

HUMAN RIGHTS LEGAL SUPPORT CENTRE

Annual Report 2024–2025

HRLSC | Human Rights Legal Support Centre

CAJDP | Centre d'assistance juridique
en matière de droits de la personne

Ontario 

Land Acknowledgement

The Human Rights Legal Support Centre (HRLSC) provides services throughout Ontario and operates from its central office in Toronto. Accordingly, we acknowledge our presence on the traditional territories of the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, and Anishinaabeg, Attawandaron and Leni-Lunaape, the Mushkegowuk and particularly the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, as well as the 46 treaties and other agreements that cover the territory now called Ontario. This place is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Metis peoples from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work and operate on this land.

The HRLSC also recognizes and acknowledges that we are in the territory subject to the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Anishinaabeg and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the land and waters of the Great Lakes region.

“Thank you. I do appreciate the work you do. It's life changing for the clients.”

– HRLSC Client

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1. Opening Messages

Message from our Chair

This year marks a momentous transition for the Human Rights Legal Support Centre (HRLSC) as we look ahead with renewed purpose and clarity, guided by the launch of our [2024–2029 Strategic Plan](#). This Plan is more than an operational roadmap—it is a bold commitment to propel the HRLSC’s digital impact, to deepen and expand our human rights reach, and to lead with principled intention with a view of moving our services along with the modern imperatives of this decade.

From our inception over 16 years ago, at the heart of the HRLSC’s work is a simple but powerful truth: human rights are not just legal principles—they are inalienable values to be lived in our daily experiences. Every day, the HRLSC team supports individuals throughout the Province facing discrimination and harassment, helping them navigate complicated relationships and systems and seek justice for their inherent right to live with equity and respect. The HRLSC is increasingly called upon to identify systemic gaps, influence and advance jurisprudence, and advocate for reforms that benefit all — but especially marginalized, communities in Ontario.

This year, we saw the power of that approach in action through a number of significant legal victories:

- In **Powell v. Ontario**, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTO) ordered the Ontario Provincial Police to review its custody policies after failing to accommodate a woman with diabetes. This case demonstrates how individual complaints can drive system-wide change to improve law enforcement practices.
- In **Robinson-Cooke v. Ontario (Community and Social Services)**, the Ontario Court of Appeals upheld the HRTO’s finding that the denial of a guide dog benefit was discriminatory. The ruling compelled the Province to reform its policies, setting a precedent for inclusive benefit design for people with disabilities.
- In **Nakogee v. North Bay Transit**, the HRTO found that a family was denied access to public transit based on their Indigeneity and that the transit authority failed to investigate their complaint. The ruling emphasized the need for culturally competent, anti-racist practices for investigating allegations of discrimination and harassment, especially in relation to essential public services.

- In **A.B. v. Mad Wax Windsor Inc.**, the HRTO recognized the compounded harm of discrimination and reprisal against a trans woman who was denied service and then publicly outed and harassed. In addition to sending a strong message about the right to dignity for trans people, the Tribunal’s findings noted that respondents must exercise caution to avoid publicizing an applicant’s personal information and media campaigns may be found to be retaliatory.
- Regrettably, sexual harassment continues to be a pervasive problem, particularly for women in the workplace. In cases such as **Aloy-Sadakane v. Data & Scientific Inc.** and **More v. Shared Workspace Inc.**, the HRTO reinforced the obligation of employers to maintain safe and respectful workplaces, ordered financial compensation for injury to dignity, feelings, and self-respect, and mandatory training.

The HRLSC’s Strategic Plan sets ambitious priorities. We aim to **provide leadership in Ontario’s human rights system**, not only by supporting individuals but by advancing early dispute resolution, advocating for systemic change, continuing our commitment to reconciliation, and expanding our experiential education programs. We are also committed to **increasing access to legal services**, especially for those most marginalized and vulnerable to discrimination.

Acutely aware of the ways in which only focusing our attention on those who come to our door for service can reproduce existing inequities in access to human rights justice, our new strategy will help to ensure that we are intentional with our outreach and about who and how we serve. This will require more targeted public communications and robust data collection. In turn, this will enable us to hone our services to those most underrepresented, deliver stronger and sharper human rights analysis, expose systemic patterns and empower rights-based advocacy that is maximally impactful.

To the HRLSC’s dedicated and hard-working staff, my Board colleagues, our partners, and the communities we aim to serve: *thank you, merci, and miigwetch*. Your confidence in the HRLSC and collaboration are critical and make this work possible. Together, we will decisively move this strategic and transformative phase forward to advance what human rights justice can look like for all in Ontario.

Sincerely,

Ena Chadha, Chair of the HRLSC Board of Directors

Message from our Executive Director

The HRLSC continued its transformational journey in new and proactive directions this past 2024–2025 fiscal year, consistent with our new Five-Year [Strategic Plan](#) and Ministry of Attorney General mandate letter priorities.

Key operational priorities this past year included:

1. Building a strategic approach to orient HRLSC services and decision-making;
2. Enhancing our community outreach, partnerships, and public profile; and
3. Stabilizing our resources and infrastructure.

In the first respect, we successfully released our 2024–2029 Strategic Plan – *Realizing Human Rights Together: Empowering Access to Justice* this past fiscal year, which has provided us with a strong foundation to orient and inspire current and future HRLSC work and efforts to expand access to human rights justice in Ontario. Through this Plan we also began enhancing our capacity to collect, analyse and use data within the organization to help inform and enable strategic decision-making, and support our efforts to attract new and additional sources of funding.

In the second regard, we engaged in concerted community outreach efforts this past year, including through strategic plan [consultations](#), building of new community partnerships, and strategic investments in our capacity to measure and communicate our value to the public. We have already begun to see the fruits of these efforts, including as measured by a 30% increase in our website visits and 300% increase in our media visibility this year (as measured by positive media stories) as compared to last year. That we were able to also increase our provision of summary legal advice by 34% this year (as compared to the last four-year average) whilst accepting the highest number of calls since 2018/2019, only further indicates our growing reach and the growing demand for HRLSC services by Ontarians.

Finally, in the third regard, the HRLSC undertook critical and proactive steps to secure and expand our resources and infrastructure over the near, medium, and long term. This included advancing proactive measures to protect and secure our IT systems, through the development of a new IT policy, strategy, and infrastructural development plan that will see us migrate our data and operating systems to a new cloud facility in the coming year, including to protect us against future cyberattacks. Concerted efforts were also undertaken to obtain new and diversified sources of funding to address ongoing human and financial resource challenges to fulfilling our statutory mandate. In this respect, we successfully secured a new Law Foundation of Ontario (LFO) grant which supported our launch of a new and exciting Mediation, Early Resolution & Experiential Learning Training

(MEET) Pilot Project, expanding our existing partnership with York University's Osgoode Hall Law School. This Pilot Project will support 12 new student placements at the HRLSC over the next two years focused on mediation and early resolution services. New LFO funding also enabled the HRLSC to launch the development of a new, online, self-administered "Guided Pathway" tool in partnership with Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO). The Guided Pathway tool will assist Ontarians in preparing and filing their applications at the HRTO. Through this tool, the HRLSC and CLEO are expanding access to human rights justice for those who may not have had legal support and advice otherwise, especially as more and more Ontarians go self-represented at the Tribunal.

On a more challenging note, we saw a significant decline this past year in our ability to provide in-depth legal interviews and attend HRTO hearings. While there were numerous contributing factors, including those beyond our direct control (such as the ongoing impacts of the 2023 cybersecurity incident), this clearly indicates that we need to continue to strive to expand our staffing complement to strengthen our capacity to provide in-depth legal services to Ontarians. This very much informs our current strategic efforts to increase our funding, resources, and capacity to attract and retain staff at levels commensurate with our statutory mandate. We recognize that there is still a lot of work to be done and improvements to be made in such respects. With this in mind, we commenced bargaining this past year with our new, voluntarily recognized counsel union group, and adopted a new Compensation Philosophy reaffirming our commitment to fairness, equity, and long-term sustainability. We also continued to analyze compensation disparities and submitted robust funding proposals to address these challenges.

We thank our staff for their valiant efforts to provide Ontarians experiencing discrimination with the legal supports they need, despite working in a consistently fiscally challenged, resource-strained environment. Our new Strategic Plan provides us with an inspirational roadmap in such respects going forward. We remain confident that we will begin to reap the benefits of our longer-term strategic investments in the years ahead from the seeds we plant today.

To our staff, partners, and the communities we serve: I echo our Chair Ena's words of gratitude. Your dedication and collaboration make this work possible. Together, we will continue to advance human rights in Ontario—not only by responding to those who seek our help, but by proactively shaping a more just and inclusive future.

Sincerely,

Remi Warner, Executive Director for the HRLSC

2. Summary of Mandate and Services

2.1 *Code*-related Discrimination:

The HRLSC provides legal support services to persons who have experienced discrimination, harassment or reprisal under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (or *Code*).

One of the key requirements for establishing discrimination under the *Code* is determining if an organization or individual is treating someone unfairly because of a personal characteristic (or prohibited ground). These 17 prohibited grounds are:

- Age,
- Ancestry,
- Citizenship,
- Colour,
- Creed (including religion),
- Disability,
- Ethnic origin,
- Family status,
- Gender expression,
- Gender identity,
- Marital status,
- Place of origin,
- Race,
- Receipt of public assistance (in housing only),
- Record of offences (in employment only),
- Sex (including solicitation, sexual harassment and pregnancy), and
- Sexual orientation.

Discrimination, harassment or reprisals can occur if a policy, practice, or program unfairly affects someone, or a group, based on one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination listed above. Discrimination can also happen when someone's particular needs are not accommodated based on one of the grounds of discrimination listed above.

Some *Code*-related discrimination can be intentional and is directly targeted at a person or group. Discrimination can also be unintentional: when someone is indirectly or accidentally singled out or excluded, based on their identity, or when an individual or an organization does not know or understand their duty to accommodate someone.

A second key requirement for establishing if discrimination is *Code*-related, is confirming that it has taken place in one of five social areas as set out in the *Code*:

- Housing (including buying, selling, renting or being evicted from an apartment, house, condominium or hotel room);
- Employment (including the hiring process, during employment, and post-termination);
- Services, goods and facilities (such as schools, local transit, police, hospitals, stores, recreational facilities and restaurants);

- Contracts; and
- Vocational/occupational associations (such as unions or professional associations).

2.2 HRLSC’s Mandate:

The HRLSC is funded by Ontario’s Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) to provide free human rights advice and legal support services.

Pursuant to ss. 45.12 and 45.13 of the *Code*, the HRLSC provides support, and representation to individuals whose rights may have been violated under the *Human Rights Code*. The HRLSC also offers confidential advice and assistance, legal and otherwise (including information, resources, educational outreach), respecting the infringement of rights under the *Code*, including to help Ontarians exercise their rights and redress options under the *Code* and resolve disputes involving discrimination, harassment, or reprisal.

Vision:

Advancing an equitable society where everyone lives with dignity, respect, and promotes human rights.

Mission:

Empowering people and communities experiencing discrimination by providing legal services and supports, strengthening their capacity to navigate the human rights system, and advancing access to and the attainment of justice in Ontario.

Values:

Equity and Inclusion: Treating everyone with dignity, respect, and compassion.

Excellence: Delivering independent, responsive, high quality and high-impact legal services and supports and pursuing learning, knowledge-sharing and innovation.

Integrity: Being principled, accountable, and transparent.

2.3 Services:

The HRLSC provides free legal advice and support, primarily over the phone (alternative accommodations are available, as is an online portal for inquiries). The HRLSC also offers in-depth advice and representation to Ontarians for HRTO mediations and hearings. It helps resolve disputes, negotiate settlements, enforce HRTO orders, and represent clients at judicial reviews and appeals. The HRLSC also offers educational outreach and online resources to increase awareness and understanding of the province’s human rights system and the HRLSC’s legal support services.

3. Activities

3.1 Release of new Five-Year Strategic Plan

In January of 2025, following an intensive visioning process, the HRLSC publicly released its new Strategic Plan, “[Realizing Human Rights Together: Empowering Access to Justice](#)”, along with a [Stakeholder Engagement Report](#), which informed the development of this Plan. This is the HRLSC’s first Plan since 2013 and the first to cover a five-year period.

The four priorities and nine goals found in this Strategic Plan will direct the HRLSC’s activities towards fulfilling the Centre’s new Vision, Mission and Values for the next five years. The priorities identified are focused on creating better access to a broader range of human rights legal support services, strengthening our leadership role in support of people seeking human rights justice to advance systemic change, law reform, jurisprudence, reconciliation and experiential education, and creating organizational sustainability for the HRLSC.

The HRLSC’s staff have begun working on implementing the priorities laid out in the plan. This implementation required additional labour in collecting, analyzing and sharing data, along with expanded community stakeholder, government, media and external relations. To this end, and to support HRLSC’s efforts to acquire new funding and demonstrate HRLSC’s value to the public, the HRLSC added a communications manager, as well as a policy, research and strategic advisor. The focus of this past year’s work was on reviewing the current landscape, including assessing risks, opportunities and change management strategies, and developing implementation plans in this context. A Strategic Implementation Planning Retreat was held with the Management Team in the Fall, with staff being further engaged through staff meetings and surveys.

In the first year of implementing its new plan, one key achievement of the HRLSC was its successful application for the Law Foundation of Ontario's Responsive Grant, which will help support the Centre's operations (see section 3.2.7 for more on this Grant). The HRLSC made several grant funding submissions this past fiscal year. This reflects the HRLSC’s new strategic prioritization of efforts to diversify and expand its funding sources, including through such time-limited grants and resource partnerships, to supplement the Centre’s core funding in the interests of its shorter and longer-term organizational effectiveness and sustainability. The HRLSC also continued to work

extensively with its core funder, MAG, on its Business Case for funding increases to sustain our staffing and operations.

The HRLSC is aware of the challenges and limitations of not being able to rely exclusively on stable core funding, but has little choice but to seek out new funding and resource prospects (however much time-limited) to keep up with rising costs and inflation (see section 7.3 for more on some of the associated risks and benefits in this respect).

The HRLSC's focus on planning and resources included the HRLSC's adoption of a new Compensation Philosophy. This Philosophy will help advance the HRLSC's strategic priority of making the HRLSC an employer of choice. Recognizing the critical importance of recruiting and retaining talented staff, the philosophy sets out the HRLSC's compensation goals and aspirations to help inform the HRLSC's overall approach and a principled methodology to compensation for all occupational groups.

Another highlight for the HRLSC's Strategic Plan implementation in the 2024–2025 fiscal period was forging and deepening collaboration with some longstanding partners. Such collaboration included the development of a partnership (as noted in section 3.2 under "Partnerships") with CLEO for the delivery of a new Guided Pathways tool to support individuals in navigating the HRTO's application process. The HRLSC grew its partnership with York University's Osgoode Hall Law School through the development of a new LFO-funded Mediation, Early Resolution and Experiential Education Training (MEET) Pilot Project. These partnerships and programs support the HRLSC's priorities of improving access and service options for people across Ontario.

In furtherance of our new Strategic Plan goals to strengthen our infrastructure, the Centre developed a new IT strategy to further secure our IT systems and guide and inform future priorities and investments in the expansion of HRLSC digital service delivery. As part of this strategy, the HRLSC furthermore completed a review and update of its existing IT policies to include increased security measures and best practices on usage of IT equipment and artificial intelligence.

In its second year, the HRLSC is launching several initiatives to advance its new Strategic Plan. Some key highlights include:

- expanding our early resolution and mediation service offerings and capacity;
- improving our capacity to collect and use data across the organization, including to better target services and outreach;
- modernizing our technological infrastructure to expand future digital service delivery;

- growing our communications and public awareness of the Centre’s activities and services;
- developing a resource generation strategy and further diversifying and expanding our funding;
- continuing to enhance Board governance and risk management, including through Board governance policy development.

Importantly, in year two of the Strategic Plan, the HRLSC aims to build and improve engagement and consultation with organizations operating in or adjacent to Ontario’s human rights system, including to further develop additional partnerships in support of referrals and outreach to marginalized communities, to advance public accountability and public interest litigation, and for possible future program and funding collaborations.

The HRLSC will also strive to continue to build out engagement and consultation with organizations operating in or adjacent to Ontario’s human rights system, including to further develop additional partnerships in support of referrals and outreach to marginalized communities, to advance public accountability and public interest litigation, and for possible future program and funding collaborations.

3.2 Speaking and Outreach Events

As part of its mandate to advance equality and protect human rights by providing a range of accessible and high quality legal and support services, the HRLSC provides public legal education, which includes speaking engagements as part of Continuing Professional Development sessions and presenting information about its case-work and other relevant subject matter. Such activities fall under its outreach and engagement work to inform the public about accessing their legal options under the *Code* and the HRLSC’s services.

2024–2025 Events:

- April 24, 2024 – Presentation for Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) members on the *Human Rights Code* and Ontario's human rights system (Research Lawyer)
- May 9, 2024 – Fourth day of the Osgoode Certificate in Human Rights Theory and Practice covering HRTO remedies (Research Lawyer)
- May 16 and December 12, 2024 – “Your Human Rights at Work” training for the Lighthouse Project, run by Youth Employment Services (Research Lawyer)
- May 23, 2024 – Toronto Newcomer Day Information Fair (Communications Coordinator)

- May 29, 2024 – Presentations on the topics of citizenship-based discrimination and jurisdiction and choice of legal forum for unionized employees for human rights matters as part of the Ontario Bar Association’s Annual Human Rights Update (Legal Director and Legal Counsel)
- August 12, 2024 – Presentation of “Serving Indigenous Communities: HRLSC Indigenous Services, the *Code*, and the HRTO jurisdiction & process” to OFIFC, Odawa and Thunder Bay and Pro Bono staff (Member of ISOC)
- September 20, 2024 – Presentation on Human Rights law Update to Frontenac Law Association (Chair)
- October 17, 2024 – Canadian National Institute for the Blind Parent and Caregiver Education (Research Lawyer)
- November 5, 2024 – Zonta Club Action to Build a Better World for Women & Girls (Chair)
- December 5, 2024 – Chaired and delivered presentation for the major case law and Tribunal update at the Law Society of Ontario's 13th Human Rights Summit (Research Counsel & Legal Counsel)
- January 23, 2025 – Ontario Bar Association, Litigating a Human Rights File (Research Lawyer)
- February 8, 2025 – Panel discussion disability rights as part of Osgoode Professional Development’s Certificate in Human Rights for Education Professionals (Legal Counsel) (Legal Counsel)
- February 24, 2025 – Western University Black History Month (Executive Director)
- March 7 – 8, 2025 – Kawaskimhon Moot (Member of ISOC)
- March 10 – 11, 2025 – Little Native Hocket League (LNHL) Mobile Legal Clinic (Member of ISOC)

3.2 Partnerships

3.2.1 Indigenous Services and Outreach Committee

Several staff at the HRLSC serve as members of the Indigenous Services and Outreach Committee (ISOC). This team supports outreach and engagement to communities across Ontario, as well as providing legal advice and representation to clients identifying as Indigenous (including Métis, Inuit and members of First Nations).

