

# OTLA Strategic Plan 2018-2021



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| <b>VISION</b> | To fearlessly champion, through the pursuit of the highest standards of advocacy, the cause of those who have suffered injury or injustice. |
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| <b>Professional Excellence</b><br>Build strong ethical practices founded on the OTLA Code | <b>Member Services &amp; Engagement</b><br>Deliver valuable services & opportunities | <b>Communication &amp; Collaboration</b><br>Drive key messages in multiple ways along with partners | <b>Solution-Based Lobbying &amp; Advocacy</b><br>Champion Access to Justice and Individual Rights | <b>Leadership</b><br>Influence & inspire action on significant legal issues |
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| CORE PRINCIPLES |                              |                             |                               |                   |                                |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Integrity       | Best Interests Of The Client | Mutual Respect And Civility | Highest Standards Of Advocacy | Access To Justice | Mutual Cooperation And Support |



## **OTLA Vision Statement**

**To fearlessly champion, through the pursuit of the highest standards of advocacy, the cause of those who have suffered injury or injustice.**

The Ontario Trial Lawyers Association (OTLA) is a non-profit, professional organization formed in 1991. We have approximately 1500 Members who are plaintiff lawyers, law clerks, and law students practicing in personal injury law. We are committed to seeking justice for all and advancing the administration of justice for the public good while enhancing the rights of injured persons and ensuring their voices are heard.

OTLA has a strong commitment to inspire excellence in advocacy through the training and ongoing education of our Members, to encourage mutual collaboration and cooperation, and to address the needs of our Members.

We also work in partnership with communities across Ontario to promote safety through community-based projects, such as the OTLA 'Helmets on Kids' program and to support and encourage the work of other safety initiatives and organizations.



## OTLA Core Principles

The OTLA Code sets out Standards of Conduct for Excellence to guide our Members. It is a voluntary code that includes our six Core Principles ranked in priority to assist our Members in their decision-making as they seek ethically and professionally-correct outcomes.

### **1. Integrity**

Members conduct themselves at all times with professional integrity.

### **2. Best Interests of the Client**

Members respect and act in the best interests of their clients and advance those interests in priority to the interests of all others.

### **3. Mutual Respect and Civility**

Members demonstrate respect, fairness and civility in all of their professional interactions and relationships.

### **4. Highest Standards of Advocacy**

Members strive to achieve and maintain the highest standards of professional skill and competence.

### **5. Access to Justice**

Members promote and facilitate access to justice, including access to the court system, for those who have suffered injury or loss as a result of wrongdoing by others.

### **6. Mutual Cooperation and Support**

Members help each other by sharing knowledge, expertise, guidance and time, without expectation of personal gain.



## Professional Excellence

*OTLA will work to build strong, ethical practices founded on the OTLA Code.*

### **Strategic Outcomes:**

- Develop a series of best practices specific to personal injury law, publish and share with our members.
- Establish an OTLA Advisory Committee (past presidents and senior lawyers) where members can confidentially request advice on ethical practices.
- Prepare talking points on various topics for members to regularly share with local media.
- Develop podcasts focussed on ethical issues in personal injury law.
- Continue to educate members on all aspects of the OTLA Code.



## Member Services and Engagement

*OTLA will deliver sustainable and valuable services and opportunities to our members.*

### **Strategic Outcomes:**

- Implement regional strategy to improve interaction and communications amongst members and to/from OTLA.
- Provide specialized training such as marketing, managing a business and media training.
- Elevate learning opportunities on Personal injury law through various learning styles.
- Create new opportunities for discussion groups on areas such as Product Liability, Accident Benefits, Employment Law, Class Actions, Estate Law and Nursing Homes.
- Engage members in all aspects of OTLA's strategic plan including donating time, ideas and financial support.



## Communication and Collaboration

*OTLA will drive key messages in multiple ways along with partners.*

- Continue to utilize social media to educate public on key issues.
- Develop regular communication with MPP's through variety of corporate and individual approaches.
- Continue to work with LSO on OTLA concerns, collaborating where possible with other legal organizations.
- Build clear messaging on key issues to share with Government courts and public.
- Continue to build earned media by ensuring frequent contact on potential stories.
- Develop regular OTLA messaging for members to provide to local news outlets.
- Collaborate with other legal organizations on submissions to strengthen our joint positions and with consumer and safety-related groups to get strong consumer voice heard.



## Solution-Based Lobbying and Advocacy

*OTLA will champion access for justice and individual rights.*

- Build strong relationships as solution-oriented advisors with all MPP's.
- Actively participate in issue related consultations, including development of timely position papers on areas such as auto-insurance reform.
- Continue focus on other areas of legislation including areas such as Med Mal, Class Proceedings, *Consumer Protection Act*, *Liquor License Act*, Joint and Several, *Solicitors Act* and more.
- Undertake regular, ongoing research on key areas to build solution-oriented positions.
- Revitalize court intervention policy and procedures to ensure clear and consistent application of criteria, time for review process, strong submissions to courts and good communication.



## Leadership

*OTLA will influence and inspire action on significant legal issues.*

- Courts- Develop key trial management and court reform positions through input from members throughout the province.
- LSO-Research and engage more actively with various issues, particularly ethical standards.
- Government-Build solution-oriented positions to present to the government addressing major issues of access to justice issues, consumer rights and improving safety across the province.
- Progressive legislation and regulations- Continue to advocate for important changes to key areas of legislation and regulations.