Mandeep Gill	Lawyer	Housing
Fintan Lee	Lawyer	Housing
Akina Tamang	Lawyer	Housing
Jaspreet Syan	Lawyer	Housing & Employment
Sheiba Manso	Lawyer	Housing
Jennifer Goodfellow	Lawyer	Immigration
Ritu Gupta	Lawyer	Immigration
Naila Hussain	Lawyer	Employment
Michael Daoud	Lawyer	Income Maintenance
Taylor Thomson	Paralegal	DAU Team: ODSP Disability
Gail Buckley	Paralegal	DAU Team: ODSP Disability
Christa Merlin	ODSP Case Manager	DAU Team: ODSP Disability
Alison Blackman	Director of Operations	
Maria Deray	Client Service Representative	
Margarita Schupp	Client Service Representative	

Our thanks to Daniel Gordon (lawyer) and Akanksha Tripathi (Client Service Representative) who have moved on to do great work in new positions at Legal Aid Ontario but were important members of our team in 2024-25.

2.3 Board of Directors

Name	Start	Position	Position Start
Kayla Stephenson	2018 June	Chairperson	Sept. 22, 2020
Musa Bello	2024 February	Secretary	March 26, 2024
Shaneil Stewart	2020 September		
Kate Paisley	2022 January		
Amandeep Kaur	2023 May		
Rishika Thakur Malhi	2023 May		
Kavi Naraine	2024 February		
Parush Mann	2024 February		

Our thanks to Emily Beaton, who was our Vice-Chair, and who has been appointed as an Ontario Court Justice! And our thanks to Nayan Thaker, a CPA who was our Treasurer for many years, including through 2024-25, who was since moved on. Both were very involved board members who tirelessly committed to our legal clinic.

We have a dynamic and effective board of directors drawn from our community. The board is a governance and policy board, with operational issues being the responsibility of the Executive Director. The board of directors sets the policy objectives and the Executive Director is responsible for the policies and procedures needed to achieve those objectives.

3. Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression Project

3.1 Process

We began collecting identity data from clients in 2017, including race, gender identification and sexual orientation. Developing an ARAO framework was approved at our Annual Planning Meeting in January 2021. We retained D&D Inclusion Consulting in August 2021. Their report was issued in April 2022.

Following that report, separate board and staff committees worked on implementation of recommendations. The Board ARAO Committee felt that we needed better knowledge of the specific issues within our legal clinic and asked for input from the staff.

The Staff ARAO Committee surveyed and then interviewed every staff member. Their report (authored by the co-chairs of the committee) concluded that there was no evidence of any racism between management and staff. However, there was a high level of racism experienced from clients.

One recommendation of the staff committee was a policy to address racism by clients. A Client Code of Conduct Policy was developed.

Our Board ARAO Committee continues its work. As well, our Board Chair, Kayla Stephenson, is co-chair of the Association of Community Legal Clinics of Ontario (ACLCO) Race Equity Committee. That committee proposed training on developing ARAO-D policies for legal clinics and our clinic, together with the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO) obtained funding from LAO to carry out that training.

3.2 Staff & Board Diversity

In 2024, we conducted diversity surveys of our board and staff. 71% of our staff identified as racialized, with 29% South Asian and 18% Black. Chinese, Filipino, Middle Eastern and Mixed each represented 6% of staff.

NPD-CLS Staff: 71% racialized
NPD-CLS Board: 90% racialized

Low Income Population in our catchment area: 72% racialized

New Cases: 79% Racialized Clients

76% of staff identified as female; 24% male.

38% speak a language other than English. Eight different languages were identified and three staff speak Hindi and Urdu.

82% of staff said that they have had personal experience of living in poverty or of experiencing racism or systemic barriers.

No staff identified as having a disability.

Ninety percent of our board members identified as racialized: 40% Black, 40% South Asian, 10% Black/South Asian, 10% Mixed (Caribbean) and 10% White.

90% of board members said that they have had personal experience of living in poverty or of experiencing racism or systemic barriers.

Our board identified as 60% female and 40% male.

Twenty percent of board members were in the age range of 25-34 years; 60% were 35-49 years of age; and 20% were 50-64 years of age.

No board members identified as having a disability.