2024–2025 Collaborations:

- Indigenous Reconciliation Advisory Group (IRAG): In 2024, ISOC received information on the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s (OHRC) drafting of a statement regarding self-identification and Indigenous identification in hiring, as well as a policy that

expands on addressing Indigenous-specific discrimination in the provincial healthcare system. The HRLSC remains an active member of the OHRC's IRAG which consists of individuals from diverse First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities and organizations from across Ontario.

- Indigenous Human Rights Program (IHRP) through Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC): Following a slowdown in the 2023–2024 fiscal period, the PBSC program restarted in 2024–2025, with staff from ISOC stepping back into roles providing training for law students enrolled in the IHRP. Through this training, students led clinics which are housed at the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) in Ottawa and Thunder Bay. ISOC provides the jurisdiction training as part of the student onboarding for the program.
- Indigenous Human Rights Podcast: Members of ISOC participated in a podcast episode discussing the successful case of *Nakogee v. The Corporation of the City of North Bay o/a North Bay Transit*.
- Strategic Plan Indigenous Community Working Group (ICWG): As part of the HRLSC's new Strategic Plan, ISOC struck a new Indigenous Community Working Group to collaborate with Indigenous communities. The aim is to strengthen our outreach, services and supports to Indigenous communities as part of the HRLSC's Strategic Priority to provide leadership in Ontario's human rights system. In the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the ICWG began drafting a historical account of HRLSC's Reconciliation Journey to be posted and showcased on the ISOC web page on the Centre's website.
- Disability Justice Network of Ontario (DJNO): ISOC continues to work with the DJNO to receive referrals from its Prison Project. This project aims to support self-advocacy for Indigenous and racialized individuals with disabilities who are incarcerated in correctional facilities.
- Patient Ombudsman: The Patient Ombudsman's role is to help resolve complaints from patients, residents and caregivers about experiences in Ontario's health care system. ISOC staff delivered presentations to the Patient Ombudsman on providing client referrals to the HRLSC.
- Tribunals Ontario – Indigenous Services: ISOC continued to invite Tribunal's Ontario's Indigenous Services representative to some of its yearly meetings.
- Chiefs of Ontario: Chiefs of Ontario is a representative and advocacy body for 133 First Nation communities across the province. ISOC continued to provide information about its services.

3.2.2 Ontario Human Rights Commission – Community Advisory Group

The OHRC's Community Advisory Group (CAG) represents diverse constituencies including community service providers, representatives of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, individuals with lived experiences relating to discrimination prohibited under the *Code*, social justice organizations in Ontario, and the Canadian Human Rights Commission and provides advice relating to the OHRC's strategic priorities. The HRLSC remains a valued member of the CAG.

3.2.3 Anti-Discrimination Intensive Program

The Anti-Discrimination Intensive Program (ADIP) is a collaborative project between the HRLSC and Osgoode Hall Law School at York University. Entering its 14th year of operations, this highly valued program offers 12 full-time placements at the HRLSC to first, second and third-year law students. ADIP offers students the opportunity to develop specialized knowledge of anti-discrimination law and to see an administrative law process from beginning to end. Students receive mentorship from the HRLSC's counsel and assist with the HRLSC's intake phone lines.

The HRLSC is proud to announce that, through LFO funding, we are expanding our partnership with Osgoode Hall Law School with the creation of a new pilot project named Mediation, Early Resolution & Experiential Learning Training (MEET). MEET will provide an additional 12 law students with an opportunity to train in the areas of early dispute resolution and mediation legal services over the next two years.

3.2.4 Windsor University Student Placement

The Windsor Law Social Justice Fellowship Program supports students interested in obtaining exposure to social justice advocacy and to enhance the capacity of future social justice lawyers to work towards the protection of human rights and the pursuit of social justice goals. During the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the HRLSC hosted a student placement from this program, with the student supporting the HRLSC's intake services as well as research and outreach.

3.2.5 Western Ontario Summer Student Placement

The HRLSC hosted a first-year Western Law student this past year as part of Western University's inaugural "Summer After 1L" summer placement program. The student conducted research on the Ontario legislature's intended goals for the HRLSC at its inception, including its statutory mandate and services, as discussed in the Hansard

Records during Bill 107 (the *Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2006*), which brought the HRLSC into existence. The student furthermore reviewed, consolidated and expanded HRLSC's community contact database for future outreach purposes, and supported HRLSC intake services.

3.2.6 Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic

The Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic (BSCC) provides trauma-informed legal services, counselling, multi-lingual interpretation and drives system change to support women and gender-diverse clients who have experienced violence.

The HRLSC and the BSCC continued co-referrals in 2024–2025, with the HRLSC referring clients to the BSCC for services including family and immigration legal advice and representation, support through the family court process, and counselling services. The BSCC referred clients with human rights complaints to the HRLSC, especially related to sex and gender-based discrimination. These mutual referrals reduced client intake time and made it easier for staff to assist clients with their legal options and provide resources for related wellbeing or social support needs. The HRLSC continued to receive referrals roughly once every two to three months from the BSCC in the 2024–2025 fiscal year.

3.2.7 Law Foundation Ontario, Community Legal Education Ontario and Osgoode Hall

The LFO has a unique mandate to improve access to justice for the people of Ontario and has funded human rights training initiatives to assist community service providers in identifying discrimination claims.

Recently, the HRLSC successfully secured LFO funding to support a new Mediation, Early Resolution & Experiential Education Training (MEET) Pilot Project, a Guided Pathway online tool, and the hiring of a Legal Services Representative staff to support mediation and early resolutions.

As part of this funding, the HRLSC partnered with [Community Legal Education Ontario](#) (CLEO) and Osgoode Hall Law School at York University.

Osgoode Hall Law School, which partners with the HRLSC on the aforementioned Anti-Discrimination Harassment Program (ADIP) will provide 12 students to work as part of the Mediation Services Pilot Project. These students will support mediations and early resolutions at the HRTO, as well as earning valuable experiential learning in this area of law and practice.

CLEO will collaborate with the HRLSC on the launch of a new self-administered online "Guided Pathway" tool. This tool will help Ontarians directly complete and file applications at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario.

"I am writing to express my deepest and most sincere gratitude for the excellent work your team at Human Rights Legal Support did on my case.

Your dedication, expertise, and unwavering commitment to justice have profoundly restored my faith in the legal system and the power of human rights advocacy."

– HRLSC Client

4. Operational Performance

4.1 Case Summaries

4.1.1 Judicial Reviews

Applicant Proceeds with Case at HRTO after Divisional Court overturns HRTO Decision to Dismiss Application as Abandoned

Employment/disability

Ramirez v. Rockwell Automation Canada Ltd., [2025 ONSC 1408](#)

On judicial review, the Divisional Court ruled it was unreasonable for the HRTO to find Fernando Ramirez had abandoned his application after missing one email, in a case related to disability and employment.

In 2019, Ramirez's HRTO application was deferred until the conclusion of a proceeding before the Worker Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). During a two-year period after this deferral, Ramirez responded to two requests for information from the HRTO and contacted the Tribunal about his file. However, following these successful exchanges, the HRTO sent an email seeking an update, which Ramirez did not receive. When Ramirez did not respond, the HRTO dismissed his application as abandoned, with no further notice to him. Ramirez filed a request for reconsideration of that decision, but the request was denied.

The HRLSC represented Ramirez at the Divisional Court. On March 7, 2025, the Divisional Court ruled it was unreasonable for the HRTO to find that Ramirez had abandoned his application, noting the HRTO should have considered the one missed email within the context of his past, successful communications.

The Divisional Court also ruled that because the HRTO decision was obviously unfair, there was no reason to send the matter back to be reconsidered by the HRTO. Ramirez's application will be heard again at the HRTO, after his WSIB proceeding is complete.

HRTO Decision Stands: Denial of Guide Dog Benefit was Discriminatory Based on Disability

Services, goods, facilities/disability

Ontario (Minister of Children, Community and Social Services) v. Robinson-Cooke, [2024 ONSC 3556](#)

A Divisional Court ruling upheld the [original decision](#) at the HRTO in the case of the HRLSC's client Destiny Robinson-Cooke, who was unable to obtain a service dog from an accredited facility for her disability needs, causing her to be ineligible for the Ontario Disability Support Program's Guide Dog Benefit.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCSS) requested a judicial review of the original HRTO decision, which had ordered the Province to review its policies around benefits for individuals requiring guide dogs.

The Divisional Court upheld the HRTO decision, finding that the Tribunal had applied the correct legal tests, properly assessed the evidence and came to a reasonable finding that the Guide Dog policy was discriminatory based on disability. The Court also agreed that the HRTO remedies ordered for the MCSS to make systemic changes to its Guide Dog policy and practice were reasonable.

The Court of Appeal denied the Province's request for leave to appeal the case further. As a result, the decisions of the HRTO and Divisional Court have been upheld and will not be subject to any further challenges.

Following the conclusion of these cases, the MCSS is required to follow [the HRTO's original remedies](#), which included conducting a review into developing a more inclusive method of determining eligibility for the Guide Dog Benefit.

4.1.2 HRTO Hearings

Systemic Policy Changes Recommended at OPP to Address Disability Related Needs in Police Custody

Services, goods, facilities/disability

Powell v. Ontario (Solicitor General), [2023 HRTO 1497](#)

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) was ordered to review its policies, procedures and protocols, with a particular focus on the treatment of persons with diabetes, after failing to accommodate a diabetic woman in custody.

The HRLSC's client was a woman taken into OPP custody and at the time of detention the police were informed by her spouse that she had diabetes. A short time later, the spouse brought the applicant's insulin medication and glucose testing instruments to the police station. Despite being notified of her health condition and being provided with her health aids, the police made no inquiries of the applicant about her diabetes, nor did the police offer her the use of her testing equipment or medication during her time in custody.

The HRTO found that the police had sufficient knowledge of the applicant's disability that it had a duty to inquire as to whether the applicant needed access to her glucose monitor and insulin.

The HRTO ordered:

- \$2,000 in general damages; and
- Hiring an external consultant to [conduct a review of its policies](#), procedures and protocols related to the screening of individuals entering custody.

Nine months later, the external report recommended: "A new policy on custody and prisoner care and control should include a duty to inquire about medical information for all arresting and custodial officers."

Indigenous Family wins Discrimination Case against North Bay Transit

Services, goods, facilities/race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin
Nakogee v. The Corporation of the City of North Bay o/a North Bay Transit, [2024 HRTO 1838](#)

The HRTO ruled that North Bay Transit must pay damages, make policy changes, and train staff, after a driver refused to let the HRLSC's client, an Indigenous family, onto a bus.

Paula Nakogee and her adult sons, Kendall and Austin, were denied from boarding a North Bay bus outside a shopping centre, despite having valid bus passes. They were the only Indigenous people waiting for the bus, along with 15 to 20 other passengers who were all allowed to board. The driver did not suggest an alternative route or provide any explanation as to why he was refusing service.

The HRTO found that the applicants' race, colour, ancestry, place of origin and ethnic origin were factors in their treatment. The HRTO also found that North Bay Transit additionally violated the *Code* when it did not properly investigate the applicants' complaints.

The HRTO noted that there is no direct competitor to a municipal transit service, and that the family experienced significant financial strain following the incident as they avoided taking this particular route home, instead paying for taxis or walking long distances, often in inclement weather.

The HRTO ordered North Bay Transit to:

- Pay \$15,000 in damages for injury to dignity and mental distress to each of the three applicants;
- Develop new customer complaint and investigation policies; and
- Hire an expert to provide training to all staff on racial discrimination, racial profiling and Indigenous cultural competence.

Denial of Services Against Trans Woman was Discrimination

Services, goods, facilities/gender expression, gender expression

A.B. v. Mad Wax Windsor Inc., [2024 HRTO 721](#)

The HRTO found that the HRLSC's client, an Indigenous trans woman, was discriminated against after she was denied leg waxing services by a salon because of her gender identity. In addition, the HRTO also found that the owner of the salon had violated the *Human Rights Code* through his subsequent attempts to contact the media, where he misgendered the applicant and made disparaging comments related to the applicant's gender identity. He also publicized the applicant's full name, contact information, and name of her employer. The HRTO found that these actions constituted reprisal, as they were intentional acts of retaliation against the applicant for attempting to assert her rights under the *Code*.

The respondents' efforts to publicize A.B.'s private information, including her name and contact coordinates and details of the complaint, caused A.B. significant distress. The HRTO noted that the respondents' overtures to media outlets "opened up a non-consensual public conversation as to the status of [A.B.'s] physical transition," which was very traumatizing. The impact of the reprisal also caused the applicant to relapse into substance use, which led to the loss of her job and the breakup of her marriage. Ultimately, the applicant felt she could no longer stay in her community and moved.

The HRTO awarded the applicant \$35,000 in damages for injury to dignity and mental distress and ordered the personal respondent and all his employees to complete the OHRC's Human Rights 101 eLearning module.

HRTO Rules for Applicant in Workplace Sexual Harassment Case

Employment/sexual harassment, sexual solicitations and advances

Aloy-Sadakane v. Data & Scientific Inc. [2024 HRTO 770](#)

The applicant worked at a two-person office for a computer service company. The personal respondent made comments about the applicant's sexual orientation, her desirability as a sexual partner, and spouse, as well as solicitation of sexual acts. This harassment continued despite the applicant's threats to report this behaviour to the police. The personal respondent also repeatedly made unwanted physical contact with the applicant.

After the personal respondent failed to respond to the HRTO's notices, the Tribunal issued an interim decision deeming the respondents to have accepted all the allegations set out in the Application and had waived their rights to further notice or participation in the proceedings.

The HRTO ordered:

- \$50,000 in damages for injury to dignity and mental distress;
- \$28,218.56 in damages in lost wages;
- Completion of sexual harassment prevention training; and
- Development of a new sexual harassment office policy.

HRTO finds Sexual Harassment of Executive Assistant led to a Toxic Work Environment

Employment/sexual harassment, sexual solicitations and advances

More v. Shared Workspace Incorporation, [2025 HRTO 681](#)

An executive assistant to a CEO was awarded general damages after the HRTO found that she had been sexually harassed in the workplace.

The CEO had requested that the applicant go shopping for clothing with him that "accentuated her body." This shopping included unwanted comments from the personal respondent about the applicant's body. He also took the applicant to isolated areas in their workplace and asked intrusive, sexually explicit questions, including whether she had ever been raped.

This treatment culminated in unwanted touching and personal respondent's alleged desire for a "more personal level of a relationship" and asking the applicant to kiss him

on the cheek. When the applicant refused this advance, the personal respondent sent her to move furniture.

The applicant resigned from her position and left feeling less confident and differently about herself. She avoided applying for jobs at male-run or led workplaces.

The HRTO found that the personal respondent sexually harassed the applicant in the workplace and created a poisoned work environment.

The HRTO ordered the applicant be paid \$16,500 in damages for injury to dignity and mental distress.

4.1.3 Early Dispute Resolution Interventions

Splitting Rent Subsidy to Accommodate Tenant's Disabilities

Housing/disability

An Ontario housing provider agreed to accommodate the adult daughter of a disabled senior in a separate unit, despite initially denying the request, after the HRLSC assisted in drafting and filing an application at the HRTO.

The HRLSC's client was a senior with multiple disabilities. Since 2009, she had lived with her adult daughter, who was her caregiver and assisted her with everyday activities. She and her daughter were treated as a single household for the purposes of their rent-geared-to-income (RGI) housing subsidy.

This arrangement worked until the family grew, and it was no longer feasible for the applicant to reside in the same house.

The applicant asked her housing provider for a transfer on an urgent basis to a separate unit in the same building, so that the applicant's daughter could still assist the applicant with daily living. The housing provider denied the request and stated they were unable to split their tenancy.

After the HRLSC assisted the applicant in drafting and filing an application to the HRTO the housing provider agreed to split the RGI tenancy and allow the applicant to move to another unit in the same building as her daughter.

4.1.4 Settlements

Settlement Reached after Workplace Sexual Assault

Employment/sexual harassment, sexual solicitations and advances

The HRLSC's client was sexually assaulted by her supervisor at work. As a result of the assault, she was forced to go on sick leave. She received WSIB benefits during her leave, which were much less than her regular wages.

A settlement was reached that includes financial compensation from the employer.

The HRTO matter is proceeding against the individual supervisor, who did not participate in the mediation.

Settlement Reached after Employee Made to Work under Manager who Sexually Harassed Her

Employment/sexual harassment, sexual solicitations and advances

An employee experienced repeated sexual harassment and solicitation from her manager. She complained to the respondent about her manager's conduct.

The respondent investigated and advised that the manager had been disciplined. However, the applicant was still required to work with this manager after the complaint. The applicant was later offered a transfer to another location, but she declined as she believed it was an attempt to silence her.

With the help of the HRLSC, a settlement was reached that includes:

- financial compensation;
- providing updated record of employment so that she can obtain social security benefits; and
- an agreement to end her employment.

