



LAW PRACTICE PROGRAM



NATIONAL SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS PROJECT

September 21, 2021 Law Practice Program National Self-Represented Litigants Project

STRENGTHENING LAWYER TRAINING

Law Practice Program and the National Self-Represented Litigants Project Involve Self-Reps in Lawyers' Skills Development

ONTARIO: The Law Practice Program (LPP) and the National Self-Represented Litigants Project (NSRLP) are working together to strengthen lawyer training. Involving self-reps directly in lawyer training will improve skills development and enhance the lawyers' understanding of self-represented litigants.

This innovative 4-part program combines the expertise of the NSRLP and the experience of self-represented litigants with the experiential training knowledge provided by the LPP.

"Lawyer licensing Candidates will have the opportunity to listen to, interview, obtain feedback from and practice advising those who have had to represent themselves in the justice system. This will deepen the lawyers' understanding of who self-reps are, the challenges they face, and what they need to achieve justice. We are excited to be working with the LPP in this first of a kind program," says Julie Macfarlane, NSRLP.

"Self-represented litigants are the majority of those coming before our family courts. Directly involving them in the training of future lawyers will provide an excellent opportunity for the lawyers to enhance their skills in a structured setting before they enter practice," says Chris Bentley, Managing Director LPP.

The four sessions will include practice scenarios involving listening, questioning and advising of self-reps by trainee lawyers. These will be supported by an introductory information session and a facilitated wrap-up discussion.

Background:

The Law Practice Program is a lawyer-licensing program run by Ryerson University for the Law Society of Ontario. It consists of 4 months of experiential skills development and training, all online, followed by 4 months of work experience with a licensed lawyer/law firm/in-house/or government. The introduction of self-reps adds another dimension to training that includes the use of actors. The LPP runs from the end of August through April. This is its 8th year.

[The National Self-Represented Litigants Project](#) (NSRLP) is a national non-profit organization dedicated to understanding and addressing the self-represented litigant (SRL) phenomenon in Canada. Operating out of the University of Windsor's Faculty of Law since 2013, the NSRLP has continued to generate energy and motivation towards serious contemplation of system change, reflecting the findings of Dr. Julie Macfarlane's 2011-2013 research study, [The National Self-Represented Litigants Project: Identifying and Meeting the Needs of Self-Represented Litigants](#).

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