3.3 Clients

Race of Clients¹

	StatCan	NPD-CLS 2022-23	NPD-CLS 2023-24	NPD-CLS 2024-25
Racialized	72%	70%	72%	79%
Indigenous	1%	2%	1%	1%
South Asian	44%	26%	22%	23%
Black	13%	25%	33%	28%
Latin American	3%	2%	3%	2%
Middle Eastern	2%	5%	5%	4%
West Asian	1%	1%	0%	1%
Chinese	1%	0%	0%	0%
Filipino	1%	2%	1%	1%
Other SouthEast Asian	2%	3%	3%	2%
Other or Mixed	5%	4%	4%	3%
White	28%	30%	27%	21%
Chose Not to Identify		40%	29%	15%
No Data Recorded		3%	3%	8%

Data is based on new cases created and cases re-opened. The same client may be counted multiple times, as multiple cases are opened for the same client, or the same case is re-opened multiple times.

¹ Percentages are for those clients where we have data, excluding "no data recorded" and "chose not to identify".

Data is compared in this table to Statistics Canada data from the 2021 census. This is the census data is for the low income population (not the population as a whole) in our catchment area (Brampton, Caledon and Dufferin County).²

For most racial categories, our clients align very closely with the Statistics Canada data, including the total percentage of racialized clients. The anomalies are South Asian clients (23% of our clients but 44% of the low income population) and Black clients (28% of our clients but 13% of the low income population).

One reason for the lower than expected number of South Asian clients is SALCO (the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario), which is located in Toronto, serves all of Ontario, and is particularly active in the GTA. For example, SALCO provides regular in-person legal advice clinics at Indus, a prominent non-profit in Peel serving the South Asian population. SALCO helps many South Asian clients in Brampton.



This also helps to explain the data for Black clients. Every other racial category is a small percentage: South Asian and Black clients comprise over three-quarters of our racialized clients. When the number of South Asian clients is reduced due to SALCO's good work, then Black clients become an increased percentage of the remaining total number of clients.

The over-representation of Black clients may also reflect anti-Black racism. The Black low income population may be facing more problems than other racialized populations and therefore requiring more assistance from us.

As well, we do not know to what extent the 15% of clients who chose not to identify affected the statistics for South Asian and Black clients.

² Some adjustments were needed to line up our data with StatCan data. StatCan lists SouthEast Asian, Korean and Japanese; these categories are collapsed into "Other Southeast Asian" in this chart to align with categories in our database. StatCan lists Indigenous data separately from its "visible minority" data. Our database has nine different categories for "African Ancestry", which are collapsed into "Black" here to match the StatCan data. For "Middle Eastern," Statcan's data for "Arab" is compared to our data for "Arab" and "Other Middle Eastern" combined.

Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation

2024-25

Gender

Identity

Agender	0.0%
Female	59.4%
Male	38.4%
Other	0.1%
Trans Female	0.1%
Trans Male	0.0%
Two-Spirit	0.0%

Not Recorded 2%

Sexual Orientation

Bi-Sexual	0.7%
Gay/Lesbian	1.1%
Heterosexual	87.9%
Other or Not Specified	0.3%
Queer	0.2%
Questioning/ Unknown	0.0%
Two-Spirit	0.0%
Other or Not Specified	0.3%
Prefer Not to Respond	5.3%
Not Recorded	4.4%

For this data, we do not have corresponding StatCan data. Unsurprisingly, the majority of our clients identify as female. A Gay/Lesbian percentage of 1.1% seems unlikely and it is likely that we are not yet getting accurate responses to our sexual orientation question.

4. The Communities We Serve

4.1 Statistical Overview

We serve the populations of Brampton, Caledon and Dufferin County. Nine percent of that total population is low income. We serve a low income population of about 68,000, spread over almost 2,500 square kilometres.