Settlement for Workplace Inaction on Anti-Indigenous "Nickname"

Employment/ancestry and related grounds (anti-Indigenous discrimination)

The HRLSC's client, an Indigenous woman, alleged that she was subjected to repeated Indigenous racial slurs by a co-worker. Their workplace downplayed complaints about

her co-worker's "nickname." The client's workplace also allegedly claimed they were hesitant to discipline her for this activity.

A settlement was reached that included financial compensation.

Settlement after Indigenous Man Accused of Shoplifting His own Jacket

Services, goods and facilities/ancestry and related grounds (anti-Indigenous discrimination)

The HRLSC's client, an Indigenous man was followed by sales staff throughout a store while shopping for clothes. He was eventually accused of stealing a jacket, which he had in fact purchased two years earlier from the store.

A settlement was reached that included financial compensation.

Settlement after Dealership Refuses to Sell Car over Status Card and Cash Purchase

Services, goods and facilities/ancestry and related grounds (anti-Indigenous discrimination)

The HRLSC's client went to purchase a car. After several weeks of negotiation over the phone the car dealership agreed to sell him a car. However, the dealership then refused to sell a car after the applicant showed them his status card and asked to pay the dealership in cash. The dealership claimed they had an "export checklist" to prevent the illegal resale and export of vehicles.

A settlement was reached that included financial compensation.

4.1.5 Enforcement

HRLSC Collects for Client in Long Standing Enforcement of Breach of Settlement Application

In *Allen v. 2297970 Ontario Inc., operating as LTP Financial*, **2016 HRTO 1616**, the parties to the application settled their matter at the HRT0 in December 2015. Subsequently, the applicant filed a contravention of settlement under the *Code* on the grounds that the respondent failed to pay the money agreed to as part of the settlement.

The applicant sought an order from the HRT0 directing the respondent to pay the money owed under the settlement agreement plus additional monetary compensation for the

alleged contravention of the agreement. The HRTTO found that the respondent breached the settlement agreement.

The HRTTO ordered that the respondent pay the applicant \$5250.00 along with pre-judgment interest on the \$4500.00 and post-judgment interest calculated on the total \$5250.00.

In mid-2024, the HRLSC successfully enforced the HRTTO order, and the applicant received payment from the respondent in an amount exceeding \$6,000 in full satisfaction for the debt owed to the applicant under the HRTTO order.

HRLSC Enforces HRTTO Order Finding Employer Breached the Code by Creating a Poisoned Work Environment and Terminating Employment

In Matheus v. MLG Enterprises Limited and McCann, 2023 HRTTO 77, the applicant alleged that the respondents discriminated against him in his employment based on race, ancestry, place of origin, and age, and that the employer reprimed against him contrary to the *Code* by terminating his employment.

The HRTTO found that the employer's comments to the applicant had created a poisoned work environment for the applicant and that the applicant's termination was a reprisal under the *Code* as the respondents' motivation for terminating the applicant's employment included his race, ancestry, place of origin and age.

The HRTTO ordered that the respondents pay:

- \$20,000.00 to the applicant in monetary compensation for injury to his dignity, feelings and self-respect,
- \$8,761.15 to the applicant in respect of lost wages,
- pre-judgment interest from the date of the filing of the application to the date of the HRTTO decision, and
- post-judgment interest calculated from the date that is 30 days after the date of the HRTTO decision.

In November 2024, the HRLSC successfully enforced the HRTTO order against respondent employer. The applicant received a payment of over \$31,000 from the respondent in full satisfaction of the amounts owed to him under the HRTTO order.

4.2 In the Media

A key aspect of the HRLSC’s work is providing the public with information about how to realize their human right to non-discrimination in Ontario, including through the HRTO legal redress process. The HRLSC often offers comments to the media on HRTO human rights claims, decisions and processes we are involved in (with the permission of our clients), as well as regarding our services more generally.

As noted in our performance measures later in this Annual Report, the HRLSC experienced a jump in the number of positive news stories, with 17 in the 2024–2025 fiscal year, up from three in the 2023–2024 fiscal period. One reason for this growth is the addition of a new communications manager to the HRLSC’s communications team, which allowed for increased outreach, education, content creation and media engagement.

4.2.1 Positive Media Coverage:

Here is a snapshot of some of this fiscal year’s media coverage:

Story Headline:	Publication/Media Outlet and Date:	Description:
<u>Patchwork Treatment and the Invisible Majority</u>	KCI-NIWESQ (Native Women’s Association) May 2024 issue	The HRLSC’s Chair provided comment on the human rights challenges faced by Indigenous people with disabilities accessing healthcare services.
<u>‘I am proud of myself for never giving up’: Almaguin employer sexually harassed young woman, tribunal finds</u>	Parry Sound North Star June 17, 2024	Media coverage of the HRLSC’s successful decision in the case of <i>Kreps v. AHMIC Maintenance & Storage Ltd.</i> , with comments from the client and HRLSC’s Chair.
<u>Une femme transgenre obtient 35 000 \$ parce qu’on lui a refusé une épilation</u>	Radio-Canada June 20, 2024	French-language coverage of the HRLSC’s successful decision in the case of <i>A.B. v. Mad Wax Windsor Inc.</i> , with provided comments from the client and her legal counsel.
<u>Windsor business fined \$35,000 for ‘discrimination and</u>	CTV Windsor June 25, 2024	Local English-language coverage of the HRLSC’s successful decision in the case of <i>A.B. v. Mad Wax</i>

reprisal' of Indigenous transgender woman		<i>Windsor Inc.</i> , with comments from the client and remarks from an interview with her legal counsel.
An Indigenous Trans Woman in Ontario Won a Six-Year Legal Battle Against a Waxing Salon	Them June 26, 2024	Coverage of <i>A.B. v. Mad Wax Windsor Inc.</i> in US online magazine covering LGBTQ-relevant news.
Frank Stronach allegations highlight harassment in the workplace	The Conversation July 9, 2024	Article by HRLSC Chair about how Frank Stronach allegations highlight harassment in the workplace.
<i>Up North and Afternoon Drive</i> Radio Programs	CBC Radio Dec 5, 2024	Interviews for afternoon radio programming in Thunder Bay and Windsor with the HRLSC's Chair discussing the Centre's annual report for 2023-2024.
Victim of discrimination on North Bay, Ont., transit bus speaks out	CTV Northern January 15, 2025	Media coverage of the HRLSC's successful decision in the case of <i>Nakogee v. The Corporation of the City of North Bay o/a North Bay Transit</i> , with comments from the clients and their legal counsel.
Morning North Radio Program	CBC Radio January 16, 2025	Interview for morning radio programming in Sudbury with the HRLSC's legal counsel discussing the case of <i>Nakogee v. The Corporation of the City of North Bay o/a North Bay Transit</i> .
Jamie McGinnis: Discrimination on Public Transit – Nakogee v. North Bay Transit	<i>Indigenous Human Rights</i> – Pro-Bono Students Canada March 27, 2025	Podcast episode with interview with the HRLSC's legal counsel for the case of <i>Nakogee v. The Corporation of the City of North Bay o/a North Bay Transit</i> .

4.2.2 Website Traffic:

The HRLSC saw a 30% increase in its website traffic from the 2023–2024 to 2024–2025 fiscal years. As mentioned above, with the increase in communications staff from one to two full-time positions, the HRLSC’s ability to develop content increased greatly. In the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the HRLSC had over 188,000 user sessions on its website.

Key pages that received the most visits included the HRLSC’s contact page and its online questionnaire to assist users with determining if they have a *Code*-related human rights issue. The next most visited pages were its How-to Guide on the concept of the duty to accommodate, followed by its media stories page.

The HRLSC will continue to develop accessible content to support users through online resources, provide information on the Centre’s activities and direct individuals to its legal advice and support services.

4.3. 2024–2025 Statistics

4.3.1 Region

The HRLSC provides legal services to thousands of people across Ontario every year. To track the impact of this work, the HRLSC utilizes its Client Tracking Tool and cloud-based phone software, online surveys, web analytics as well as manual data input from staff.

An examination of regional population data in relation to regional intake data demonstrates that Central Ontario is notably underrepresented among intake callers (39% of the population, 31% of intake calls) while Toronto is significantly overrepresented (20% of the population, 30% of intake calls). Among the other regions, there is a close correspondence between their shares of the population and their representation among intake callers.

The HRLSC’s highest number of intakes during the 2024–2025 fiscal year were from Central Ontario (which includes the city of Hamilton, as well as the regions of Niagara, Halton, Peel, Durham, Dufferin and York Regions, and Simcoe County) and Toronto.¹

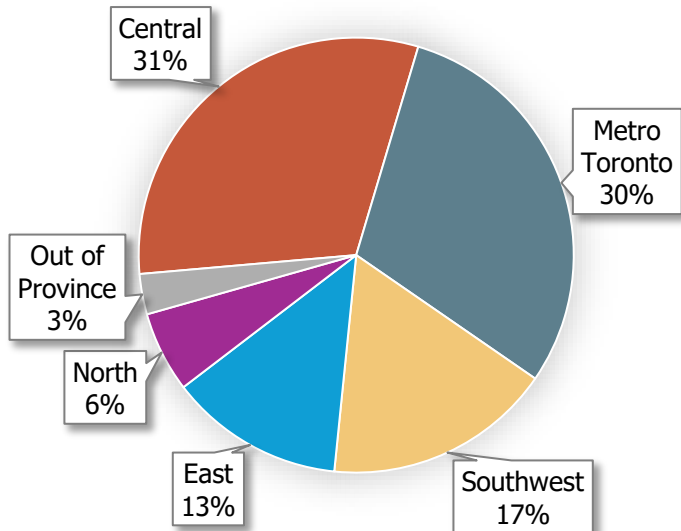
¹ The five regional designations used by the HRLSC are derived from [Canada Post regional classifications](#). Accordingly, postal codes that begin with “K” are within Eastern Ontario, “L” are within Central Ontario, “M” are within Toronto, “N” are within Southwestern Ontario and “P” are within Northern Ontario. These regional breakdowns are in line with those used by the [Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario](#) but differ from the regions (eight in total) designated within the [Ontario court system](#).

A comparative examination of HRLSC intake calls and HRTTO applications, broken down by region, shows a high degree of overlap between the share of intakes received at the HRLSC and population distribution in four out of five regions. Toronto is the exception given a seven-percentage point gap between Toronto related HRLSC intake calls (30%) and HRTTO applications (23%).

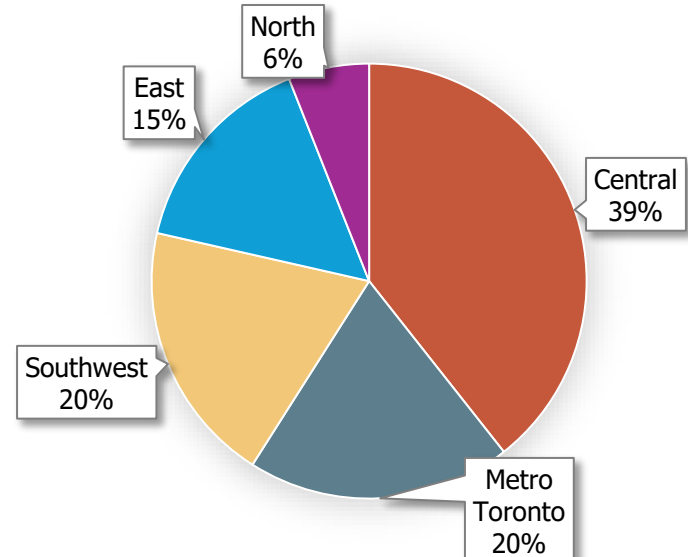
“The call center staff were also incredibly empathic and human-friendly, adding an extra layer of support to the process. Please extend my gratitude to them as well. I want to extend a special mention to [the HRLSC’s staff], whose empathy and support were particularly meaningful to me throughout this process.”

– HRLSC Client

2024 – 2025 INTAKE CALLS BY REGION



ONTARIO REGIONS BY POPULATION SHARE



HRLSC/HRTO Regional Comparison:

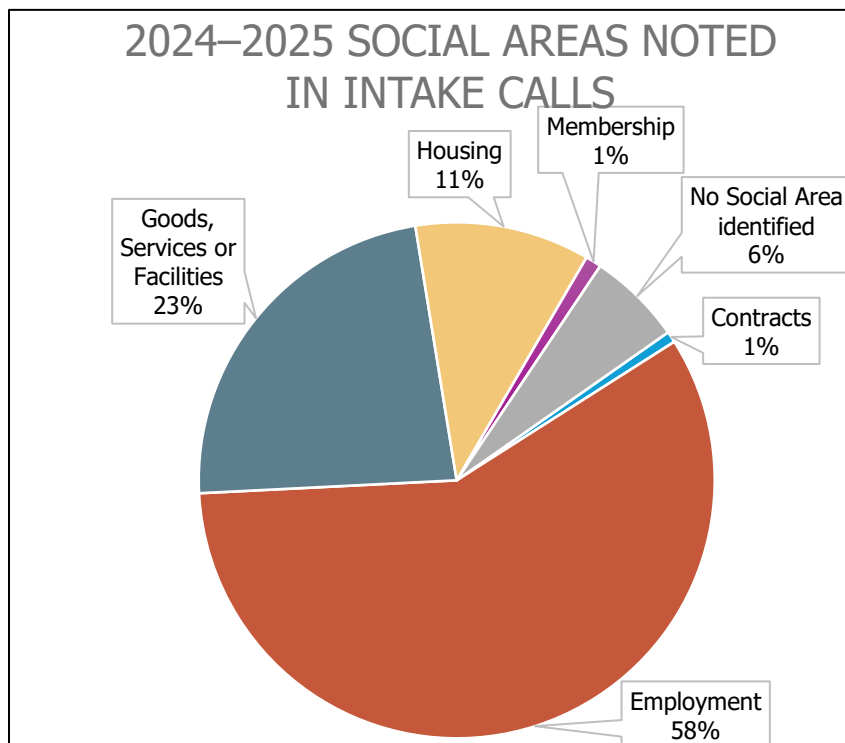
Region	HRLSC Intake Calls*	HRTO Applications**
East	13%	15%
Central	31%	34%
Toronto	30%	23%
Southwest	17%	18%
North	6%	6%
Other***	3%	4%

*Percentages calculated based on 24,472 intake calls

**Percentages calculated based on 3,639 applications in 2023–2024; full year data for 2024–2025 was not available at the time of this writing. Source: [HRTO Open Data – Applications Received – Region](#)

*** "Other" includes instances when regional information is unknown, not provided, when the caller or applicant is from another province/territory, etc.

4.3.2 Social Areas



HRLSC/HRTO Social Area Comparison:

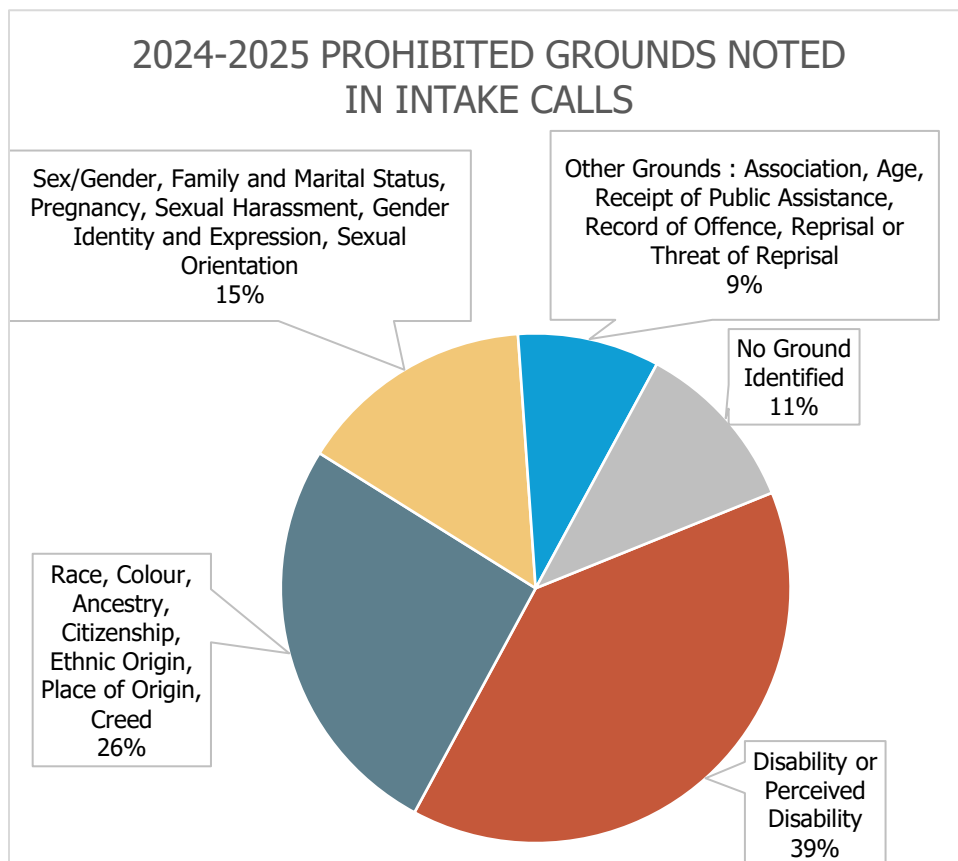
Social Area	HRLSC Intakes*	HRTO Applications**
Employment	58%	57%
Goods, Services and Facilities	23%	26%
Housing	11%	10%
Contracts	1%	2%
Membership in a Vocational Association	1%	4%
No Social Area	6%	2%

*Percentages calculated based on 24,705 intakes (calls and other forms of intake)
 **Percentages calculated based on 3,639 applications in 2023/24; full year data for 2024/25 was not available at the time of this writing. Source: [2023/24 HRTO Annual Report](#). The total does not equal 100% due to the presence applications mentioning more than one social area.

Employment remained the most mentioned social area on intake calls. The percentage of employment-related calls has remained consistent from the previous two fiscal periods. Similarly, there were minimal changes to the other social areas (at most increasing or decreasing by 1% in comparison to figures provided between the 2020–2021 and 2023–2024 fiscal periods).

