



## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Bar and Legal Associations

FROM: Chief Justice Geoffrey B. Morawetz

DATE: July 29, 2020

RE: CaseLines

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I am extremely pleased to announce that the Ministry of the Attorney General has procured CaseLines for the Ontario Superior Court of Justice and will launch a two-week test phase in Toronto beginning on August 10, 2020 for select civil motions and pre-trial conferences. The pilot will then expand to all Toronto civil, Divisional Court, Commercial and Estate List, and bankruptcy matters commencing on August 24, 2020.

Further communications about the expansion of CaseLines to other court locations and practice areas will be provided in August. We anticipate that CaseLines will be implemented province-wide in all court locations by year end.

### **About CaseLines**

CaseLines is a cloud-based document sharing and storage e-hearing platform for remote and in-person court proceedings. Developed by Netmaster Solutions Ltd., CaseLines is used in courts in the United Kingdom, South Africa, and the U.S.

Some of the many benefits of CaseLines include:

- user-friendly interface
- materials of any size and file format can be uploaded
- users can make private notes and highlights on documents
- terms can be searched in all uploaded documents
- parties can navigate documents and redirect opposing counsel and the court to view specific sections, and
- users can view uploaded materials anytime, with or without VPN access.

Court documents will continue to be filed with the court office in accordance with the applicable rules of procedure and Notices to the Profession. However, parties will now upload court documents to CaseLines for review by the judiciary. While an end-to-end e-filing solution continues to be pursued, CaseLines is a very welcome first step.

## **Pilot information**

CaseLines will be piloted at the 330 University Avenue courthouse in Toronto, beginning with a subset of civil motions and pre-trials. Counsel scheduled to appear in these matters either in person or remotely will be contacted to participate in CaseLines training in advance of their hearing dates. Commencing on August 24, 2020, the CaseLines pilot will be expanded to all Toronto civil, Divisional Court, Commercial and Estate List, and bankruptcy matters, and additional training will be offered.

After the completion of the pilot, the platform will be incrementally introduced within the Ontario Superior Court of Justice across the province.

## **Is this the same as the Ministry's Justice Services Online Portal?**

No. Also beginning in August 2020, new services will be made available on the Ministry's Justice Services Online portal. These new services will replace the current practice during the COVID-19 period of emailing civil and family court documents to generic Court Services Division email addresses (i.e. the Registrar's Office). Following online payment of the prescribed fee, court documents uploaded into the new Civil Submissions Online and Family Submissions Online portal services will be reviewed by court staff to determine whether they can be accepted for filing and/or issuance. Filers will receive an email indicating whether their documents were accepted.

At this time, the Justice Services Online portal cannot be used to request an urgent hearing or send documents for court dates that are 5 business days or fewer in the future. In these situations, parties will continue to email the appropriate SCJ Trial Coordination Office and later upload their documents into CaseLines.

## **Integration with CaseLines?**

At this time, CaseLines is not integrated with the Justice Services Online portal. As a result, parties will be required to upload their court documents into CaseLines in advance of their hearings. We continue to work toward the ultimate goal of having an end-to-end e-filing service that will allow for a single upload of documents into a document sharing platform.

Thank you for continuing to embrace the long-awaited technologies being put into place to support Ontario's justice system.



Geoffrey B. Morawetz,  
Chief Justice.