2021 Census Data		Brampton	Caledon	Dufferin	TOTAL
Population					
Total Population 2021		656,480	76,581	66,257	799,318
Population 2001		325,428	50,605	51,003	427,036
% Change 2001 – 2021		102%	51%	30%	87%
Land Area (sq. km.)		266	689	1,487	2441
Pop. Density per sq. km.		2,469	111	45	
Low Income Population					
Low Income Pop. ³		57,905	4,580	5,480	67,965
Low Inc. % of population		8.9%	6%	8.4%	8.6%
Household Census Data					
Average Household Size		3.6	3.2	2.8	-
One Parent Households		9.1%	7.3%	8.7%	8.9%
Multi-Generational Households		14.3%	9.1%	5.4%	12.8%
Age 65+		12.5%	14.9%	15.9%	13.0%

The population growth in the area that we serve has been explosive. Over the span of 20 years (2001-2021) the population in the area that we serve increased 87% (Brampton's population doubled). Given the size of the population that we serve, that percentage represents a huge number of additional potential clients. As well, since the 2021 census, it is estimated that the population in our catchment area has grown another 19%.

³ This is the "Low Income Measure – Before Tax" (LIM-BT) data from Census 2021 (based on 2020 income). There are several different low income measures. There is a similar Low Income Measure after tax (LIM-AT) and there are LIM-BT and LIM-AT measures from tax filer data rather than census data, as well as the LICO and other low income measures. The different measures produce different results.

The total low income population in our catchment area increased 10% from the 2016 census to the 2021 census.⁴ However, the percentage of the population with low income declined from 14% to 9% from the 2016 to the 2021 census.

Citizenship, Immigration & Language: 2021 Census

In the census low income population, 45% are immigrants and 73% are citizens. Of course, this census data is likely missing many undocumented immigrants.

Citizenship & Immigration	Brampton	Caledon	Dufferin	TOTAL
Citizens: % of low income pop.	70%	88%	94%	73%
Citizens: % of entire pop.	79%	93%	96%	82%
Immigrants: % of low inc. pop.	48%	34%	19%	45%
Immigrants: % of entire pop.	53%	29%	16%	48%

Language Knowledge for Low Inc. Pop.	Brampton	Caledon	Dufferin	TOTAL
Neither English nor French	6%	4%	1%	5%
French Only	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
English Only	90%	92%	94%	91%
Both English and French	4%	4%	6%	4%
Mother Tongue not English	48%	36%	14%	45%

Only 4.3% of our clients speak neither English nor French. Although 45% of the low income population has a mother tongue other than English, Statistics Canada reports that only 4.9% of the low income population are without knowledge of English or French. Our clientele is in line with the low income population as a whole.

58% of our clients are Canadian citizens, compared to 73% of the low income population generally. Sixteen percent of our clients are permanent residents.

Our clients are mostly immigrants to Canada – 73%, compared to 45% of the low income population as a whole.

4.2 Our Clients

Families Assisted

The number of clients associated with cases created or re-opened in 2024-25 was 1,896, a 7% increase over 2023-24. The average household size was 2.4 people.

⁴ Assuming a similar increase in the low income population as in the general population over the past four years, we likely now serve a low income population 29% larger than in 2016.

Household Size	
1 Person	39%
2	20%
3	17%
4	12%
5 or more	11%

Location of our Clients⁵

Location	2023-24 Clients	2024-25 Clients	Census Low Inc.
Brampton	92%	94%	85%
Caledon	1%	1%	7%
Dufferin	6%	4%	8%

A major discrepancy between our clients and the low income population per the census is the low percentage of clients in Caledon (and correspondingly higher percentage in Brampton). Outreach in Caledon and Dufferin suffered during the pandemic. Work on improving this has already begun and needs to be expanded. As well, our case figures may reflect a higher low income population in Brampton than is shown in the census data (in particular, the very large population of international students; plus the homeless population which likely does not show up in census data is primarily located in Brampton).

⁵ This data excludes out of area clients. This is based on clients in both new cases and re-opened cases during 2024-25, compared to the low income population (LIM-BT) from the 2021 Census.

5. Our Services

5.1 Cases

There were 1,896 clients associated with our 2,468 cases in 2024-25, with 4,143 family members assisted by those cases.