A comparison of HRLSC intakes and HRTO applications, broken down by social area, illuminates a high degree of correspondence between the two sets of data. In both cases, approximately 90% of identified social areas pertained to Employment; Goods, Services and Facilities; and Housing.

4.3.3 Prohibited Grounds



From the available data, calls involving the ground of disability remain the most commonly cited ground at intake, followed by race-related cases and gender and sex-related cases, consistent with historical trends at the HRT0 and HRLSC.²

The two most commonly cited grounds — disability and race/race-related grounds— can be further separated into related sub-grounds (see below for examples). The charts featured below provide data on the prevalence of these sub-grounds.

² Notwithstanding the presentation of these grounds in a sequential, compartmentalized manner, the Centre represents clients who often cite discrimination on multiple grounds in keeping with the realities of intersectional discrimination. Indeed, as the Ontario Human Rights Commission states, “Discrimination may be unique or distinct when it occurs based on two or more Code grounds. Such discrimination is said to be ‘intersectional.’ The concept of intersectional discrimination recognizes that people’s lives involve multiple interrelated identities, and that marginalization and exclusion based on Code grounds may exist because of how these identities intersect.” Source: OHRC [Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability](#).

Prohibited Grounds Noted in Intake Calls (2024–2025)	Number	% of Intake Calls Citing Ground*	HRTO Comparison (23–24)
Disability or Perceived Disability - Physical	15683	64.2%	51%
No Grounds	4308	17.6%	2%
Race	3425	14%	28%
Sex, Gender and Pregnancy	2055	8.4%	15%
Colour	1910	7.8%	18%
Ethnic Origin	1704	7%	20%
Reprisal or Threat of Reprisal	1545	6.3%	26%
Place Of Origin	1465	6%	13%
Family Status	1362	5.6%	10%
Age	1289	5.3%	12%
Sexual Harassment	1001	4.1%	15%
Creed	956	3.9%	9%
Ancestry	749	3%	12%
Sexual Orientation	464	1.9%	2%
Gender Identity	444	1.8%	8%
Citizenship	416	1.7%	5%
Sexual Solicitation, Advances or Reprisals	386	1.6%	5%
Gender Expression	312	1.3%	6%
Marital Status	292	1.2%	6%
Receipt of Public Assistance (in housing)	286	1.2%	2%
Record of Offences (in employment)	109	0.4%	1%

*Calculated based on a total of 24,426 inquiries; some intake calls cite discrimination on more than one ground, so the total exceeds 100%.

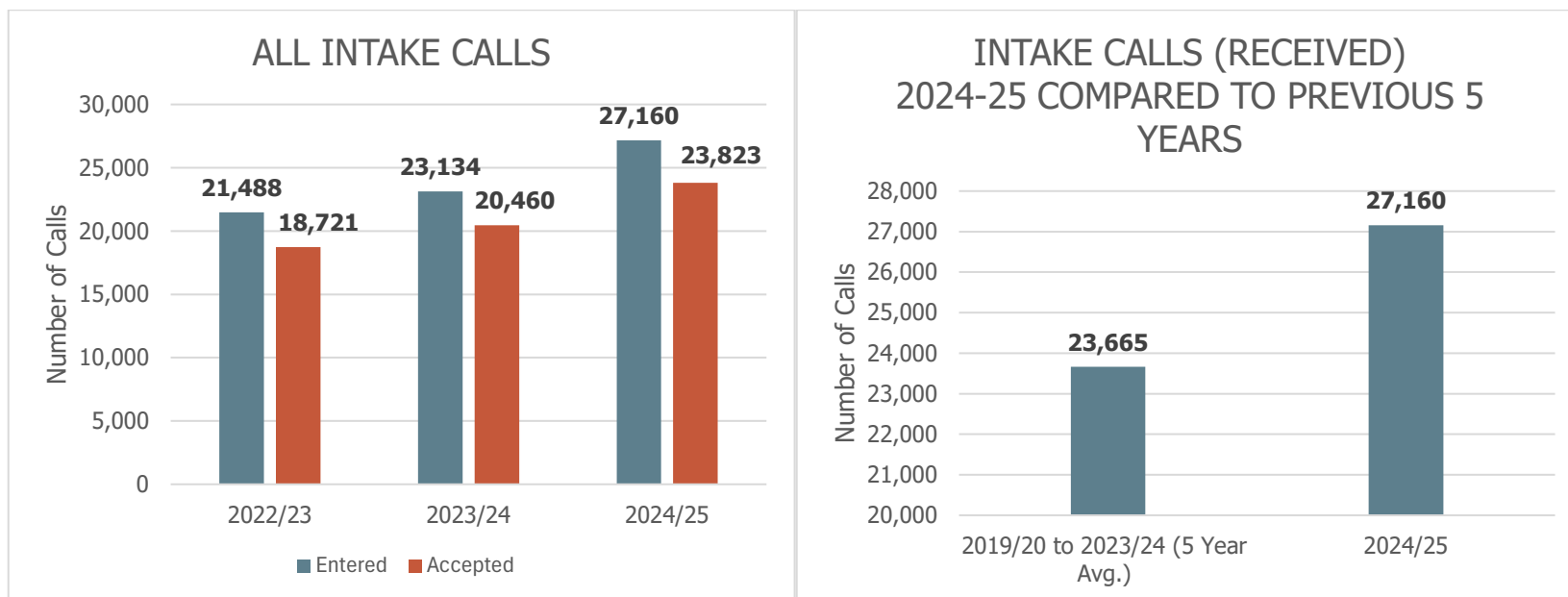
Disability Related Sub-Grounds Per 1,000 Inquiries – 2024–2025	# of reports noted in inquires	% of intakes citing sub-ground**
Disability or Perceived Disability - Physical	8048	33%
Disability or Perceived Disability - Mental/Emotional	5922	24%
Disability or Perceived Disability - Intellectual/Developmental	1713	7%

**Calculated based on a total of 24,426 inquiries

Race-Related Sub-Grounds Per 1,000 Inquiries – 2024–2025	# of reports noted in inquires	% of intakes citing sub-ground***
Anti-Black Racism	1463	6%
Anti-Muslim Discrimination***	297	1.2%
Anti-Indigenous Discrimination	280	1.1%
Anti-South Asian Racism	187	0.8%
Antisemitism***	87	0.4%
Anti-East Asian Racism	64	0.3%

***Calculated based on a total of 24,426 inquiries

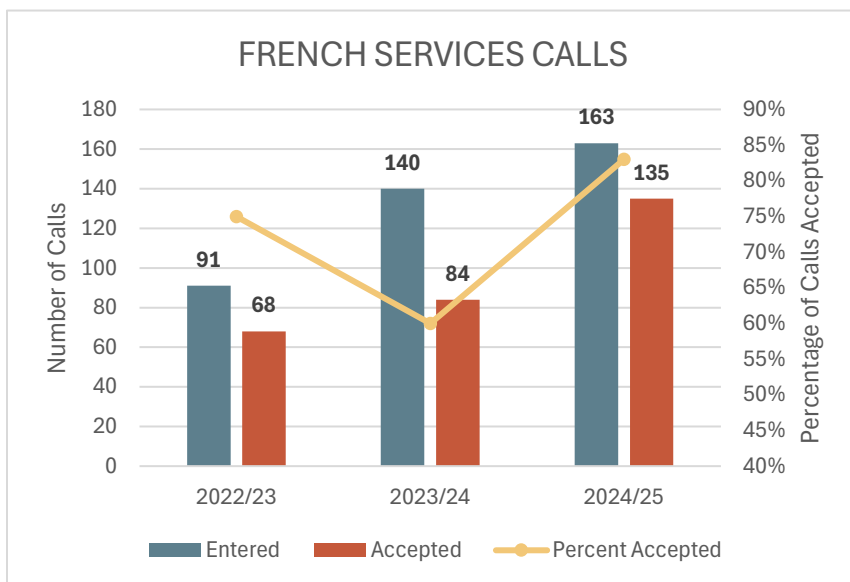
4.3.4 Initial Phone Calls Received and Accepted



The number of HRLSC calls accepted increased 27% from 18,721 in 2022–2023 to 23,823 in 2024–2025. Applications received by the HRTTO also increased considerably over the same period. Specifically, in 2022–2023 the HRTTO received 3,425 applications, a figure which rose to 4,500 in 2024–2025— a 31% increase. This may in part account for the increase in HRLSC call numbers, in keeping with the expectation that numerous individuals seeking assistance in response to discrimination will access both the HRLSC and the HRTTO, and because the HRTTO is a top source of referral for HRLSC clients.

The number of calls HRLSC accepted in 2024–2025 was the highest total since 2018–2019. The 23,823 calls accepted in 2024–2025 represented a 16.4% increase over the 20,460 calls accepted in 2023–2024.

The number of calls received in 2024–2025 was 15% higher than the average of the preceding five years, 2019–2020 to 2023–2024. This significantly greater number of calls to the Centre may be due to a number of potential factors, including: increasing incidents of discrimination; greater hate and social polarization in Ontario society (consistent with growing hate crime levels in Ontario)³; increased reporting of incidents and action to seek redress (as suggested by increasing HRTO Application numbers this year); as well as increased HRLSC communications efforts which have raised the public profile of the Centre and awareness of possible human rights remedies.

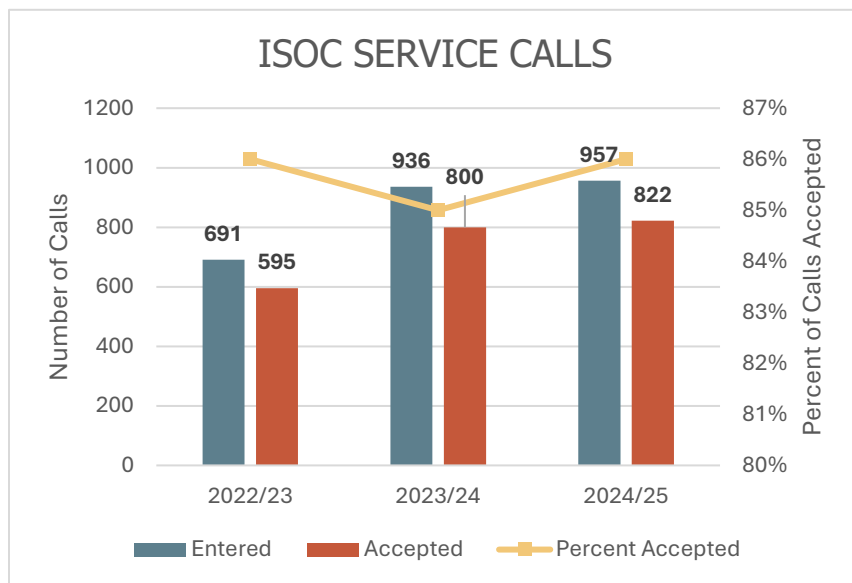


4.3.5 French Language Services

In 2024–2025, the acceptance rate for French language service calls rose considerably (to 83%) due to increases in bilingual staffing as compared to the previous year. While staffing numbers may change year-to-year, with retention of bilingual staff being a consistent challenge with existing HRLSC salary structures, the Centre remains committed to providing prompt service for callers seeking legal advice provided in French.

³Reports of hate crimes are up across all of Canada, with Ontario reporting the greatest numbers in 2023, both in absolute terms, and relative to population, with some 2,424 police-reported hate crime incidents in Ontario in 2023, up 25% from 1,950 reported incidents the year before. (Source: Statistics Canada. 2024-03-13. Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (3302). Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240313/cg-b002-png-eng.htm>). Additionally, and more recently, Statistics Canada data shows that in 2024 there were 4,722 reported hate crimes across Canada, 2,443 of which were reported in Ontario. Source: [Police-reported hate crime, by type of motivation, number of incidents and year to date total, preliminary quarterly data, Canada and regions](#). Consequently, Ontario, which constitutes 39% of Canada’s population, disproportionately accounted for 52% of all reported hate crime incidents in 2024.

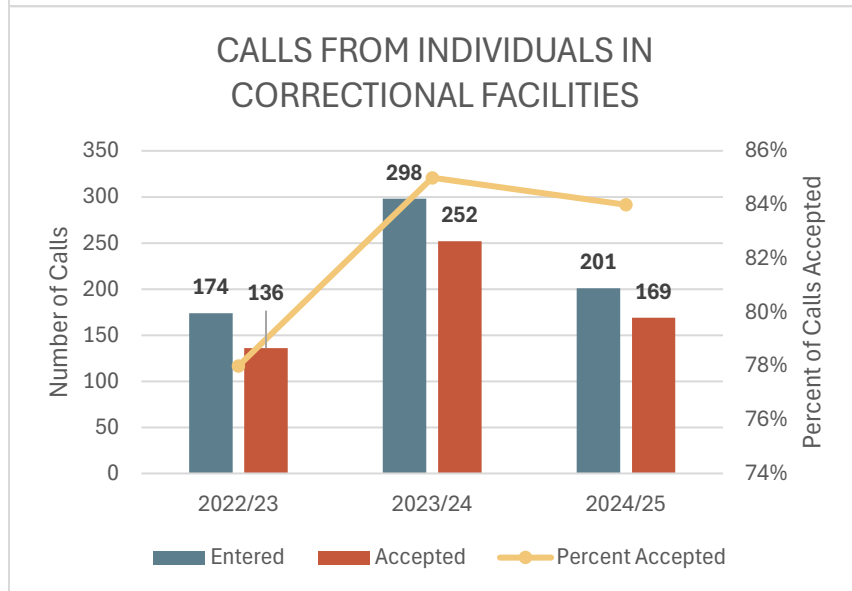
4.3.6 Indigenous Services



From 2022–2023 to 2024–2025 there was a substantial and identical rise in entered ISOC service calls (38% increase) and accepted calls (38% increase).

ISOC’s dedicated work in terms of outreach and collaboration, particularly with entities such as the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, has fostered greater awareness of the Centre’s services thereby contributing to these upward trends in service use and provision.

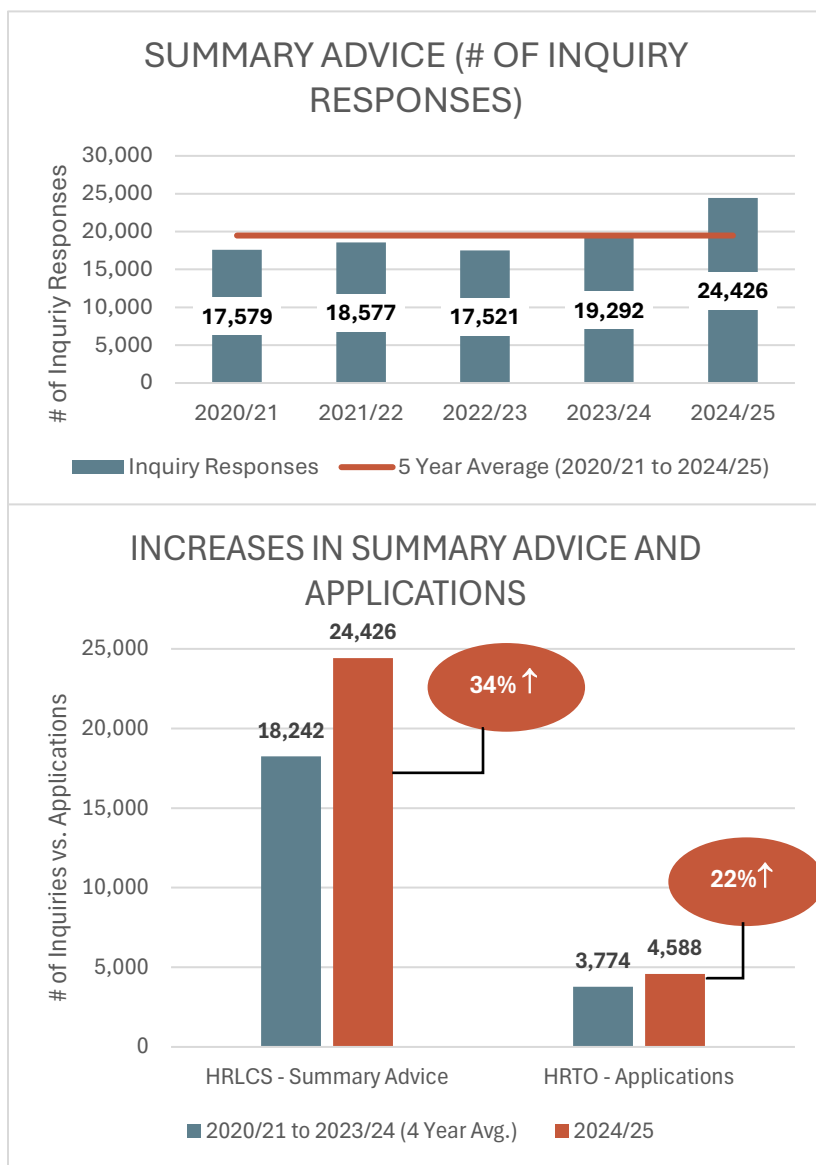
4.3.7 Service Line for Individuals in Correctional Facilities



Calls to the priority phone line for incarcerated individuals rose sharply from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024 in the context of a poster initiative, done in conjunction with the Ministry of the Solicitor General, which raised awareness of the Centre’s legal services among people held in correctional institutions.

It is unclear why there was a decline in calls from 2023–2024 to 2024–2025. In response, the Centre is exploring ways to extend awareness of its services for incarcerated individuals, including engaging in dialogue with the John Howard Society and Elizabeth Fry Society.

4.3.8 Summary Advice



Summary advice includes responses to initial phone inquiries or intake inquiries by other communicative means (such as via email or online portal inquiries). These intakes can include a series of phone calls between the HRLSC’s staff and a caller about the caller’s human rights concerns and issues, and each call will be counted separately.

From 2020–2021 to 2023–2024, the Centre provided summary advice an average of 18,242 times per year. Notably, the provision of summary advice on 24,426 occasions in 2024–2025 constituted a 34% increase over the preceding four years.

