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Our Reference Number: M-2025-8751

February 25, 2026

Ms. Ena Chadha
Chair
Human Rights Legal Support Centre
180 Dundas Street West, 8th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 0A1

Dear Ms. Chadha:

I am pleased to share our government's 2026-27 priorities for the Human Rights Legal Support Centre (HRLSC).

Agencies are a part of government and are expected to act in the best interests of the people of Ontario. In a time of economic uncertainty, agencies play a critical role in supporting our commitment to Protect Ontario by improving service delivery, driving innovation, and ensuring responsible stewardship of public resources – all while adhering to government policies and directives.

In accordance with the Agencies and Appointments Directive, agencies are required to align their goals, objectives and strategic direction with our government's priorities. As Chair, you are responsible for ensuring that the HRLSC's business plan clearly demonstrates how the agency will fulfill these expectations. Progress and achievements must be reported through your annual report, and compliance with these requirements will be monitored and reported to Treasury Board/Management Board of Cabinet annually.

This letter sets out my expectations for 2026-27, with a focus on how the HRLSC will contribute to protecting Ontario by delivering better services and driving innovation and value for money.

Protect Ontario

1. Expand domestic partnerships within Canada, to promote the development of supply chains and economic opportunities across Canada and support economic resilience, particularly in light of ongoing U.S. tariff threats and economic uncertainty.
2. Procure from Ontario and Canadian businesses whenever feasible.
3. Provide economic relief for Ontario families, consumers and businesses by freezing government fees and fares, unless approved by the oversight Minister.

Deliver Better Services

4. Focus on a user-centered client/customer experience by simplifying interactions, improving satisfaction, and expanding and optimizing digital service offerings.
5. Identify opportunities to enhance efficiency, improve services, drive innovation, and achieve cost savings for the people of Ontario, including through the use of AI and other advanced technologies.
6. Eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape by applying lean methodologies or other modalities to achieve operational efficiency.

Drive Innovation & Value for Money

7. Find innovative solutions to use public resources efficiently and to effectively deliver on the agency's mandate while operating within agency's financial allocation, supported by accurate financial reporting, effective internal controls, and proactive fraud management practices.
8. Manage agency workforce with careful responsibility to stabilize expenditures and preserve long-term financial viability by:
 - strictly adhering to the hiring control parameters, including ceasing hiring for non-business critical and non-public-facing positions, including the use of consultants;
 - operating within a defined maximum workforce size (including consultants);
 - ensuring compliance with the Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act (BPSECA);
 - enhancing productivity and efficiency by using technology wherever possible.
9. Create a span of control policy that recognizes different streams of work within the organization and sets minimum span of control benchmarks, and provide it to the Minister for approval by March 31, 2026.
10. As previously communicated, provide to your oversight minister by October 1, 2025, the amended human resource policy, guideline or directive that adheres to the OPS in-office standard of four (4) days per week effective October 20, 2025, and five (5) days per week effective January 5, 2026, and work with your oversight ministry to address any office space constraints.

I am also sharing several priorities specific to the HRLSC:

1. The HRLSC is expected to continue to prioritize addressing the recommendations of the 2022-23 mandate review approved by Treasury Board Secretariat. This includes specific recommendations focused on the possibility of implementing financial eligibility criteria, strengthening data collection, and leveraging client data to inform decision-making.
2. In accordance with the 2020 TBS audit, the HRLSC is expected to continue to work with MAG's Justice Technology Services and Information Technology

Services to migrate the HRLSC IT services to the OPS network to take advantage of shared infrastructure.

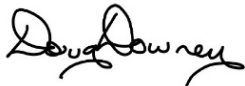
3. As the HRLSC released its new five-year Strategic Plan in January 2025, the agency is expected to continue to work on advancing the goals and priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan and report back to the ministry on progress.
4. The HRLSC and the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) shall, in a manner consistent with their respective statutory mandates, maintain regular communication to strengthen information-sharing and identify direct opportunities to enhance efficiency and impact in the delivery of their mandated services to the people of Ontario.

At our next meeting, I would be pleased to discuss these priorities, and I look forward to hearing how they will be reflected in the agency's upcoming business plan and in ongoing agency operations.

Thank you and your fellow board members for your continued commitment to the Human Rights Legal Support Centre. Your work and ongoing support is invaluable to our government and the people of Ontario.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Tom McKinlay, Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Policy Division at Tom.McKinlay@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,



Hon. Doug Downey
Attorney General

Copy:

- Dr. Remi Warner, Executive Director, Human Rights Legal Support Centre
- Tom McKinlay, Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Policy Division

Attachment:

- Government Priorities for Agency Sector Chart