New & Re-Opened Cases

	2022- 2023	2023- 2024	2024- 2025	Change 2022-23 2024-25	Change 2023-24 2024-25	Cases 2024-25
ODSP Denial	248	288	231	-7%	-20%	9.4%
Other ODSP	140	110	129	-8%	17%	5.2%
Ontario Works	122	94	80	-34%	-15%	3.2%
CPP/OAS	9	36	42	367%	17%	1.7%
Income Maintenance (excl. ODSP Denial)	519	240	251	-52%	5%	10.2%
Housing	1008	1218	1460	45%	20%	59.2%
Immigration	316	289	304	-4%	5%	12.3%
Employment	141	188	220	56%	17%	8.9%
Other	1	0	2	0%	0%	0.1%
TOTAL	1870	2223	2468	32%	11%	

These statistics represent new (or previously closed and re-opened during the fiscal year) legal matters dealt with by our lawyers and paralegals. The amount of assistance provided varies considerably for each client. Many of these cases will have just received some advice; some received limited services, such as completion of legal forms or a phone call to a landlord or OW worker; and some received full representation at a tribunal or court.⁶

The total number of cases created or re-opened is up 11% over the previous year and up 32% over 2022-23, showing a steady increase despite no increase in our resources. When the number of cases increases by one-third over two years, that creates significant pressures.

⁶ Over the years, we have provided representation at a wide range of tribunals, Superior Court, Divisional Court and the Court of Appeal.

We create a case for each client who contacts us (if within our geographic area and our legal areas of practice). We have become more and more efficient each year but there is a limit to how much we can accommodate increased service volume.⁷

Ultimately, as the number of clients increases, the level of service we can offer to each client must decrease.

Some cases will not appear in these statistics despite many hours of work being done during the fiscal year. That is because a case where most of the work was done in this fiscal year may have been opened the previous year and will not show as being created or re-opened in the current fiscal year.

5.2 Client Service Representatives



Our Client Service Representatives (CSRs) are a key element in our services. They are most often the public face of the legal clinic. This position involves reception, intake and support for legal staff; it also involves provision of social work support for clients. This can include linking clients to various services, providing tools for hunting for housing, or de-escalating a mental health situation. The social work skills of our CSRs are engaged from the moment of initial intake through ongoing assistance for our clients.

5.3 No Wrong Door

We provide many ways for clients to contact us: by telephone, walk-ins, email, the contact form on our website, an online intake form, and intake forms used by our community partners. We have multiple points of entry and a “no wrong door” policy. In addition, we craft particular points of entry for particular communities.

Our standard process involves our CSRs taking down the client’s information and passing the matter on to the appropriate legal staff, who will call the client back. However, sometimes a different approach is needed. If a client has a true emergency, or does not have a telephone for us to call back, or some other circumstances dictate urgency, the CSR will find someone to speak with the client right away. When a client is referred by another legal clinic, usually we will contact the client to open the file.

We have twice monthly sessions where our ODSP Disability Denial staff (the DAU Team) meet with ODSP clients from the Dufferin Area Family Health Team (DAFHT) in Orangeville. We work closely with DAFHT in a health justice partnership to obtain the

⁷ Demand continues to climb in 2025-26, up 6% over the previous year per annualized statistics for the first six months.

best possible outcomes for our mutual clients. That partnership led to a “Shining Lights” award at an annual Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario conference.

We are always open to exploring different service methodologies for different types of clients (we have had different protocols for Canadian Mental Health Association clients).

Many clients find us because they are referred by another community agency. Many also come to us through Google searches and our website. Our Google profile is viewed by roughly 3,000 people per month. Around 1,000 Google searches for other topics (such as “free legal services”) show our legal clinic in the results each month.

5.4 Referrals

Many people contact us for issues that we cannot assist them with, such as family law problems. We provide a valuable service for these people: our Client Service Representatives direct them to where they can get assistance. For some clients in



particularly difficult circumstances, we will provide a “warm referral”, connecting them directly to another service.

Many people also self-refer through the information on our website or our telephone messaging.

5.5 Housing Law

Housing law has consistently been the area of highest demand (as is the case for most community legal clinics) and

comprised almost 60% of our new or re-opened cases in 2024-25 (up from 55% the previous year).⁸ We have over 125 new or re-opened housing cases per month. In addition, we provide tenant duty counsel (TDC) services at Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) hearings for Dufferin tenants.

Our housing cases were up 20% from the previous year. They are up 45% over the past two years. These are very significant increases. In addition, the work involved has increased considerably over the past few years. The way in which the LTB is managing virtual hearings means that hearings now consume an inordinate amount of time. This particularly affects our TDC services.