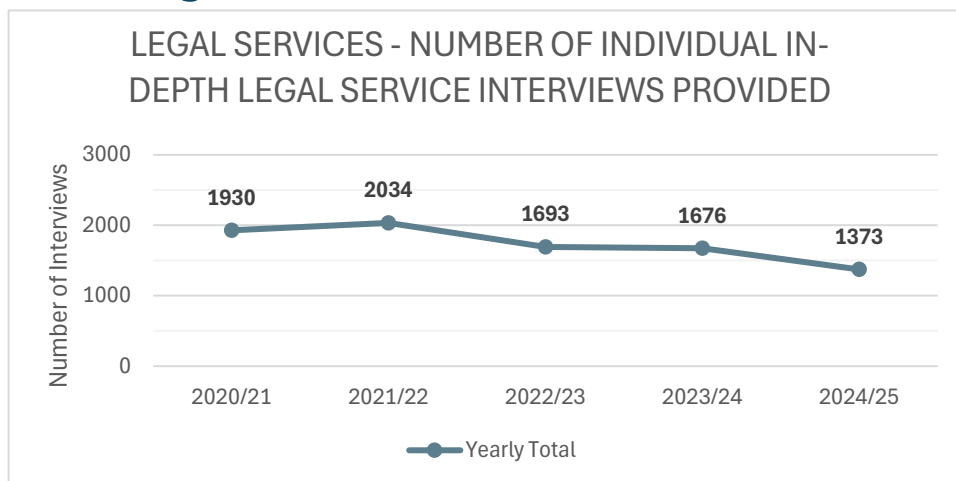
Importantly, the summary advice figures for 2024–2025 represent a return to the levels of summary advice the HRLSC reported in years prior to the pandemic. For example, there was an average of 23,955 inquiries from 2016–2017 to 2018–2019 ([2023–2024 HRLSC Annual Report](#), pg. 34).

The upward trend in summary advice reflects the increasing demand for and use of HRLSC services by Ontarians. This may be partially explained by increases in applications received by the HRTO, since many Applicants are referred to the HRLSC by the HRTO. In this regard, from 2020/21 to 2023/24, the HRTO received an average of 3,774 applications per year ([HRTO 2023/24 Annual Report](#), Table 1). Although full 2024–2025 application numbers are not yet available, in Q1 2024–2025 the

HRTO received 1,147 applications, which, projected over the remaining quarters, would equal 4,588 applications⁴ - a 22% increase over the preceding four years.

However, the 22% increase in HRTO applications does not entirely correspond with, and thus explain, the 34% increase in HRLSC summary advice in percentage terms. Other possible causal factors include increased prevalence and/or reporting of discrimination claims among Ontarians, increased HRLSC media/public outreach and public awareness of HRLSC services (as evidenced this year in the 30% rise in HRLSC website visits and 300% increase in media coverage and mentions of HRLSC compared to the previous year). Furthermore, this coverage about the success of complaints brought before the HRTO may influence people to make applications, with the prospect that the system “does work.” Increased efficiency and productivity within the HRLSC’s intake system and among intake staff may have also contributed to this outcome.

4.3.9 Legal Service Interviews



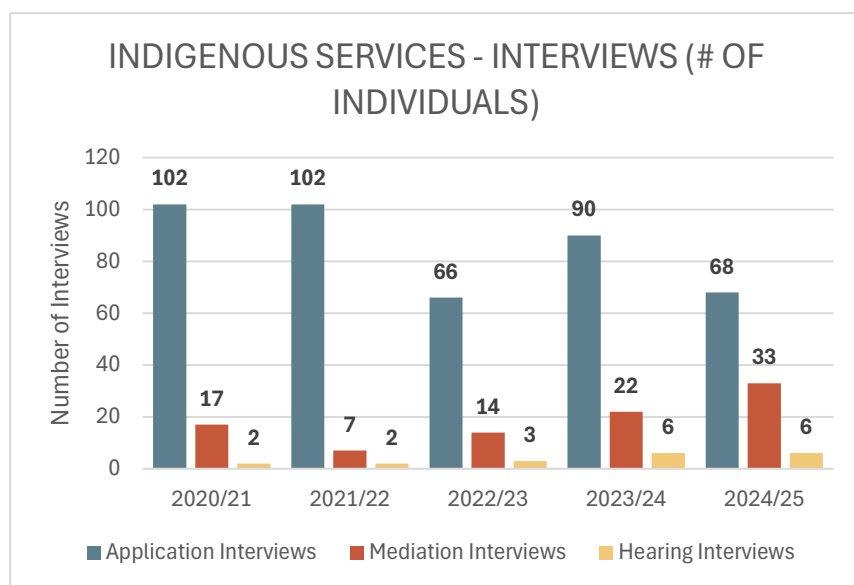
Overall, the HRLSC’s in-depth legal service interview capacity has continued to decline over this past year— down 18% from an estimated⁵ 1676 in 2023–2024 to 1373 in 2024–2025. This is in keeping with the five-year trend, and can be attributed to a number of factors, including ongoing high counsel turnover rates and decreasing counsel and legal staffing numbers and capacity, primarily due to static funding, inflationary pressures, and the ending of a time-limited federal grant,⁶ which led to staff reductions. Also impacting this decline was the

⁴The HRTO, at its April 8, 2025 Town Hall regarding its new Rules of Procedure, noted that they closed the 2024–2025 year with 4500 new applicants received – one of the highest annually ever, and only 55 less than the highest year on record since the HRTO direct access model was established in 2008.

⁵ The previous fiscal year’s (2023–2024) data depended on a projection based on only 2 fiscal quarters, due to the cybersecurity incident in October 2023.

⁶ March 2024 marked the end of the federally funded SHARE program which led to a loss of 5 staff positions.

HRLSC’s reduction in the number of monthly counsel interviews this past fiscal year (from seven to five per month per counsel), due to counsel capacity concerns and the October 2023 cybersecurity incident. Counsel needed time to re-input data into the HRLSC’s case management and file record systems, which decreased counsel availability for client legal services.⁷ The cybersecurity incident also impacted the scheduling of hearings at the HRTTO from 2024 onward, requiring the HRLSC’s cancellation and rescheduling of HRTTO hearings due to the closure of the Centre’s offices⁸ and information retrieval efforts, which resulted in hearing delays into this fiscal year (some of which have yet to be rescheduled by the HRTTO) and ultimately fewer hearing interviews.



The HRLSC continues to actively seek out new and expanded sources of core funding and to provide competitive salaries for its counsel, as demonstrated by the Centre’s adoption of a new Compensation Philosophy this past fiscal year (as discussed in section 8).

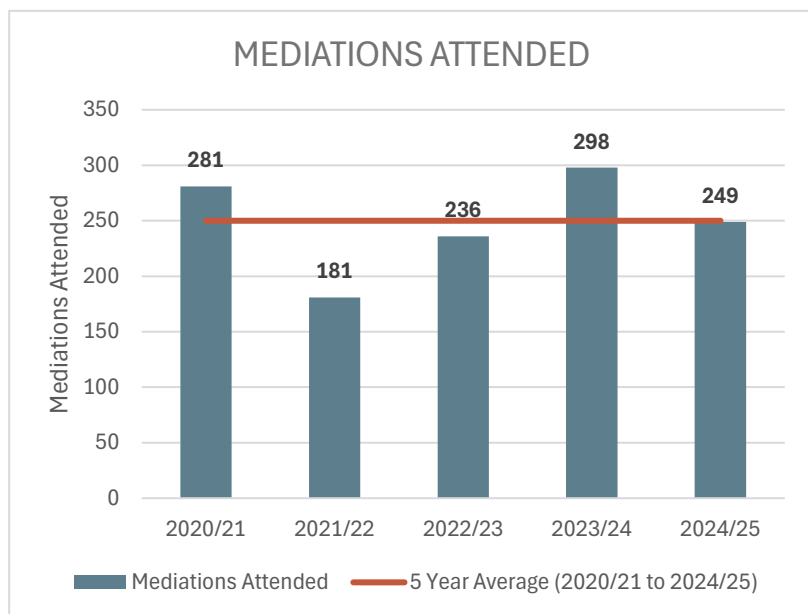
Indigenous Services

ISOC activity tends to reflect broader patterns of activity at the Centre. Pre-application interviews have gone down generally while mediations have increased, two trends that are also evident in ISOC data on application interviews and mediations.

⁷ Counsel interviews were capped at 5 per month from May 2024 to December 2024, down from the standard 7 interviews per month which did not return until January 2025, to enable counsel the time to rebuild their file records, many of which were destroyed by the October 2023 cybersecurity incident.

⁸ The HRLSC had to close its offices October 3, 2023 because of the cybersecurity incident, re-opening November 9, 2023, at reduced capacity.

4.3.10 Mediations Attended



Despite reductions in staff, the Centre’s attendance at mediations has remained steady, with 2024–2025 attendance in line with the five-year average. This rate of attendance at mediation reflects HRLSC’s strategic prioritization of early resolution efforts in its new five-year Strategic Plan. This priority developed in response to stakeholder feedback and client demand.

While the HRLSC remains cognizant of the fact that alternative resolution is not always appropriate or the most just outcome for our clients, the HRLSC always honours and respects the decision of our clients on whether or not to agree to a settlement, and our client survey results for those who were represented by HRLSC in mediations suggest that our represented clients were very pleased with the service and the outcome.⁹

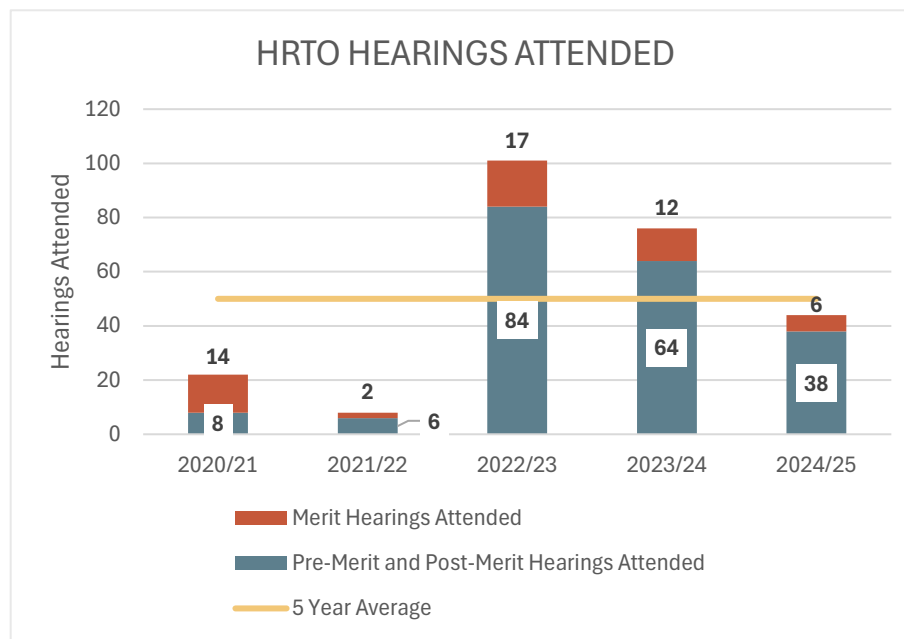
4.3.11 Hearings Attended

In 2024–2025, the Centre attended a total of 44 hearings, 38 of which were pre-merit and post-merit hearings while the remaining six were merit hearings. The significant reduction in the HRLSC’s hearing attendance as it compares to previous years¹⁰ has been impacted by a number of factors (like those impacting legal interviews) including:

⁹ In 2024/25, the Centre represented 201 clients at the pre-mediation or mediation stages. Of those clients, 100% of them rated the services provided to them by the Centre as either very good or good.

¹⁰ The number of HRTO hearings attended last fiscal year were down from an estimated 76 in 23/24 to 44 in 24/25. This represented a 15% decrease from the 2020-2024 average of 52 HRTO hearings attended.

- decreasing counsel and legal staffing numbers and capacity, primarily due to static funding, inflationary pressures, and the ending of a time-limited federal grant at the end of the last fiscal year,¹¹ which led to staff reductions¹²;
- reductions in the number of monthly counsel interviews this past fiscal year (including hearing retainer interviews) for the Centre due to counsel capacity concerns, as a result of the aforementioned cyber security incident;
- the HRLSC’s cancellation and rescheduling of HRT0 hearings due to the 2023 cybersecurity incident that resulted in the closure of HRLSC’s offices and thus hearing delays into this fiscal year (some of which have yet to be rescheduled by the HRT0) and ultimately fewer hearings.



The HRLSC engaged in more court-based litigation this past fiscal year, as compared to the previous year, and court-based hearings are not reflected in HRT0 hearing attendance statistics.¹³ It should thus be noted that the number of HRT0 hearings does not always accurately reflect counsel workload and capacity, as some hearings (such as judicial reviews, complex cases, public-interest litigation) can be much more time-consuming than others and extend beyond the HRT0 process.

Finally, it should be noted here that the sharp rise in pre-merit and post-merit hearings from 2020–2021 to 2022–2023 was due in part to a redefinition on the part of the HRLSC of pre-merit hearings to include the growing and various types of HRT0 procedural hearings introduced by the HRT0 at the pre-merit hearing phase in recent years, in the context of HRT0

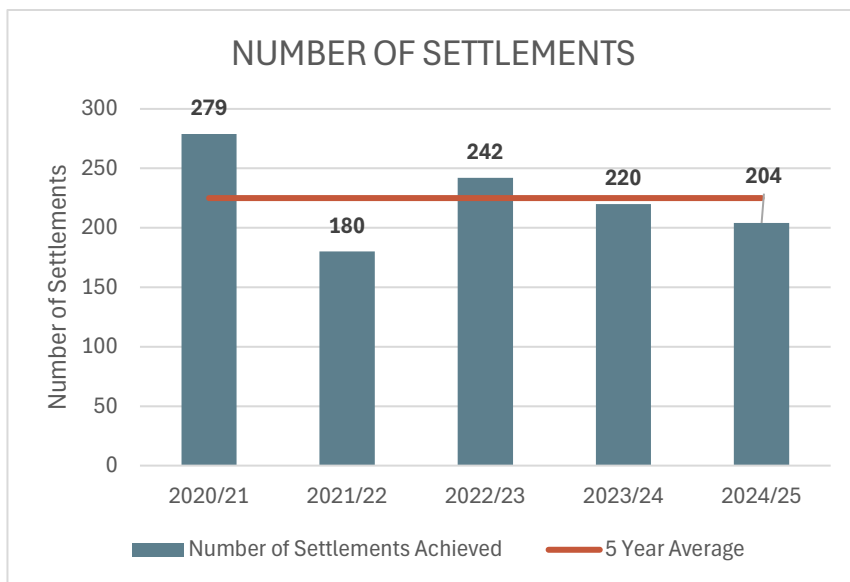
¹¹ For example, March 2024 marked the end of the SHARE program which led to a loss of 5 staff positions.

¹² Counsel interviews were capped at 5 per month from May 2024 to December 2024, down from the standard 7 interviews per month which did not return until January 2025, to enable counsel the time to rebuild their file records, many of which were destroyed by the October 2023 cybersecurity incident.

¹³ For example, HRLSC had 5 Judicial Reviews/Leave To Appeals in 2024–25 - 3 went to hearings and 2 settled, as compared to 3 Judicial Reviews in 2023-24 in which 1 went to hearing and 2 settled.

efforts to alleviate and prevent further backlogs. The HRT0 procedural changes caused an increase in pre-merit hearings, while merit hearings declined. In response, the Centre pivoted and revised its client tracking system to capture much of the pre-merit hearing work that was not previously recorded.

4.3.12 Settlements



Settlements, which mainly occur at mediation or pre-hearing stages, declined moderately to 204 in 2024–2025, in relation to the average number of settlements (230) over the preceding four years. This slight drop took place in the context of the Centre having experienced reductions in legal staffing capacity due to strained resources.

“Thank you for representing me. YOU ARE AN AMAZING LAWYER. You provided more substance than I could have imagined. You spoke very elegantly and very professionally.”

– HRLSC Client

5. Performance Measures

5.1 OBP Performance Measures, Targets & Results for 2024–2025

Access to legal information & advice

Performance Measure: Ontarians who believe they have experienced discrimination have access to human rights legal information and advice.

Year	Performance Target: Intake calls answered	Performance Result
2024–25	80%	86%
2023–24	80%	88%

Although there was a slight decline in the percentage of intake calls answered in 2024–2025, the total number of calls answered by HRLSC – to the credit of our dedicated intake staff - was 16.4% higher in 2024–2025 (23,823) than in 2023–2024 (20,460) due to a significantly higher overall volume of callers in 2024–2025 (the highest number since 2018–2019).

High quality legal service provision and client satisfaction

Performance Measure: High quality legal services are provided to Ontarians who have experienced discrimination.

Year	Performance Target: Clients rate services as good/very good, at least	Performance Result
2024–25	85%	100%
2023–24	85%	100%

On a five-point response scale (very poor, poor, adequate, good, very good), the HRLSC surpassed its target: 100% of survey clients rated our service as “very good” or “good” (85% of surveyed clients rated the services provided to them by the Centre as very good, and 15% rated the services as good).

Early resolution of human rights cases

Performance Measure: Increased and quick access to justice for Ontarians and increased efficiency and capacity in the human rights system through early resolution of human rights cases, reducing costs for applicants, respondents, and taxpayers.

Year	Performance Target: Cases resolved at mediation stage	Performance Result
2024–25	70%	66%
2023–24	70%	62%

In 2024–2025, the Centre attended 249 mediations, 165 (66%) of which resulted in settlements. Although the Centre does not determine whether a settlement flows from mediation (given that multiple factors influence settlement outcomes) the 70% performance target reflects the Centre’s existing commitments to increasing the probability of reaching settlements that accord with the interests of the Centre’s clients. The aforementioned client survey results, focused on clients who settled at mediation, demonstrate that 100% of clients rated the Centre’s service to them as either “good” or “very good.”

“I want to thank you and all HRLSC staff wholeheartedly for providing outstanding support without which we would have never been able to get through our housing human rights challenges... I am pleased to share that because of the successful settlement, we were able to move into a new rental apartment that is spacious and accessible, which has made a huge difference for [us].”

