

**SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE
FAMILY LAW LIAISON COMMITTEE (“FLLC”)
Meeting held September 18, 2025 by ZOOM**

- 1. Attendees:** The Honourable Justice Hebner (Lead), Associate Justice McCabe, Zane Handysides (Assisting as Chair, Member), Jennifer Rooke (Chair, Member), Alex Joyce, Marilyn Kopcok (Courthouse Operations), Amy Johnson (Member), Pam Porodo, Michelle DiCarlo (Member), Sandra Rutgers (Court Operations), Rob Carnevale (Member), Kathy, and Melissa Vollans.

2. Approval of the Agenda.

Some general discussion about members finding a replacement when their term ends. J. Rooke and M. DiCarlo are at the end of their terms.

3. Updates from Justice Hebner.

- a) Introduction of our New Associate Justice – Justice McCabe.
Justice McCabe will start hearing motions on September 25th.
- b) Family Law counsel are encouraged to identify on their confirmations whether it can be heard by an Associate Judge or indicate for example whether or not the Associate Judge has jurisdiction to hear the matter. Counsel can also state in their prayer for relief whether the matter should be heard by a Judge or Associate Judge. There was some discussion about matters that can be heard by an Associate Judge. *See Rule 42 of the Family Law Rules* for reference. For example, an Associate Judge cannot hear:
- “Property Rights issues” - Real Property decisions cannot be made – ie. Partition and Sale
 - Divorces
 - Cannot change prior order of a Judge (on a final basis)
 - Finding of Contempt
 - Any infant / disability settlements

This is not an exhaustive list. It will be up to counsel to confirm whether the associate judge can hear the motion or not.

- c) Legal Aid will be providing duty counsel services to Self-Represented Litigants at Case Conferences starting in September. There will be information in the form of handouts provided by court staff to SRLs so they should be aware of the option to engage with duty counsel. Self

represented litigants will have to pass the financial eligibility test to receive service.

4. Trial Co-Ordination.

- a) “Conference Blitz” – Justice Campbell will do a conference blitz (Case and Settlement) the last week of October (Oct 27th). You can move up conferences currently booked in 2026, if urgent.
- b) Certificate of Readiness for Special Motions – We are going to start using Certificates of Readiness for Family special motions. These can be filed when the Appointment is booked, even if there are remaining steps. But the Certificate should identify outstanding steps.
- c) Eligibility for Duty Counsel has increased – Up to \$45,000 in income. Families of 5 have a slightly higher threshold.
- d) We will invite a representative from Legal Aid Ontario to join our committee – Invite to be extended to regional manager (Rocio Alvarez).

5. Courthouse Operations and Management.

- a) Allow 3 days for signed orders to be uploaded to Case Centre.
- b) Confirmations should only be sent to Trial Coordination (not the Registrar).
- c) Reminder to file SDO Information Forms.
- d) Allow for 30-days before following up on basket motions (for Divorce, etc.).
- e) Requisitions to issue an order are no longer required (Civil issue largely).

6. OCJ/SCJ Committee.

- a) No updates.
- b) Discussed ongoing issue with OCJ time overlap. No solution at present. Counsel should try their best to avoid scheduling conflicts and if a conflict exists, ensure that you have someone attend to stand your matter down and advise where you are. Avoid double-booking conferences since they cannot be stood down in the same way as motions that are on an open list.

7. Essex Law Association.

- a) We now have “Law Student Membership” at the ELA.
- b) There will be an upcoming General Meeting to address adding “Student paralegals” as well.
- c) There are ongoing efforts re: Student Retention issues. There is also a separate standing committee (Judicial Lead, Justice Murphy).

8. Mediation Services

- a) No Updates – Same availability.
- b) MIPs are still remote and will remain that way.
- c) Dates:
 - 1. MIPS - Mon, Wed, Fri and 1 Saturday each Month
 - 2. Mediations are Tues 9-4 and Friday 9-1
 - 3. IRC –Wednesday 9-4
- d) MIPs now available in other languages (French, Spanish soon). Others being added by Jan 1 (Arabic, German, possibly Portuguese)

9. Upcoming Events.

- a) FLAW – Oct 28th at 5:30 at La Cucina (Halloween). No speaker. Social gathering.
- b) Justice Phillips has offered to provide tours of the OCJ historic collection. An email has gone out to determine interest. Additional emails to follow from ELA.
- c) Attorney General for Ontario is attending a Meet and Greet Fundraiser at Oxley Winery in September.

10. Other Business

None.

11. Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on December 11, 2025 at 8:45am by ZOOM.