⁸ In the first six months of 2025-26, the number of new housing cases has increased 5% over 2024-25.

Most housing clients just receive advice. The demand is far too high to provide full representation to everyone. As well, there is great variance in the importance of the cases. However, many clients do get full representation. We particularly focus on evictions (especially for rent-geared-to-income tenants) and loss of rent subsidies.



Apart from representation of individual clients, our housing team has meetings with staff at the Region of Peel to work out systemic issues, including Service Manager appeals and eviction practices. This work has the potential to assist many more tenants.

5.6 ODSP Disability Denials



Persons denied ODSP benefits as they allegedly do not meet the disability definition have always been a major area of law for us. We have worked hard over the years to develop efficient systems to handle the high volume of ODSP cases. The pressure on our staff to manage these cases has been intense during 2024-25 (and continues to be intense). These cases were 9% of our new or re-opened cases

in 2024-25. The number of ODSP Disability Denial cases was down 20% over the previous year. This is an area subject to fluctuation, causing pressure on the team and requiring re-allocation of resources. In 2023-24, cases for this team were up 16% over the previous year, in 2024-25 they were down 20% over the previous year but in the first half of 2025-26, new cases are up 18% over 2023-24. Taking a longer view, ODSP Denial cases, so far in 2025-26, are up 10% over 2022-23.

5.7 Income Maintenance Cases

This legal team deals with Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP apart from disability denial cases), Canada Pension Plan and OAS cases.

Apart from helping many individual clients, our Income Maintenance Team works on systemic issues. One of our lawyers is a member of the Provincial Steering Committee on Social Assistance. On behalf of all legal clinics, this Committee lobbies the provincial government for changes to OW and ODSP legislation, and has meetings with Ministry staff and SBT staff about their policies and procedures. Locally, our team meets with Region of Peel staff to sort out difficult systemic issues.



5.8 Immigration



Our immigration cases made up 10% of new and re-opened cases in 2024-25.

37% of the cases relate to temporary residents, such as students, work permits and visitors' visas. 13% are sponsorship cases, 8% are humanitarian and compassionate applications and 15% relate to permanent residency. Issues the team have been working on include international students and migrant workers (particularly nannies).

We have had successful appeals at the Immigration Appeal Division and successful judicial reviews at the Federal Court.

5.9 Employment Law

We have obtained many significant settlements for clients in wrongful dismissal cases and assisted clients with *Employment Standards Act* issues. The number of employment law cases was up 56% over the past two years and were 9% of our new cases in 2024-25.



5.10 Public Legal Education & Outreach

We continue to provide many public legal education sessions every year. Many of these are aimed at our client group directly. For example, our talks to newcomers at ESL classes and presentations at shelters.

However, we also target a lot of outreach/education work at other community agencies. When our potential clients have a problem, they will turn to a community agency. We make sure that we keep strong formal and informal links with various community agencies. Our presentations to staff of other agencies are aimed at training them to recognize potential legal issues. The staff at our community partners act as trusted intermediaries in referring clients to us. It is not necessary for them to learn the law so much as to recognize that a problem may have a legal solution and therefore they should connect the client to the legal clinic.

We have also produced YouTube videos on legal issues.

As well, we work with community partners in joint projects, such as our health justice partnership with the Dufferin Area Family Health Team and the Peel International Students' Roundtable.



5.11 Community Legal Clinic System



Our community legal clinic is extensively involved in working with community legal clinics across Ontario – together we are stronger and can accomplish more. The Chair of our board of directors is a member of the Executive of the Association of Community Legal Clinics of Ontario (ACLCO) and co-chairs the ACLCO's Race Equity Advisory Committee. We are also

on the Social Assistance Steering Committee, the LAO-Clinics' IT Advisory Committee (co-chaired by our Executive Director and the LAO VP for Clinic Law Services), the CIMS Working Group (client management software used by legal clinics), the Health Justice Partnerships Community of Practice, the Inter-Clinic Immigration Working Group and more.

5.12 Other Connections

We have extensive involvement in our communities and within the legal community, including on the Law Society of Ontario's Access to Innovation Roundtable, the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee, the Peel International Students Roundtable and more. Our Executive Director co-chairs an annual conference on residential landlord and tenant law for Osgoode Hall Law School.