– HRLSC Client

Overall number of cases settled

Performance Measure: Increased and quicker access to justice for Ontarians and increased efficiency and capacity in the human rights system by resolving cases at all stages of the application process, reducing costs for applicants, respondents, and taxpayers.

Year	Performance Target: Cases settled at any stage of the application process	Performance Result
2024–25	200	204
2023–24	325	220

Following a resource-sensitive reassessment of this performance target, the Centre determined that a target adjustment— from 325 to 200— was more realistically aligned with the current capacities of the Centre. Accordingly, despite a slight reduction of cases settled from 2023–2024 to 2024–2025, the 2024–2025 target was achieved.

Settlement rate at hearing

Performance Measure: Increased and quicker access to justice for Ontarians and increased efficiency and capacity in the human rights system by resolving meritorious claims at the HRTO hearing without the need for full litigation, reducing costs for applicants, respondents, and taxpayers.

Year	Performance Target: Cases settled at beginning of hearing	Performance Result
2024–25	80%	51%
2023–24	65%	72%

In 2024–2025 the Centre attended 41 merit hearings/pre-merit hearings; of these, 21 (51%) resulted in pre-hearing/hearing settlements. It is important to bear in mind, however, that the vast majority of total settlements (165 of 204) were achieved through mediation.

Positive media coverage

Performance Measure: Ontarians are informed about discrimination, the human rights system and the HRLSC’s services.

Year	Performance Target: Obtain positive media coverage for stories of the HRLSC’s service*	Performance Result
2024–25	7 stories	17 stories
2023–24	7 stories	3 stories

The sharp rise in positive media coverage of the Centre by 143% year over year was largely driven by the success of the HRLSC team on cases that were then amplified through refined planning/strategizing by the HRLSC’s newly expanded communications team. News coverage of the Centre was focused on the cases [Nakogee v. The Corporation of the City of North Bay o/a North Bay Transit](#) and [A.B. v. Mad Wax Windsor Inc.](#), as well as the Annual Report, which is typically not a source of proactive media.

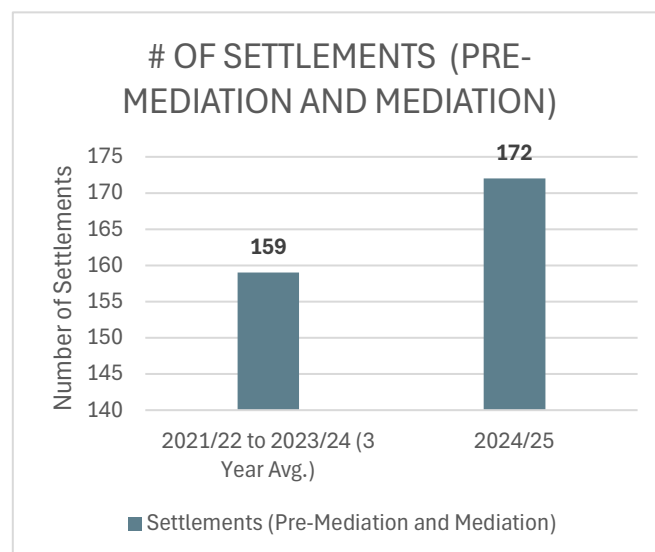
5.2 Additional KPIs

In addition to well-established KPIs, such as those above, the HRLSC is expanding the scope of its KPIs on the basis of strategic priorities and goals articulated in its [2024–2029 Strategic Plan](#).

Early Intervention & Mediation Program

Five Year Outcome: People have more early resolution service options, including strengthened mediation supports

- *Increase in the number of cases settled via early resolution and at the mediation stage*



- Increase in the number and percentage of cases settled via early resolution

In accordance with increased HRTO emphasis on resolving cases via mediation, the Centre has achieved significantly higher numbers of pre-mediation and mediation settlements in 2024–2025 than in recent previous years.

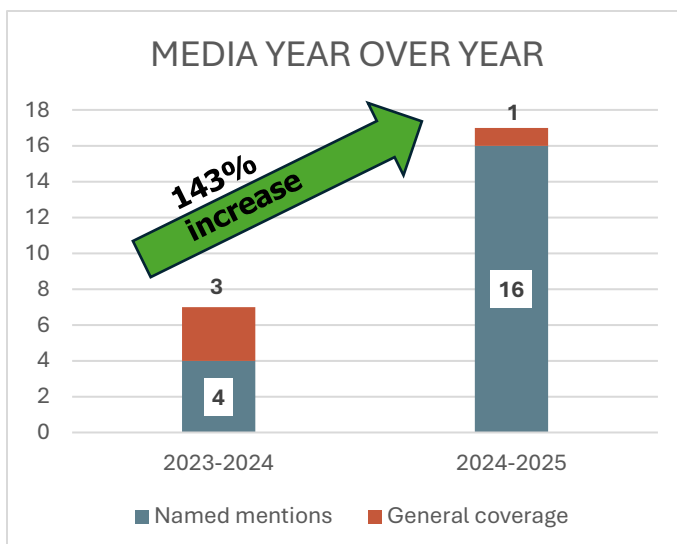
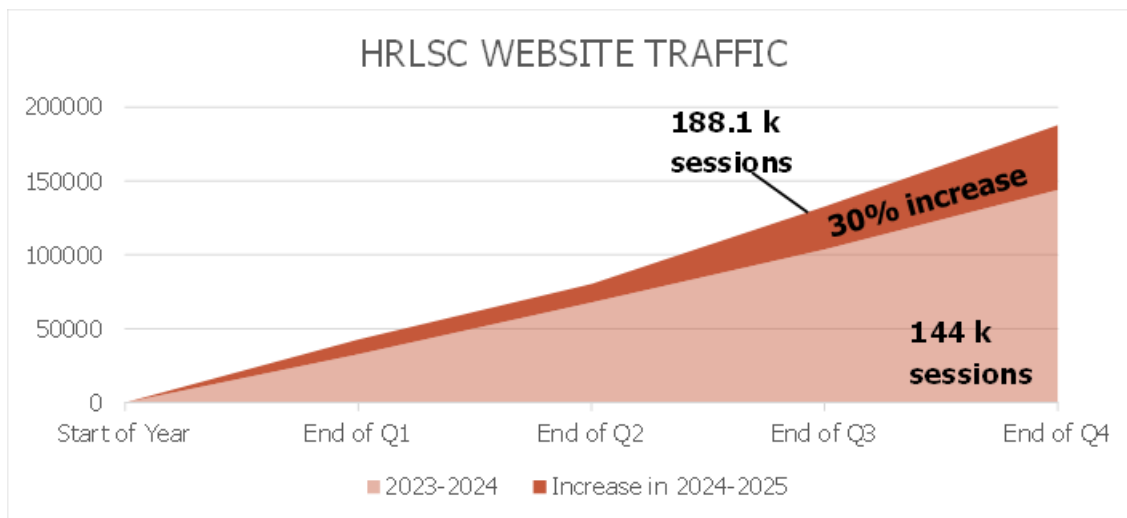
Strategic Outreach and Communications

Five Year Outcome: People have improved awareness and understanding of and access to HRLSC services and supports, especially those who are most marginalized and vulnerable to discrimination.

- Increase in HRLSC website and social media traffic

HRLSC Website Traffic Year over Year:

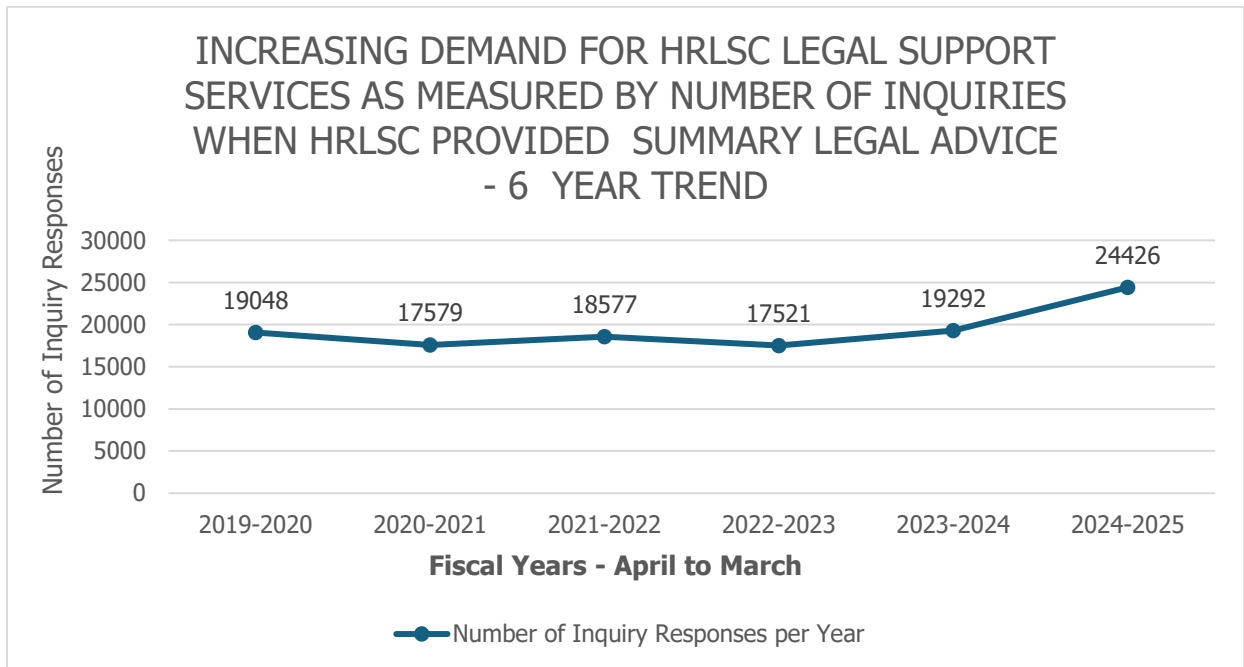
From 2023–2024 to 2024–2025, website traffic increased 30% from 144,012 to 188,081.



Media Year over Year

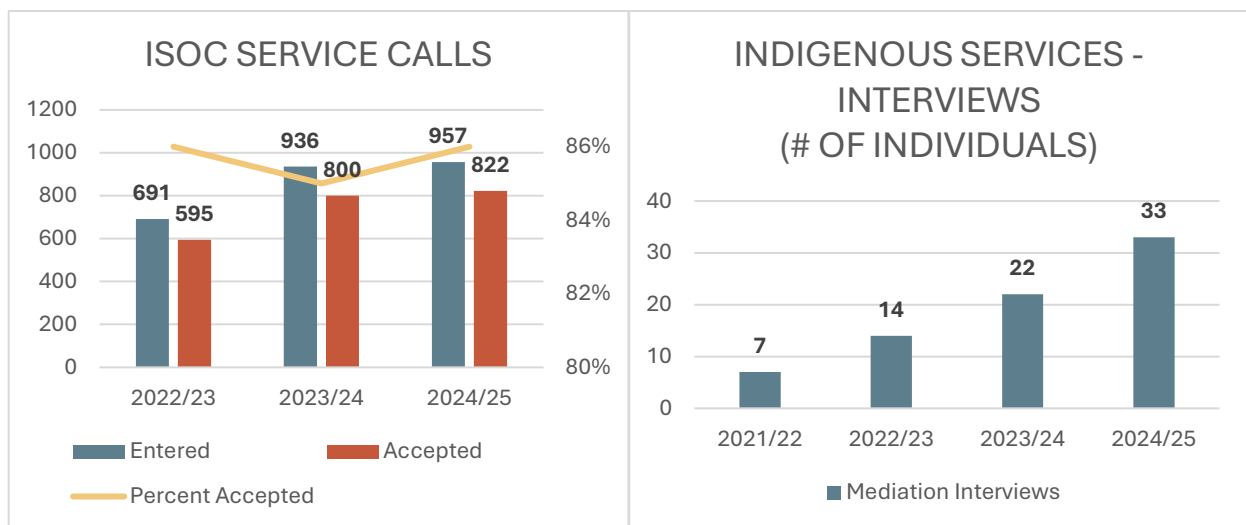
In the 2024–2025 fiscal year, 16 out of 17 positive media stories mention HRLSC by name, compared to 2023–2024, where four out of seven mentioned HRLSC by name. This represents a 143% increase in media coverage, with a 300% increase in profile growth (from four to 16 positive media stories).

Increasing Access to Services



Increase in use of services by most marginalized populations

In addition to an increase in Indigenous service calls in 2024–2025 compared to the preceding two years, the number of Indigenous services mediation interviews has increased continuously for the past four years.



6. Mandate Letter Priorities

From year to year, Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) identifies specific expectations of the Provincial government of the HRLSC through Mandate Letters. Per the Agencies and Appointments Directive, agencies are required to align goals, objectives and strategic direction with the government's priorities and direction. The Mandate Letters outline the general priorities for all agencies and specify the particularized priorities for the Centre.

Below, we have summarized each government priority for HRLSC presented in MAG's 2024–2025 Mandate Letter of Directive, and the progress made on associated initiatives in the 2024–2025 fiscal period.

6.1 HRLSC Specific Priorities

6.1.1 Implementation of 2022–2023 Mandate Review Recommendations

Government priorities specific to the HRLSC include continuing to prioritize addressing the recommendations of the 2022–2023 mandate review approved by Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS). This included specific recommendations focused on the possibility of implementing financial eligibility criteria, strengthening data collection, and leveraging client data to inform decision-making.

The HRLSC began work this year on creating an organizational data collection and reporting framework with KPIs to monitor organizational performance and inform decision-making, including in furtherance of the Mandate Letter and the Strategic Plan goal of improving HRLSC's capacity to use data, client feedback and evidence to inform decisions and service delivery. A research advisor was hired for this purpose, and work was commenced, including defining categories and methods, for the collection of socio-demographic data collection, which the HRLSC aims to launch in the 2025–2026 fiscal year. The HRLSC acknowledges that data is vital for equity-centred service delivery and for advancing contemporary human rights litigation, particularly in matters involving intersecting identity factors, such as race, sex, disability, gender, Indigeneity, income level, immigration status, to reveal systemic disparities and promote public interest remedies.

6.2 Government-wide Priorities for Board-Governed Provincial Agencies

The following subsection sets out government-wide priorities for board-governed provincial agencies, alongside HRLSC efforts to advance these priorities.

6.1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

Government priorities in this respect included:

- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation, efficiencies, and savings through innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability.
- Complying with applicable direction related to accounting practices and supply chain centralization, including leveraging Supply Ontario's bulk purchasing arrangement and working with Supply Ontario on strategic procurement initiatives.
- Complying with realty interim measures for agency office space.
- Leverage and meet benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives.

Notable Achievements:

- Began work this year on a Resource Development Plan which included identification of potential diversified and expanded future revenue and funding sources. It is expected that this Plan will be finalized in 2025–2026.
- Entered into new partnership with CLEO through LFO grant funding to develop "Guided Pathways" tool to assist Ontarians in preparing and filing their applications at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario.
- Entered into new partnership with Osgoode Hall Law School through LFO grant funding to develop Mediation, Early Resolution & Experiential Learning Training (MEET) program to assist and support clients with mediations at the HRTTO. Program will bring 12 new Osgoode Hall Law students to support HRLSC mediation and early intervention capacity over the next two years.
- Complied with applicable direction related to accounting practices and supply chain centralization and remained responsive to Supply Ontario requirements during the 2024–2025 fiscal period.
- Adopted a new Compensation Philosophy reaffirming the HRLSC's commitment to fairness, equity, and long-term sustainability.

6.2 Transparency and Accountability

Government priorities in this respect include:

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting.
- Adhering to accounting standards and practices, and responding to audit findings, where applicable.
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability, and providing the Minister with annual skills matrices to ensure boards have qualified appointees.
- Reviewing and updating agency KPIs annually to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability.

Notable Achievements:

- Ensured public accountability and transparency, complying with government directives and policies, including by developing a three-year (2025–2028) Operational Business Plan, (2024–2025) Annual Report, and independent Financial Audit for government review and approval for public posting.
- Significantly enhanced HRLSC data collection, analysis and public reporting in 2024–2025 fiscal year, including through publication of 10-year analysis of HRLSC legal services, as profiled in HRLSC's 2023–2024 Annual Report.
- Maintained relevant accounting standards and practices through retention of relevant staff and procurement of auditors.
- Updated annual skills matrix to ensure the board has and recruits qualified appointees with appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to effectively advance HRLSC's mandate and support board governance and accountability
- The HRLSC's Board again received a yearly orientation as well as new training on governance principles, as informed the Board's formal review of Board governance policies in 2024–2025, to identify areas for further development and updating.

6.3 Risk Management

Government priorities in this respect include:

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment and mitigation of agency risks, including cyber security, and any future emergency risks.

Notable Achievements:

- Continued to proactively manage and mitigate risks to the organization, including through the preparation and review of quarterly risk management plans. The HRLSC's staff furthermore attended Ontario Public Service (OPS) risk management training this past fiscal year to continue to build competency in this area.
- The HRLSC's Board again received a yearly orientation as well as training on risk management.
- In accordance with the 2020 TBS audit, the HRLSC continued to work with MAG's Justice Technology Services and Information Technology Services (JTS) to migrate the HRLSC IT services to the OPS network to take advantage of shared infrastructure. HRLSC and JTS have successfully completed the IT assessment, marking the first phase of the JTS onboarding process. Assuming MAG approval and coverage of associated costs, HRLSC is estimated to be fully on-boarded onto the JTS Network by April/May 2026.
- Hired an external IT security consultant to help further advise and ensure protection and security of individual and organizational data and cybersecurity.
- Developed a new IT strategy and IT policy, which includes new cybersecurity measures and direction on use of artificial intelligence through a new dedicated AI policy requiring reporting of uses of AI.
- The HRLSC is now implementing mandatory cybersecurity training for staff.

6.4 Workforce/Labour Management

Government priorities in this respect include:

- Optimizing your organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery, including redeploying resources to priority areas, where needed.
- Ensure that organizational decisions and resource planning regarding labour relations, office management and human resource policies are strategically aligned with broader relevant government priorities, legislation, and directives.
- Prudently and efficiently managing operational funding and workforce size.

