

Statement of Principles - Templates

The following are templates that can be used, in whole or in part, to provide licensees with a guide to what might be included in a personal statement of principles. In whatever approach you take in developing your individual statement of principles, ensure that it reflects the obligations in the recommendation.

The templates below are organized from simple to more complex and reflect a range of types of ideas that you might adopt in your individual statement of principles.

Note: the templates have been updated to include principles of reconciliation. Additional resources on reconciliation have been added to the [Resource page](#).

Template 1

As a licensee of the Law Society of Upper Canada, I stand by the following principles:

- A recognition that the Law Society is committed to Inclusive legal workplaces in Ontario, a reduction of barriers created by racism, unconscious bias and discrimination and better representation of Indigenous and racialized licensees in the legal professions in all legal workplaces and at all levels of seniority;
- My special responsibility as a member of the legal profession to protect the dignity of all individuals, and to respect human rights laws in force in Ontario;
- A commitment to advance reconciliation, acknowledging that we are collectively responsible to support improved relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Ontario and Canada; and,
- An acknowledgement of my obligation to promote equality, diversity and inclusion generally and in my behaviour towards colleagues, employees, clients and the public.

Template 2

1. Purpose

Recommendation 3(1):

3-1. Require every licensee to adopt and to abide by a statement of principles acknowledging their obligation to promote equality, diversity and inclusion generally, and in their behaviour towards colleagues, employees, clients and the public.

2. Preamble:

Human rights legislation is afforded quasi-Constitutional status by the Supreme Court of Canada. It is of such import that under the Law Society *Rules of Professional Conduct* (for

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lawyers) and the *Paralegal Rules of Conduct*, licensees of the Law Society of Upper Canada have a special duty to respect human rights in their dealings with others.¹

I acknowledge that valuing equality and enhancing diversity and inclusion in my practice, at my legal workplace, and in my public life is central to the maintenance of public trust and confidence in the legal profession.

3. Principles:

To help achieve the objectives of valuing equality and enhancing diversity and inclusion, I have adopted this Statement of Principles.

a) No Discrimination or Harassment

I am aware that under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* every person has the right to be free from discrimination and harassment in employment.

I acknowledge my obligation not to discriminate against, nor harass, any person on the basis of the grounds under the *Human Rights Code* with respect to my employment of others, or in professional dealings with other licensees.

I acknowledge my obligation not to tolerate, condone, or ignore any form of *Human Rights Code*-based harassment or discrimination in my legal workplace, or in professional dealings with other licensees or any other person.

I acknowledge that the right to be free from discrimination and harassment applies to everyone at my legal workplace: clients, partners, associates, students, paralegals, legal assistants or other employees.

b) Abide by Workplace Policies

I agree to review, understand and abide by all policies in my legal workplace that prohibit harassment and discrimination, and that encourage diversity and inclusion on the basis of the grounds set out in *Human Rights Code* or other grounds.

I will report any observations or allegations of harassment or discrimination.

If asked, I will cooperate in any investigation and complaints procedure at my legal workplace.

I will not reprise against, or threaten to reprise against anyone for making a formal complaint of harassment or discrimination, or for cooperating in any investigation.

c) Promote Diversity and Inclusion

To promote diversity and inclusion I agree to:

- review, understand and abide by any and all of my legal workplace's policies that encourage diversity and inclusion on *Human Rights Code* or other grounds;

¹ Section 2.03, *Paralegal Rules of Conduct*; ss. 6.3 and 6.3.1, *Rules of Professional Conduct*.

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- encourage a culture of inclusion and diversity at my legal workplace, in order to help attract and retain the best talent and better serve my clients' needs;
- support strategies in my legal workplace (and beyond it, where appropriate) that prioritize diversity and inclusion on *Human Rights Code* and other grounds in hiring, promotion and retention decisions;
- cooperate and engage in any efforts of the Law Society, my legal workplace and others to advance equality, diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and in the broader community;

d) Reconciliation

As a licensee of the Law Society of Upper Canada, I stand by the following:

- A commitment to advance reconciliation;
- An acknowledgement of the importance of understanding that Canada is home to three distinct legal orders: Common, Civil and Indigenous; and
- A recognition of the diversity of the Ontario public, which includes communities of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

e) Serve Clients/ the Public

I am aware that under the *Human Rights Code*, every person has the right to be free from discrimination and harassment with respect to the provision of services, including legal services.

I will provide legal services in a manner that is courteous and equitable, without discrimination or harassment.

I will ensure that no client or prospective client is denied services or receives inferior service on the basis of the grounds set out in the *Human Rights Code*.

I will respect both the letter and spirit of human rights legislation in professional dealings with other licensees or any other person.