

Neighbourhood Legal Services (NLS)

Website: <http://www.nlstoronto.org/>

Location: 163 Queen Street East Unit 101, Toronto, Ontario, M5A 1S1

Phone Number: 416-861-0677

Email Address: nlsst2@lao.on.ca

About NLS

Neighbourhood Legal Services is a non-profit and independent community legal clinic that has been serving the community since 1973. NLS provides free legal services and assistance to low income individuals who live [within our catchment area](#) and who [qualify for our services](#). We have a variety of dedicated staff to assist you. We are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. As a non-profit corporation our Members play an important role in our governance.

How do I know if I am eligible for NLS' legal services?

To be eligible for NLS' legal services, you must:

1. [Live within our catchment area](#)
2. [Financially qualify for our services](#)

What areas of Law are practiced at NLS?

In the pages that follow, the scope of our work in the areas of **Housing Law; Social Assistance/Income Security Law; Immigration, Refugee & Citizenship Law, and Employment Law** is described.

How do I request legal assistance from Neighbourhood Legal Services?

Prospective clients may fill out [the online intake form](#) or call us at 416-861-0677 x 702. A staff member or student will call you back to learn about the nature of your legal issue(s) as well as assess your eligibility for our services. If it looks like NLS may be able to assist with the legal matter, the caller will be invited to meet with a caseworker for an intake interview. If we are unable to assist with the legal issue, we may be able to point you towards alternative resources. **Notarizing and**

Commissioning Documents

Note: We also Notarize and Commission documents for clients who qualify for our services. Such documents can include income verification affidavits for housing or daycare subsidies, immigration documents or identity documents. An appointment is required for these services.

Area of Law: Housing Law

Lawyers who specialize in this area of law: Linette King (Staff Lawyer) and Brendan Jowett (Staff Lawyer)

Scope of Practice:

Advice and representation to non-owners (e.g. tenants, boarders, co-op members, etc.) **who are under threat of eviction** who have been denied rights owed to them by their housing providers (e.g. landlords). *We may be able to help with matters which raise systemic issues relating to housing and which affect large numbers of non-owners, our community at large, or the law as it affects non-owners in Toronto and Ontario.*

Other legal Issues we can help with:

We can provide advice only regarding:

- Maintenance and repair
- Landlord interference and harassment
- Disputes about lawful rent
- Return of deposits
- Issues relating to the administration of housing subsidies (e.g. eligibility for and calculation of rent geared-to- income amounts under the Housing Services Act, 2001)
- Human rights issues that may lead to Human Rights Tribunal (HRTO) applications including discriminatory denial of housing, discrimination, failure to accommodate, and/or discriminatory harassment within housing.
- Non-owner housing actions and proceedings before the Small Claims Court including:
 - defending actions (e.g. for tort and breach of contract) commenced by landlords and other housing providers against their current or former tenants, boarders, or renters
 - commencing actions against housing providers by boarders, etc. who are exempt from the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 and therefore the Landlord and Tenant Board
 - enforcing orders of the court, LTB, and HRTO against housing providers

Legal Issues we cannot help with:

- Social housing waiting list and unit transfer priority and eligibility
- Disputes among neighbours

Additional Resources in this area of law:

- [The Landlord & Tenant Board](#)
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing - Investigations and Enforcement Unit
- [Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario \(ACTO\)](#)
- [Federation of Metro Tenants Associations \(FMTA\)](#)
- [Various online Information Booklets on Landlord & Tenant issues \(CLEO\)](#)
- Also see: <http://www.nlstoronto.org/housing---steps-to-justice.html>



Area of Law: Social Assistance and Income Maintenance Law

Lawyers/Paralegals who specialize in this area of law: Nazareth Maynes (Staff Lawyer), Daniel Bastien(Paralegal)

Scope of Practice:

Assisting clients with legal matters arising out of social assistance programs, including Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program, including:

- Summary legal advice on social assistance related matters including OW/ODSP benefits, eligibility, overpayments, and interaction with CERB/CESB;
- Internal reviews of OW and ODSP decisions;
- Appeals of OW and ODSP decisions: Hearing preparation and in some cases representation at the Social Benefits Tribunal;
- ODSP application review prior to submission;
- Assistance with ODSP medical reviews.

Legal Issues we cannot help with:

- Canada Pension Plan – Disability

Additional Resources about this area of law:

- [Social Benefits Tribunal](#)
- [Service Canada](#)
- [Income Security & Advocacy Centre \(ISAC\)](#)
- [ODSP Action Coalition](#)
- [Various online Information Booklets on Social Assistance \(CLEO\)](#)
- Do you have a question about Income Assistance (CPP/CTB/ODSP/OW)? [Visit the Steps to Justice portal HERE for answers.](#)



Area of Law: Employment Law

Lawyers who specialize in this area of law: Andrew Langille (Toronto East Employment Legal Services)

Scope of Practice:

Our TEEILS lawyer offers brief advice and referral services in all areas of employment, labour, and human rights law related to the workplace, including:

- sexual harassment and sexual assaults in the workplace;
- disability insurance;
- workers' compensation;
- Employment Insurance;
- tax law relating to misclassification;
- pensionability and insurability and the status of workers;
- criminal and quasi-criminal matters directly related to employment.

This includes representation in wrongful and constructive dismissal, employment standards (both federally and provincially regulated employees), human rights, and Employment Insurance initial claims and appeals.

Legal issues we cannot help with:

Typically we do not offer representation in workers' compensation matters, workplace disputes where an employee is unionized (except for human rights matters), and high value litigation.

Other Resources in this area of law:

- [Employment Insurance \(Service Canada\)](#)
- [Employment Standards \(Ministry of Labour\)](#)
- [Industrial Accidents Victims' Group of Ontario](#)
- [Injured Workers' Consultants](#)
- [Various online Information Booklets on Employment & Work \(CLEO\)](#)
- [Various online Information Booklets on Workers' Compensation \(CLEO\)](#)
- Do you have a question about employment and work? [Visit the Steps to Justice portal HERE for answers.](#)

Area of Law: Immigration, Refugee & Citizenship Law

Lawyers who specialize in this area of law: Asiya Hirji (Staff Lawyer)

Scope of Practice:

NLS' immigration practice includes:

- family reunification, either through sponsorships (in limited cases) or applications for permanent residence following approved refugee claims;
- temporary resident permits
- applications for discretionary grants of permanent residence (humanitarian & compassionate applications)
- applications for citizenship where waivers of the language and knowledge requirements are needed.

Our clinic also focusses on enforcement/admissibility work wherein we represent clients at all levels of the Immigration and Refugee Board. NLS also regularly represents clients before the Federal Court, either in judicial reviews or refused decisions or motions for stays of removal.

Legal Issues we cannot help with:

We do not assist clients with Canadian passport issues, straightforward form filling, economic immigration applications or visitor visa applications. We also normally cannot assist with refugee claims/ appeals as these are covered by the Refugee Law Office or Legal Aid Ontario's certificate program through private law offices.

Other Resources in this area of law:

- The Canadian Council for Refugees
- University of Ottawa's Refugee Interview Support Project (RISP)
- East Downtown Local Immigration Partnership (EDLIP)
- Various online Information Booklets on Immigration & Refugee Law (CLEO)
- Do you have a question about immigration? Access the Steps to Justice portal [HERE](#) for answers.