Notable Achievements:

- Identified priority areas for services and staffing through the stakeholder-informed Strategic Plan development process this past year, which transparently informed resource deployment decisions.

- Optimized public service delivery through acquisition of new LFO responsive grant funding for new paralegal service position and through partnerships with CLEO and Osgoode Hall to expand legal service capacity (see subsection 3.2.6).
- Continued to maintain and follow its human capital and financial plan, prudently, in accordance with resources and strategic priorities.
- Adopted a new Compensation Philosophy reaffirming the HRLSC's commitment to fairness, equity, and long-term sustainability.
- Prudently managed operational funding and workforce size including through attrition and vacancies, in context of strained current and uncertain future funding and resources.

6.5 Diversity and Inclusion

Government priorities in this respect include:

- Developing and encouraging diversity and inclusion initiatives by promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace.
- Adopting an inclusion engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making.

Notable Achievements:

- Continued providing accessible, multi-language services for clients, and to ensure it had Indigenous and Francophone staff at every level of service to support capacity to provide culturally competent services including to clients requiring linguistic and cultural accommodations.
- Provided ongoing professional development for staff and its Board in accordance with its commitment to advance equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice. Provided staff trainings on:
 - The Path Indigenous cultural awareness training;
 - Ontario *Human Rights Code* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*; and *Occupational Health and Safety Act* – Worker health and safety awareness;
 - LivingWorks START Suicide Prevention E-Learning Course.
 - Director of Public Interest and Legal Initiatives at the 519 conducted an online workshop with Legal Staff on their new [519 Legal Advice Clinic](#) services, including issues facing the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and tips for making inclusive adjudicative spaces.

6.6 Data Collection, Sharing and Use

Government priorities in this respect include:

- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery.
- Increasing data sharing with Supply Ontario when applicable regarding procurement spending and planning, contract arrangements and vendor relations to support data driven decision-making.

Notable Achievements:

- Developed six five-year desired outcomes for its Strategic Plan including: People have improved access to services and supports; People have more service options; Clients are satisfied; Decision making is data-driven and evidence-informed; HRLSC is engaged in more strategic partnerships; HRLSC provides leadership in human rights analysis and strategy.
- Developed new KPIs in accordance with desired strategic plan outcomes, and updated client survey materials to expand reach to all client interactions to support further quality monitoring and improvement.
- Continued to share data with Supply Ontario regarding procurement spending.
- Developed new and expanded client evaluation surveys for implementation in 2025–2026 to receive client feedback from all clients, not just those receiving in depth legal services.
- Continued to expand its service data through Client Tracking Tool and its digital platforms to inform its requisite operational and financial reporting through its published materials shared on its website, and with MAG.

6.7 Innovative (Service delivery methods and customer engagement)

Government priorities in this respect include:

- Exploring and implementing digitization for online service delivery to ensure customer service standards are met.
- Using a variety of approaches or tools to ensure service delivery in all situations.

Notable Achievements:

- Increased access to HRLSC services, as measured by inquiry and summary advice numbers, despite reductions in legal staffing capacity due to strained resources. This was achieved in part through HRLSC's relaunch of its online client portal which

simplified and expanded access to HRLSC intake and summary advice services beyond regular business working hours.

- Updated website structure and created significant new content for website, for user friendliness and accessibility.
- Expanded participation in speaking events and public legal education around the province to support access to its services (as summarized in section 3).
- Commenced development of new LFO-grant-funded Guided Pathways online tool, in partnership with CLEO, to assist Ontarians in preparing and filing their applications at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario.

"From the very beginning, I felt genuinely supported and understood by each member of your team. The meticulous preparation of your team, attention to every detail, and compassionate approach were not just professional but truly extraordinary. [the HRLSC's staff], was exceptional in explaining how the system works...

You all went above and beyond, and it made all the difference in the outcome of my case."

– HRLSC Client

7. Risk Events

This section outlines the HRLSC’s assessment of risks related to workforce management, bargaining, competitiveness, sustainability, HRTO operations, and IT security measures.

7.1 Workforce Management

The HRLSC provides an assessment of the immediate risks to its workforce management through its annual Human Capital Plan provided in its yearly Operational Business Plan (OBP), as well as through its ongoing maintenance and updating of a Risk Registry. This is reported quarterly to our provincial funder MAG, along with the Workforce Data and Human Resources Reporting. Additionally, the HRLSC tracks potential future long-term trends and threats to its workforce through the OBP’s Environmental Scan.

During the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the HRLSC continued to experience significant challenges to financial sustainability which continued to negatively impact staff recruitment and retention, leading to significant and consistent high workforce turnover.

The HRLSC presented an Emergency Business Case and long-term financial sustainability submission to MAG and TBS this past fiscal year and continued to have ongoing discussions with MAG about long-term financial sustainability concerns, including addressing salary disparities and annual wage increases for staff.

The HRLSC is actively seeking to increase and diversify its funding to ensure future capacity to hire and retain critical staff positions, at least on a short-term basis, to align with Centre’s five-year strategic plan and mandate.

7.2 Bargaining

The HRLSC and OPSEU ratified the 2022–2024 collective agreement for non-legal unionized staff this past fiscal year. The risk for 2024–2025 remains in managing and sustaining retroactive annual increases stemming from ratification. Bargaining will also need to recommence in the near future on the terms of a new collective agreement, due to the protracted period of negotiation for the 2022–2024 Collective Agreement which was only settled this past year.

The HRLSC and OPSEU have commenced negotiations for the counsel bargaining unit as of 2024–2025. The HRLSC looks forward to working with its counsel and their new

OPSEU bargaining agent to make the Centre an employer of choice as part of the HRLSC's five-year strategic plan and mandate.

7.3 Competitiveness and Sustainability

The HRLSC continues to provide financial forecasting in its yearly Operational Business Plans to assess potential risks to its services and staffing. While the HRLSC has been effective in sharing prompt updates about its financial standing and in looking at creative solutions to budgetary constraints and sustainability challenges, it relies heavily upon the attention and action of MAG and the Treasury Board Secretariat. The HRLSC continues to seek out creative alternative sources of funding and support. During Strategic Planning consultations, stakeholders emphasized the need for the HRLSC to be mindful of the critical role of stable government funding for effective human rights institutions.¹⁴ Various stakeholders expressed concern regarding the HRLSC's static provincial funding and sought transparency regarding what efforts the Centre was taking to mitigate this sustainability risk, which stakeholders viewed as jeopardizing their communities' and clients' fundamental human rights.

7.4 HRTO Operations

In the 2024–2025 fiscal period, the operation of the HRTO continued to have a significant impact on the delivery of the HRLSC's legal services. The HRLSC maintains and develops strong relationships with key administrators both at Tribunals Ontario and at the HRTO, including regular one-on-one meetings with the HRTO and quarterly Three Pillars meetings (HRTO, OHRC and HRLSC). This permits the HRLSC to effectively

¹⁴ One of seven core "Paris Principles" used internationally by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights institutions (GANHRI) as a minimum standard for a NHRI to be considered credible and to operate effectively, is: **"Adequate resources, so that NHRIs have the funding, staffing, infrastructure and institutional capacity to perform their functions and discharge their responsibilities"** (<https://ganhri.org/paris-principles/>). GANHRI's Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) further expounds on the meaning of this Paris Principle in its "General Observations, 2018" guidance, which further states: **"To function effectively, an NHRI must be provided with an appropriate level of funding in order to guarantee its independence and its ability to freely determine its priorities and activities. It must also have the power to allocate funding according to its priorities."** The SCA further states that adequate funding must at a minimum include "salaries and benefits awarded to its staff comparable to those of civil servants performing similar tasks in other independent institutions of the State" and "allocation of a sufficient amount of resources for mandated activities". It also advises: **"Funding from external sources...should not compose the core funding of the NHRI, as this is the responsibility of the State"**; and "such funds should not be tied to donor-defined priorities but rather to the pre-determined priorities of the NHRI". This and other [Paris Principles](#) can and should be extended to the evaluation of provincial human rights institutions in federal states like Canada (see for example OHRC's consideration of the Paris Principles at the time of Bill 107 in its [Discussion paper: Reviewing Ontario's human rights system](#)").

identify, monitor and manage risks regarding potential fluctuations in the HRTO's operational delivery.

The HRTO has augmented its roster of Vice-Chairs and members over the last fiscal year which should assist in addressing some of the delays and backlogs at the HRTO. The HRTO's continued emphasis on preliminary and procedural hearings in the last fiscal year has impacted the HRLSC in terms of sustained requests for legal services connected to this pre-merit hearing context. The HRLSC provides extensive summary advice, information, interviews and other in-depth legal services to the public and HRTO applicants required to respond to requests and directions for case-related submissions, updates, and other information.

The HRTO announced the introduction of mandatory mediation effective June 1, 2025. With many more HRTO mediations set to be scheduled, the HRLSC anticipates that there will be a corresponding spike in requests for legal services related to mediations, including representation in the coming reporting period.

7.5 IT Security Measures

The HRLSC continues to identify and address enhanced security measures, following the cybersecurity incident in 2023. It has commenced efforts to integrate HRLSC IT systems within the broader OPS IT network (see section 6.1.2). Moreover, MAG approved a list of 2024–2025 cybersecurity expenditures, including for HRLSC's cybersecurity IT expert, which will enable the HRLSC to continue identifying and addressing security measures to keep its systems secure.

HRLSC staff will be required to complete mandatory updated cybersecurity training modules in the coming year, which will reinforce compliance with HRLSC's new IT and AI policies.

8. HR Impact

During the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the HRLSC continued to experience significant challenges with financial sustainability which continued to negatively impact staff recruitment and retention leading to significant and consistent high staff turnover.

In response to financial challenges, and related efforts to manage operational funding and workforce size prudently, the HRLSC was forced to leave positions vacant during the year. This resulted in our inability to maintain our full FTE staff complement and particularly impacted on our in-depth legal service capacity this past year.

As part of HRLSC’s new Strategic Plan, the Centre continued its concerted efforts to actively seek to increase and diversify its funding to ensure future capacity to hire and retain critical staff positions to support legal service delivery in fulfillment of HRLSC’s statutory mandate. During the 2024–2025 fiscal period, the HRLSC awaited a decision on the status of its emergency business case and long-term sustainability funding request to MAG and the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) that would enable HRLSC to maintain its current staff numbers. In addition to working with government partners, the HRLSC also looked to secure funding through grant proposals, including its successful application to the Law Foundation of Ontario (LFO). The HRLSC anticipates that such funding opportunities may positively impact its workforce complement in the next fiscal year to address increasing service demand.

The HRLSC continued to ensure it had Indigenous and Francophone staff at every level of service to support culturally and linguistically competent service delivery.

Workforce composition

HRLSC’s workforce size in 2024–2025 was set at 49 FTEs, with executives and management remaining steady during the 2024–2025 fiscal year. Overall staff size fluctuated over the year, as HRLSC was forced to leave staff positions vacant at times to address sustainability concerns and ensure that priority areas set out in its strategic plan were supported.

The HRLSC optimized its organizational capacity by developing clear organizational priorities, with its new strategic plan, which enabled it to rationalize and redeploy resources accordingly.

As part of its Strategic Plan priorities, HRLSC introduced two new FTEs in the 2024–2025 fiscal year, including to support data-informed, equity-centred service delivery, increase awareness and use of the Centre’s services, especially within marginalized

communities, and to support resource-generation and business-case development efforts, with an eye to supporting long-term sustainability. These included a Manager of Communications, Outreach & Education, and a Senior Policy, Research & Strategic Advisor position.

Bargaining

In the Summer of 2024, the HRLSC and OPSEU ratified a Collective Agreement for the period covering January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2024, for its non-Lawyer bargaining unit. In October 2024, the Centre was served with a Notice to Bargain to initiate the collective bargaining process for a new Collective Agreement. The HRLSC anticipates negotiations for a renewed agreement to begin within the 2025–2026 fiscal year.

In March 2024, the HRLSC entered into a Voluntary Recognition and Framework Agreement with OPSEU who will now represent all non-management lawyers employed by the HRLSC. This development followed the latter's filing of an Application for Certification in September 2023, at the Ontario Labour Relations Board, and the HRLSC's agreement to voluntarily recognize the new union in March 2024. The HRLSC commenced negotiations for the first Collective Agreement for its non-management lawyers in February 2025.

HR Policy & Practice

HRLSC continued its job evaluation and compensation review, developing and adopting a new Board-approved Compensation Philosophy in February 2025 that reaffirmed HRLSC's commitment to fairness, equity, and long-term sustainability. Recognizing the critical importance of recruiting and retaining talented staff, in keeping with the HRLSC's strategic commitment to being an employer of choice, this philosophy sets out the HRLSC's compensation goals and aspirations to help inform the HRLSC's overall approach and a principled methodology to compensation for all occupational groups.

HRLSC also continued to analyze compensation disparities and submitted robust funding proposals to MAG and TBS to address these challenges.

Finally, HRLSC continued to review its Human Resources and Accommodation strategies to ensure alignment with the OPS and policies.

9. Financial Analysis

2024–2025 Budget vs Actuals

Expense	2024–2025 Budget	2024–2025 Actuals	Variance
Salaries	\$4,051,146	\$3,763,044	\$288,102
Benefits	\$888,116	\$852,054	\$36,062
Operating	\$335,72	\$970,905	(\$635,182)
Board	\$61,215	\$63,213	(\$1,998)
Total Expenses	\$5,336,200	\$5,649,216	(\$313,016)

2024–2025 Revenue: \$5,670,254

Summary and Analysis

The HRLSC is required to have an annual and independent external audit in accordance with the *Agencies and Appointments Directive*. The auditors for this year's report confirmed that the HRLSC is in good standing and that the Centre derives its primary operating revenue from MAG.

The overall revenue for 2024–2025 fiscal year amounts to \$5,670,254. The Ministry of the Attorney General provided in-year, one-time funding, over and above our annual \$5.3K base funding, specifically to address the benefit premium increase, sustain historical 1% annual increases for counsel, and support ongoing IT operational commitments aimed at further securing HRLSC's IT environment.

The HRLSC continues to experience significant staff turnover and is forced to leave positions vacant to enable the Centre to realign funds from salaries to Other Direct Operating Expenses (ODOE) to help sustain our ongoing operational commitments and critical one-time projects mandated under the letter of direction. With this additional funding from MAG, the bank interest earned this year, and the cost awards, HRLSC was able to manage the overall pressure for 2024–2025 fiscal year. The audited financial statement approved by the Board of Directors is appended at the end of this annual report.

Costs for the 2024–2025 fiscal period were managed through ongoing monitoring, analysis, and timely decision-making, as supported by the HRLSC’s agile service delivery model.

The HRLSC continues to make efforts to find cost efficiencies, such as utilizing digital platforms, relocating its IT infrastructure to the Justice Technology Services, outsourcing administrative work, and seeking out new funding sources and partnerships to expand our legal service capacity (e.g. see section 3.2.6). In addition, the HRLSC optimized our organizational capacity by identifying, and redeploying resources to priority areas to support its new 5-year strategic plan.

While the HRLSC’s ongoing operational expenses typically range in the \$800K range (thus requiring drawing on savings from salary and benefits each year through vacancies), the HRLSC’s operating expenses during the 2024–2025 fiscal year were somewhat higher (\$970K), primarily as a result of increased IT security-related measures and expenses after the October 3, 2023, cybersecurity incident.

The HRLSC continues to assess and make budget realignments to address its immediate operational needs. The HRLSC continues to be concerned with the impact of the rate of inflation and lack of permanent funding increases to keep pace with this, and will continue to discuss this matter with MAG.

The HRLSC’s Board members continue to participate in governance-related initiatives including resulting from the government’s October 1, 2024 introduction of a new Agencies and Appointment Directive, which required, among other things, initiating discussions of and updates to MAG and HRLSC’s Memorandum of Understanding. The Board also supported the development of several new HRLSC grant funding proposals, in addition to the emergency business case and long-term sustainability funding request to MAG/TBS for core funding increases in the 2024–2025 period, the efforts of which expanded significantly over previous years. Increased board participation in response to such government review processes and funding generation efforts, in addition to HRLSC’s recruitment of an interim Executive Director, contributed to slightly higher board-related costs in 2024–2025. The Board serves as a bridge to other organizations within the justice system and interacts extensively with MAG and the other two pillars of the human rights system, the HRTO and OHRC. In this work with fellow community and government partners, the Board promotes additional potential opportunities for efficiencies.

The most significant and persisting financial challenge for the HRLSC in 2024–2025 continues to relate to long-term sustainability in the context of a static budget, specifically maintaining and sustaining annual increases, competitive salaries, avoiding salary compression, and affording rising operational costs due to inflation. The HRLSC maintains regular communications and correspondence with MAG to address these financial challenges, including discussions about a more sustainable funding model.

Without an increase to the HRLSC's permanent base budget, the Centre will have to implement a restructuring plan that will reduce our resources and services, even as Ontarians' demand for legal advice and support on human rights issues continues to demonstrably increase (e.g. see sections 4.3.4 and 4.3.8).

"Thanks to your team tireless efforts, I can now move forward with a renewed sense of hope and confidence. Your teamwork has had a life-changing impact on me, and words cannot fully capture the depth of my gratitude."

