

**HUMAN RIGHTS LEGAL SUPPORT CENTRE
JOB DESCRIPTION**

POSITION TITLE	Legal Counsel
NUMBER OF INCUMBENTS	2
REPORTS TO	Manager, Early Intervention & Mediation Services (EIMS)
LAST UPDATED:	July 31, 2025

PURPOSE OF POSITION
To provide legal services to individuals who have experienced discrimination under the <i>Human Rights Code</i> including advice in respect of applications to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTTO). To provide early intervention services, including advice, assistance, interviews, preparation of early intervention documents, and representation in negotiating the early intervention and resolution of applications. To provide legal representation to HRLSC clients in early intervention services, at HRTTO mediations and, as may be assigned by the Manager, Early Intervention & Mediation Services (EIMS) HRTTO hearings, including preliminary and pre-merit hearings, including jurisdictional and other early dismissal hearings, contravention of settlement hearings, and merit hearings as may be assigned. To work collaboratively in a legal services team to ensure excellent service to HRLSC clients; supporting and mentoring other team members including more junior lawyers, Legal Services Representatives (LSR), Human Rights Representatives (HRR) and law students, including in the Osgoode Anti-Discrimination Intensive Program (ADIP), and the Mediation, Early Intervention and Experiential Learning (MEET) Project, and other students, as may be applicable.
MAJOR DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES
• Conducts up to 10 in depth mediation and other interviews a month with members of the public seeking legal services; assesses merit of application and eligibility of individuals for further legal services based on HRLSC service eligibility guidelines; makes recommendation to Manager, EIMS and legal team on eligibility for further services including representation. • Establishes retainer agreement with applicant based on legal strategy and extent of services to be provided as determined in collaboration with Manager, EIMS and legal team. • Manages case load of assigned client files (predominantly mediation related); determines nature and complexity of issues, and appropriate legal strategy in each case, consistently with HRLSC policies; confers with Manager, EIMS as necessary and/or as requested. • Participates in regular file reviews to enable Manager, EIMS and/or Director, Legal Services to monitor volume and complexity of caseload in the context of the overall legal work of the team and HRLSC. • As may be assigned, contacts respondent on applicant's behalf and attempts early intervention and/or resolution of claim, assists in negotiations or other settlement related options; provides advice and assistance regarding potential terms of settlement of application including reaching binding settlements. • Conducts or coordinates case preparation; identifies documents/evidence required to support HRTTO application, mediation and hearing process; conducts research; reassesses case strategy throughout application and hearing process. • Provides representation to HRLSC clients during pleadings, submissions/filings, settlement negotiations and at mediations and hearings.

- Works collaboratively with other counsel and, as assigned, may co-counsel with more junior/senior counsel on complex mediation files.
- Assists the Manager, EIMS in providing guidance and supervision on legal issues and the conduct of cases to other team members, including more junior counsel, LSR, HRR, law students, and the Mediation, Early Intervention, and Experiential Training (MEET) Project law students, and others as may be applicable.
- Acts as a resource to LSR and HRR as assigned by the Manager, EMIS to ensure that legal services are professionally sound and appropriate to the case.
- Supervises the work of LSR and HRR as needed and may be assigned by Manager, EIMS related to all early intervention work, application drafting, pleadings retainers, mediation retainers and post-mediation retainers
- Attends EIMS legal team meetings; participates in the discussion of legal issues, early intervention and mediation and litigation strategies; identifies any emerging or important issues for further strategic consideration, and other assistance as may be required.
- Assists Manager, EIMS as may be assigned, with preparation of materials documents, reports, statistics, and other information or data as may be necessary for compliance with EIMS project funder's requirements.
- Participates, as may be required and assigned, in the development of integrated and strategic approaches to the HRLSC's litigation of important or emerging legal issues in human rights law.
- Participates in outreach to, and training of, HRLSC community partners as assigned and when appropriate (e.g. legal aid clinics, Ontario Bar Association, Law Society of Ontario, organizations serving marginalized populations etc.) including advising on, and where appropriate contributing to, the development of associated resources and materials.
- Performs other duties, temporary or otherwise, as assigned which may change from time to time depending on a number of factors, including changes in the demand for legal services or in the HRLSC's service delivery model.

COMPENSABLE FACTORS

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

Knowledge of:

- Human rights legislation in Ontario, including the *Human Rights Code*.
- Objectives and strategies of the human rights system in Ontario; the independent roles and inter-relationship of the three pillars of the system – the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, and the Human Rights Legal Support Centre.
- Principles and issues of human rights and discrimination, the concerns of individuals and groups, and the history of the protection of human rights in Ontario.
- Litigation principles and practice.
- Membership in the Law Society of Ontario.

• Experience in the practice of human rights law or similar practice experience. • Experience in appearing before adjudicative boards and tribunals. • Experience in alternative dispute resolution techniques, including mediation. • Ability to work collegially in a team environment and with all members of the workforce. • Ability to work collaboratively and respectfully in a diverse workplace, including awareness of and sensitivity to cultural, racial, ethnic, gender, age and disability-related issues that may arise in the workplace and in serving diverse communities. • Commitment to applying the principles of equity/diversity competence in performing the job responsibilities of this position including recognition of the need to deliver services to the public in a manner that recognizes the unique needs of the diverse communities served. • Interpersonal skills to interact sensitively and respectfully with members of the general public, including members of diverse communities; ability to explain complex legal issues, engage in conflict resolution discussions on behalf of clients in negotiations with respondents. • Oral and written communications skills to present cases before the HRTTO. • Case management skills including the operation of standard office software and tools to track file work on case management system and record legal advice and services provided on non-retained and retained files. • Case preparation skills including conducting legal research and preparing case related materials such as legal submissions, motions, etc.	
COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS	
Requires the ability to effectively communicate technical/legal information in order to persuade or convince decision-makers to take a particular course of action or adopt a particular decision. Requires skill in communicating responsively with members of the public including members of diverse communities.	
ANALYTICAL SKILLS	
Requires analytical skills to research and analyze complex legal issues/ cases and develop/ implement solutions based on sound legal research and precedents.	
RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISIONS/ACTIONS	
Responsible for decisions that determine the approach /strategy of individual legal cases, in consultation with Legal Manager, with or without established precedents for guidance and reference, and consistent with HRLSC policies, guidelines and resources.	
RESPONSIBILITY FOR MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP	
Responsible for providing formal guidance and direction to others within area of speciality, without having direct management responsibility. Responsible for coordinating administrative resources required to prepare case files, without having direct management or supervisory responsibility.	

RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIENTS/STAKEHOLDERS	
Responsible for overseeing case preparation and representing clients before the HRT0 including on complex cases. Responsible for negotiating or advocating on behalf of a client before the HRT0.	
PHYSICAL EFFORT/DEMANDS	
Work involves minimal physical effort normally associated with typical office routines. There is flexibility to change work activities or take a break to alter body position.	
MENTAL/SENSORY DEMANDS	
Work involves a considerable or constant degree of mental/sensory demands. Typically deadlines and priorities are unpredictable due to dealing with crises situations, work involves multiple role demands, required to travel overnight more than 5 days per month, frequent requirement to deal with upset or agitated clients or situations.	
WORKING CONDITIONS	
Work is regularly performed in a normal office environment where unpleasant conditions or hazards are minimal.	
FRENCH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS	N/A