



The Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers, Ontario (FACL Ontario) joins legal aid lawyers, legal clinics, and lawyers concerned about access to justice in condemning the funding cuts to Legal Aid Ontario announced on June 12, 2019.

FACL Ontario is extremely concerned that the cuts will have a disproportionate impact on racialized minorities and immigrants, many of whom face multiple and intersecting challenges in our society. The broad range of cuts proposed – from reduction in hours for bail hearings to cancellation of family law funding to drastic cuts to legal clinic budgets – touches on virtually every aspect of life for low income Ontarians. These cuts are even more problematic when seen from the perspective of racialized minorities and immigrants, many of whom will now need to navigate a complicated legal system in a foreign language and culture without legal representation. FACL Ontario believes these cuts will leave many of the most vulnerable persons in this province in legal jeopardy.

Adequately funding legal aid is not only a moral and ethical obligation, but also an economic necessity. Reducing the availability of legal representation will clog the courts and result in greater miscarriages of justice. The financial cost of both will be enormous.

FACL Ontario calls on the Ministry of the Attorney General to reverse these funding cuts and commit to sustainable funding for legal aid in this province.

- Emily Lam, Advocacy & Policy Committee Chair