– HRLSC Client

10.HRLSC Board of Directors Remunerations

2024–2025 HRLSC Board Appointees

Name	Position	Date First Appointed	Current Term and Expiration Date	Board meeting attendance	Total annual remuneration (per diem)
Ena Chadha	Chair	February 21, 2018	August 19, 2024 – August 18, 2026	May 28, 2024 July 23, 2024 September 17, 2024 October 24, 2024 December 10, 2024 February 25, 2025	\$35,431.60
Mary Joe Freire	Vice-Chair	February 20, 2020	July 22, 2024 – July 21, 2026	May 28, 2024 July 23, 2024 September 17, 2024 October 24, 2024 December 10, 2024 February 25, 2025	\$4,312.50
Martial Moreau	Treasurer	May 26, 2020	May 26, 2025 – May 25, 2026	May 28, 2024 July 23, 2024 September 17, 2024 October 24, 2024 December 10, 2024 February 25, 2025	\$7,912.13

Evelyn Ball	Member	June 11, 2020	June 11, 2025 – June 10, 2026	May 28, 2024 July 23, 2024 September 17, 2024 December 10, 2024 February 25, 2025	\$2,794.23
Sandi Bell	Member and Cross-Appointee (OHRC)	March 23, 2023	March 23, 2025 – March 22, 2028	May 28, 2024 July 23, 2024 September 17, 2024 October 24, 2024 December 10, 2024 February 25, 2025	\$3,485.02
Tamar Witelson	Member	February 8, 2018	February 20, 2025 – February 19, 2028	May 28, 2024 July 23, 2024 September 17, 2024 October 24, 2024 December 10, 2024 February 25, 2025	\$3,000.00
Michelle Tan	Member	May 26, 2020	May 26, 2025 – May 25, 2028	May 28, 2024 July 23, 2024 September 17, 2024 October 24, 2024 December 10, 2024 February 25, 2025	\$2,217.83
Gary Pieters	Member Cross-Appointee (OHRC)	March 25, 2021	March 25, 2023 – March 24, 2026	May 28, 2024 July 23, 2024	\$750.00

Audited Financial Statements

Insert Financial Statements

Human Rights Legal Support Centre
Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2025

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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Board of Directors of Human Rights Legal Support Centre

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Human Rights Legal Support Centre (the "Centre"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2025, and the statements of operations and changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Centre as at March 31, 2025, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Centre in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Centre's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Centre or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Centre's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.



Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements (Continued)

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Centre's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Centre's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Centre to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

BDO Canada LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants

Oakville, Ontario
July 16, 2025

Human Rights Legal Support Centre Statement of Financial Position

March 31	2025					2024				
	General Operations MAG	Law Foundation of Ontario	Department of Justice Canada	Internally Restricted Fund	Total	General Operations MAG	Law Foundation of Ontario	Department of Justice Canada	Internally Restricted Fund	Total
Assets										
Current assets										
Cash	\$ 184,200	\$ 167,802	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 352,002	\$ 939,106	\$ -	\$ 88,836	\$ -	\$ 1,027,942
Short-term investments (Note 2)	410,064	-	-	-	410,064	-	-	-	-	-
Accounts receivables	114,018	-	-	-	114,018	-	-	-	-	-
Interest receivables	28,801	-	-	-	28,801	-	-	-	-	-
HST recoverable	262,727	-	11,109	-	273,836	171,157	-	10,841	-	181,998
Prepaid expenses	120,220	-	-	-	120,220	64,090	-	-	-	64,090
Interfund balance	(489,323)	(12,158)	(11,109)	512,590	-	(256,360)	-	(4,230)	260,590	-
	630,707	155,644	-	512,590	1,298,941	917,993	-	95,447	260,590	1,274,030
Capital assets (Note 3)	44,068	-	-	-	44,068	76,428	-	-	-	76,428
	\$ 674,775	\$ 155,644	\$ -	\$ 512,590	\$ 1,343,009	\$ 994,421	\$ -	\$ 95,447	\$ 260,590	\$ 1,350,458
Liabilities										
Current										
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 607,293	\$ 750	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 608,043	\$ 650,810	\$ -	\$ 95,447	\$ -	\$ 746,257
Deferred revenue (Note 4)	67,200	154,894	-	-	222,094	112,200	-	-	-	112,200
	674,493	155,644	-	-	830,137	763,010	-	95,447	-	858,457
Net Assets										
Operating fund (Note 8)	282	-	-	-	282	231,411	-	-	-	231,411
Law Foundation of Ontario	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Department of Justice Canada	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Internally restricted fund	-	-	-	512,590	512,590	-	-	-	260,590	260,590
	282	-	-	512,590	512,872	231,411	-	-	260,590	492,001
	\$ 674,775	\$ 155,644	\$ -	\$ 512,590	\$ 1,343,009	\$ 994,421	\$ -	\$ 95,447	\$ 260,590	\$ 1,350,458

On behalf of the Board of Directors:

Director

Director

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre Statement of Operations

For the year ended March 31

2025

2024

	General Operations MAG	Law Foundation of Ontario	Department of Justice Canada	Internally Restricted Fund	Total	General Operations MAG	Law Foundation of Ontario	Department of Justice Canada	Internally Restricted Fund	Total
Revenue										
Ministry of the Attorney General	\$ 5,614,298	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,614,298	\$ 5,823,363	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,823,363
Department of Justice Canada	-	-	(46,248)	-	(46,248)	-	-	576,755	-	576,755
Law Foundation of Ontario	-	45,107	-	-	45,107	-	-	-	-	-
Interest income	50,278	824	-	-	51,102	-	-	-	-	-
Other income	5,678	-	-	-	5,678	67,251	-	-	-	67,251
	5,670,254	45,931	(46,248)	-	5,669,937	5,890,614	-	576,755	-	6,467,369
Expenditures										
Salaries and wages	3,763,044	9,978	(50,261)	-	3,722,761	3,701,648	-	418,186	-	4,119,834
Employee benefits (Note 5)	852,054	2,180	4,248	-	858,482	795,601	-	71,175	-	866,776
Services	714,512	773	(68)	-	715,217	1,002,855	-	51,006	-	1,053,861
Communication	114,564	-	-	-	114,564	96,938	-	13,096	-	110,034
Province wide service delivery	6,648	-	-	-	6,648	8,862	-	-	-	8,862
Travel	2,850	-	-	-	2,850	6,741	-	-	-	6,741
Supplies and equipment	94,773	-	-	-	94,773	71,908	-	5,823	-	77,731
Board expense	63,213	-	-	-	63,213	78,981	-	-	-	78,981
Amortization	37,558	-	-	-	37,558	31,072	-	-	-	31,072
Project expenses	-	33,000	-	-	33,000	-	-	-	-	-
	5,649,216	45,931	(46,081)	-	5,649,066	5,794,606	-	559,286	-	6,353,892
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year	\$ 21,038	\$ -	(167)	\$ -	\$ 20,871	\$ 96,008	\$ -	17,469	\$ -	\$ 113,477

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre Statement of Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended March 31

2025

2024

	General Operations MAG	Law Foundation of Ontario	Department of Justice Canada	Internally Restricted Fund	Total	General Operations MAG	Law Foundation of Ontario	Department of Justice Canada	Internally Restricted Fund	Total
Net assets , beginning of year	231,411	-	-	260,590	492,001	231,403	-	(17,469)	164,590	378,524
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year	21,038	-	(167)	-	20,871	96,008	-	17,469	-	113,477
Interfund transfer (Note 1)	(252,167)	-	167	252,000	-	(96,000)	-	-	96,000	-
Net assets , end of year	\$ 282	-	-	\$ 512,590	\$ 512,872	\$ 231,411	-	-	\$ 260,590	\$ 492,001

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended March 31	2025					2024				
	General Operations MAG	Law Foundation of Ontario	Department of Justice Canada	Internally Restricted Fund	Total	General Operations MAG	Law Foundation of Ontario	Department of Justice Canada	Internally Restricted Fund	Total
Cash provided by (used in)										
Operating activities										
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for the year	\$ 21,038	\$ -	\$ (167)	\$ -	\$ 20,871	\$ 96,008	\$ -	\$ 17,469	\$ -	\$ 113,477
Amortization	37,558	-	-	-	37,558	31,072	-	-	-	31,072
Changes in non-cash working capital balances										
Accounts receivable	(114,018)	-	-	-	(114,018)	-	-	-	-	-
Interest receivable	(28,801)	-	-	-	(28,801)	-	-	-	-	-
HST recoverable	(91,570)	-	(268)	-	(91,838)	(103,431)	-	(3,949)	-	(107,380)
Prepaid expenses	(56,130)	-	-	-	(56,130)	52,666	-	6,264	-	58,930
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(43,517)	750	(95,447)	-	(138,214)	208,816	-	57,671	-	266,487
Deferred revenue	(45,000)	154,894	-	-	109,894	112,200	-	-	-	112,200
	(320,440)	155,644	(95,882)	-	(260,678)	397,331	-	77,455	-	474,786
Investing activities										
Interfund transfers	(19,204)	12,158	7,046	-	-	38,064	-	(38,064)	-	-
Purchase of capital assets	(5,198)	-	-	-	(5,198)	(82,026)	-	-	-	(82,026)
Purchase of investments	(410,064)	-	-	-	(410,064)	-	-	-	-	-
	(434,466)	12,158	7,046	-	(415,262)	(43,962)	-	(38,064)	-	(82,026)
Increase (decrease) in cash during the year	(754,906)	167,802	(88,836)	-	(675,940)	353,369	-	39,391	-	392,760
Cash, beginning of year	939,106	-	88,836	-	1,027,942	585,737	-	49,445	-	635,182
Cash, end of year	\$ 184,200	167,802	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 352,002	\$ 939,106	\$ -	88,836	\$ -	\$ 1,027,942

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

1. Significant Accounting Policies

Nature of Operations

The Human Rights Legal Support Centre (the "Centre") was established December 20, 2006 as a corporation without share capital as a result of Royal Assent being granted to Section 45.11 of the *Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2006*. The legislation took effect on June 30, 2008 and the Centre opened on that day.

The Centre is not a Crown agency, but is designated as an operational service agency and reports to the Ministry of the Attorney General ("MAG"). The Centre is independent from, but accountable to the Government of Ontario. Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") between the Centre and the Attorney General for the Province of Ontario, the objectives of the Centre are:

- (a) To establish and administer a cost-effective and efficient system for providing support services, including legal services, respecting applications to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal under Part IV of the Code; and
- (b) To establish policies and priorities for the provision of support services based on financial resources.

The Centre is a not-for-profit organization, as described in Section 149(1)(l) of the *Income Tax Act*, and therefore is not subject to either federal or provincial income taxes.

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are prepared by management in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. The financial statements have been prepared within the framework of significant accounting policies summarized below:

The Centre maintains an Operating Fund, Law Foundation of Ontario Fund, Department of Justice Canada Fund and an internally restricted fund.

The day to day activities of the Centre are recorded in the Operating Fund which is funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General ("MAG").

The Law Foundation of Ontario Fund ("LFO") is an externally restricted fund to provide funding for the "Leave No One Behind: Empowering Access to Human Rights Justice, Supporting Early Human Rights Dispute Resolution" project. The Centre entered into an agreement with the Law Foundation of Ontario to fund this project for the period from January 20, 2025 to January 19, 2027.

The Department of Justice Canada Fund ("DOJ") is an externally restricted fund to provide funding for a specialized team to provide free legal advice and public legal education information to individuals across Ontario who have experienced sexual harassment at work. The Centre entered into an agreement with the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of Canada to fund this project for the period from July 3, 2019 to March 31, 2024.

The internally restricted fund was established, by the Board of Directors to fund projects. This fund is financed by appropriations from the operating fund. During the year, the Board of Directors approved a transfer of \$252,167 (2024 - \$96,000) from the operating fund.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

1. Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Revenue Recognition

The Centre follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions, which includes government grants.

The Centre receives revenue from the MAG. The amounts are recorded as revenue when received or receivable. All of the funds received are restricted as to use for purposes set out in the MOU.

The Centre receives revenue from the Law Foundation of Ontario. The amounts are recorded as revenue when received or receivable. All of the funds received are restricted as to use for purposes as set out in the funding agreement.

The Centre receives revenue from the Department of Justice Canada. The amounts are recorded as revenue when received or receivable. All of the funds received are restricted as to use for purposes as set out in the funding agreement.

Deferred revenue

Deferred revenue consist of funding received relating to restricted revenue from the MAG and LFO. These funds will be recognized as revenue in the ensuing fiscal year corresponding with the period in which the related expenses are incurred.

Capital Assets

The costs of capital assets are capitalized upon meeting the criteria for recognition as a capital asset; otherwise, costs are expensed as incurred. The cost comprises its purchase price and any directly attributable cost of preparing the asset for its intended use.

Capital assets are measured at cost less accumulated amortization and accumulated impairment losses.

Amortization is provided for on a straight-line basis at rates designed to amortize the cost of the capital assets over their estimated useful lives. The annual amortization rates are as follows:

Computer equipment	-	3 years
Furniture and fixtures	-	5 years

Capital assets are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that its carrying amount may not be recoverable. If any potential impairment is identified, the amount of impairment is quantified by comparing the carrying value of the capital asset to its fair value. Any impairment of the capital asset is recognized in income in the year in which the impairment occurs.

Financial Instruments

All financial instruments are initially recognized at fair value and subsequently at amortized cost. Financial assets are tested for impairment when changes in circumstances indicate that the asset could be impaired. Transaction costs are expensed for those items remeasured at fair value at each statement of financial position date and charged to the financial instrument for those measured at amortized cost.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

1. Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Impairment

At the end of each year, the Centre assesses whether there are any indications that a financial asset measured at amortized cost may be impaired. Objective evidence of impairment includes observable data that comes to the attention of the Centre, including but not limited to the following events: significant financial difficulty of the issuer; a breach of contract, such as a default or delinquency in interest or principal payments; and bankruptcy or other financial reorganization proceedings.

When there is an indication of impairment, the Centre determines whether a significant adverse change has occurred during the year in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows from the financial asset.

When the Centre identifies a significant adverse change in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows from a financial asset, it reduces the carrying amount of the financial asset to the greater of the following:

- The present value of the cash flows expected to be generated by holding the financial asset discounted using a current market rate of interest appropriate to the financial asset; and
- The amount that could be realized by selling the financial asset at the statement of financial position date.

Any impairment of the financial asset is recognized in income in the year in which the impairment occurs.

When the extent of impairment of a previously written-down financial asset decreases and the decrease can be related to an event occurring after the impairment was recognized, the previously recognized impairment loss is reversed to the extent of the improvement, but not in excess of the impairment loss. The amount of the reversal is recognized in income in the year the reversal occurs.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures during the current period. Actual results may differ from these estimates, the impact of which would be recorded in future periods.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognized in the year in which the estimates are revised and in any future years affected.

Pension Plan

The Centre, through the sponsorship of MAG, is a participating employer to a multi-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the Ontario Pension Board ("OPB") for employees of the Province of Ontario. In accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, as sufficient information is not available to the Centre to use defined benefit plan accounting, the Centre accounts for the pension plan as a defined contribution pension plan. The Centre expenses pension contributions when made.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

2. Short-term Investments

Short-term investments consist of Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs). The GIC's have an interest rate of 4.25% (2024 - Nil) annually and mature on June 11, 2025 (2024 - Nil).

3. Capital Assets

	2025		2024	
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Cost	Accumulated Amortization
Computer equipment	\$ 631,243	\$ 587,175	\$ 635,921	\$ 559,493
Furniture and fixtures	4,150	4,150	4,150	4,150
	\$ 635,393	591,325	\$ 640,071	\$ 563,643
Net book value		\$ 44,068		\$ 76,428

4. Deferred Revenue

	2025	2024
Balance, beginning of the year	\$ 112,200	\$ -
Less: amounts recognized as revenue in the year	(221,356)	(440,063)
Add: restricted amounts received related to the following year	331,250	552,263
Balance, end of year	\$ 222,094	\$ 112,200

5. Pension Plan

The Centre, through the sponsorship of the MAG, is a participating employer to a defined benefit plan administered by the Ontario Pension Board ("OPB") for employees of the province of Ontario. Based on contribution rates as set by the OPB, the Centre matches employee contributions to the plan at the rate of 7.4% (2024 - 7.4%) of earnings up to the CPP yearly pension maximum entitlement ("YPME") and 10.5% (2024 - 10.5%) for earnings above the YPME. The Centre contributed \$311,610 (2024 - \$313,150) to the plan which is recorded in employee benefits in the statement of operations.

Human Rights Legal Support Centre Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

6. Contingent Liabilities

The Centre is party to legal proceedings with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario which arise from normal operations. Actual liabilities with respect to these actions and proceedings cannot be determined. Management believes that they will be successful and any potential liability will not materially affect the financial position of the Centre. Any ultimate liability in respect of these legal proceedings will be accounted for as an expense in the year incurred.

7. Economic Dependence

The Centre derives its primary operating revenue from the Ministry of the Attorney General.

8. Operating Fund

The Centre has expended grants received as follows:

	2025	2024
Revenue - Ministry of Attorney General	\$ 5,614,298	\$ 5,823,363
Interest and other income	55,956	67,251
Operating expenses (excluding project expenses)	(5,649,216)	(5,794,606)
Amortization included in operating expenses	37,558	31,072
Purchase of capital assets	(5,198)	(82,026)
	\$ 53,398	\$ 45,054

Reconciliation of net assets:

	Capital	Operating	Total
Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 76,428	\$ 154,983	\$ 231,411
Surplus of revenue over expenditures for the year	-	21,038	21,038
Funds transferred to capital fund	(32,360)	32,360	-
Funds transferred to internally funds restricted	-	(252,167)	(252,167)
	-	(252,167)	(252,167)
Net assets, end of year	\$ 44,068	\$ (43,786)	\$ 282

Human Rights Legal Support Centre Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

9. Financial Instruments

Credit Risk

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party by failing to discharge an obligation. The Centre is also exposed to credit risk arising from all of its bank accounts being held at one financial institution. The Centre has exposure to credit risk in cash to a maximum of \$352,002 (2024 - \$1,027,942).

Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Centre encounters difficulty in meeting its obligations associated with financial liabilities. Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of operational liquidity requirements, the Centre will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction on the due date; will be forced to sell financial assets at a value, which is less than what they are worth; or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset. Liquidity risk arises from accounts payable and accrued liabilities. The Centre meets its liquidity requirements by preparing and monitoring detailed forecasts of cash flows from operations, anticipating investing and financing activities and holding assets that can readily be converted into cash.

Market Risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in the market prices. Market risk is comprised of currency risk, interest rate risk and other price risk. The Centre is not exposed to significant market risk.

These risks have not changed from the prior year.

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ISSN 1923-0389