



**FAIRNESS COMMISSIONER**

**COMMISSAIRE À L'ÉQUITÉ**

# THE OFC NEWSLETTER

## JUNE 2023

**EQUITY, INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND ANTI-RACISM**

**NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH**



The month of June is significant from the perspectives of equity, inclusion, diversity and anti-racism.

June is **National Indigenous History Month** and June 21 marks **National Indigenous Peoples Day**. These events represent opportunities to learn about the unique cultures, traditions and experiences of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. It's also a time to honour the stories, achievements and resilience of Indigenous Peoples, who have lived on this land since time immemorial and whose presence continues to impact and enrich the evolution of our country

It is particularly important for everyone involved in fair registration activities to learn more about the histories, achievements and aspirations of this group. In that respect, the Office of the Fairness Commissioner would like to acknowledge the work of the Law Society of Ontario (LSO) in providing insights to its members and staff about the rich cultures of Indigenous cultures in the province.

On June 6, 2023, the LSO hosted an event called "**National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Solidarity Day 2023**". The [recording](#) can be viewed through the LSO

website . This innovative program featured teachings from Elders, as well as welcome remarks from the Treasurer of the law society and of the Chair of its Indigenous Advisory Group. It was followed by cultural performances showcasing the rich culture and traditions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, and featured other keynote speakers.

## HAPPY PRIDE MONTH



In addition, June is **Pride Month**. On June 19, 2023, the Pride flag will be raised at the Ontario Legislature to celebrate this event and mark the festivities in the province. Pride Month is a celebration of love and diversity. It is also an opportunity to honour, recognize and support the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. For some, this means continuing the struggle to pave the way for a more just future for all. For others, it means learning to be a better, stronger supporter. For everyone, it means recognizing that all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression, deserve equality and respect.

Once again, the OFC would like to recognize the LSO, the Ontario Bar Association and its Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Community (SOGIC) for their annual Pride Month program. Their event, “**Queer Perspectives on Professional Challenges and Mental Health**” was held on June 13, 2023. It featured a panel of distinguished 2SLGBTQIA+ practitioners and highlighted the unique complexities and subtle nature of the challenges that queer individuals encounter within the legal profession—from the intricacies of workplace dynamics to managing client relationships. The panel also explored the profound impact of these challenges on mental health, underscoring the need for greater understanding and support.

In the spirit of this work, the OFC would like to offer the following infographic as a tool to help regulators and other stakeholders think about their interactions with members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. It forms part of a toolkit called “[Creating Authentic Spaces](#)” developed by [The 519](#) (see below) for everyone interested in creating positive, inclusive and affirming work environments and service provision. It can be employed by individuals involved in registration processes, human resources personnel, front-line staff and customer service representatives. While this toolkit focuses on inclusive and affirming practices around gender identity and expression, the steps and suggestions identified in the document can help organizations foster positive spaces for everyone.

It is important that organizations take an integrated approach to dealing with discrimination and harassment. Organizations cannot be inclusive if racism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, ableism, or any other forms of discrimination, are present.

The 519 is a City of Toronto agency which employs an innovative model of “Service, Space and Leadership”. It strives to make a real difference in people’s lives, while working to promote inclusion, understanding and respect. The 519 is committed to the health, happiness and full participation of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

## BEING A SUPPORTIVE PEER OR CO-WORKER

**IF IT IS DISCLOSED TO YOU**  
that a co-worker, or someone you know or interact with through your workplace, is trans-identified or transitioning on the job, it is important to continue to treat that person with respect, care, and dignity.

**TREAT THAT PERSON WITH RESPECT, CARE, AND DIGNITY.**

**THAT INCLUDES**

**LISTENING**  
If someone is having a difficult time and requires support, actively listen to their needs. Validate their experiences and show compassion and empathy.



**EDUCATING YOURSELF**  
There are lots of amazing resources available to you online and through different community centres. Take the time to seek them out.



**IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION** about someone’s body or identity, stop and think about why you might be asking that question.



**IF IT IS A QUESTION ABOUT SURGERY OR THEIR BODY, CHANCES ARE YOU DON’T NEED TO ASK IT.**

**PRONOUNS**  
Using the name and pronouns by which they wish to be addressed – e.g., he/him/his, she/her(s), them, they/their(s), ze/hir(s). If you are having difficulty with this change, don’t be afraid to practice in your head or with other co-workers.

#TRANSINCLUSION

INFOGRAPHIC DESIGN BY: LIGHTUPTHEKID

HEAR STOP IT! IT! PHOTOGRAPHIC

519 SPACE FOR CHANGE

[Being a Supportive Peer or Co-worker](#)

## ON THE MOVE



The OFC is currently experiencing some changes at the management level which we would like to share with our readers.

We wish to announce that our director, Hilary Forgie-Resnick, will be departing as she takes on an important new role in the as Director of the Apprenticeship Branch in the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. During her two years plus at the OFC, Hilary led a number of important initiatives that have enhanced the legislative and program landscape for applicants to the professions and skilled trades. Her leadership will be sorely missed. While we are sad to see her go, we wish her well in her new position.

Ming-Young Tam, who recently joined the OFC team as Manager of Operational Planning, will be stepping in as Interim Director. She has more than 15 years of diverse experience in policy and program development in the public and not for profit sectors. We look forward to continuing to rely on Ming-Young's leadership and expertise!

And finally, joining the OFC as the new Manager of Operational Planning is Tanya Chute-Molina. Tanya worked as a Policy and Program Advisor at the OFC from 2012 to 2015. She has more recently held roles as a policy advisor and program manager. We look forward to Tanya's return to the OFC to help develop approaches to further enhance fair registration practices.

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