



Sent via Email - [pkryworuk@lernalers.ca](mailto:pkryworuk@lernalers.ca)

June 12, 2023

Peter Kryworuk, President  
The Advocates Society

Dear Peter Kryworuk,

The Ontario Superior Court of Justice (SCJ) recognizes that the open court principle requires that court proceedings presumptively be open and accessible to the public and to the media. This principle has been described as a "hallmark of a democratic society". However, the open court principle is not absolute and exceptions are sometimes necessary to protect the privacy and safety of hearing participants or the confidentiality of sensitive information. These exceptions may be all the more necessary when access to virtual hearings means there is no ability to ensure hearings are not live-streamed, a witness's evidence is not recorded or a screen shot of a witness is not taken.

Currently, the SCJ provides the public access to court proceedings upon request - any member of the public who wishes to attend a virtual hearing must send a request to the local courthouse staff. Zoom links are not posted and made available on the SCJ's public website.

We have a different process that pro-actively provides registered members of the media with links to the Court's virtual proceedings.

The Office of the Chief Justice is seeking your input on the following question:

Should the **public** be provided unlimited access to attend any court matter that is heard virtually by publishing Zoom link information on the SCJ's website or should Zoom links continue to be made available only upon request by email to the Court? Or how should the public be provided access to attend a virtual hearing?

If you are interested in providing input on this question we would be pleased to receive your organization's input in writing from your executive (i.e. not individual responses from your membership) by September 30, 2023 to my attention at [rosemarie.juginovic@ontario.ca](mailto:rosemarie.juginovic@ontario.ca).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rosemarie Juginovic". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Rosemarie Juginovic,  
Executive Legal Officer  
Office of the Chief Justice  
Ontario Superior Court of Justice