

*Established in 1889, the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) is the self-regulating body for the province's architecture profession. It governs the practice of architecture and administers the Architects Act in order to serve and protect the public interest.*

Honourable Doug Downey, Attorney General  
Ministry of the Attorney General  
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June 6, 2023

Minister Downey,

As you are aware, the Association of Architectural Technologists of Ontario (AATO) advanced a court application to challenge the Ontario Association of Architects' (OAA) authority to issue licences via policy rather than statute. A hearing date had been set for December 2023.

The OAA responded substantially to this challenge, while our governing Council also agreed to pursue good-faith negotiations with AATO in attempt to find an equitable and fair resolution in the public interest. Unfortunately, these negotiations were unsuccessful.

Notwithstanding the considerable effort to respond to this challenge, and given its technical nature—that is, a matter of statutory interpretation—an outcome from a scheduled hearing that would allow the OAA to continue to issue licences via policy was unlikely. Ultimately, the OAA was unable to successfully respond to the challenge about how the licences were issued.

The Ontario Superior Court of Justice issued an Order on this matter that took effect on May 10, 2023.

The order states that:

1. The OAA has no lawful authority to issue Certificates of Practice (CoPs) or licences based on the Licensed Technologist OAA (Lic.Tech.OAA) policy (or any similar policy).
2. The Lic.Tech.OAA CoPs and licences previously issued are void and of no force and effect.
3. The OAA is prohibited from issuing Lic.Tech.OAA CoPs or licences based on the policy or any similar policy going forward.

We are disappointed with this result, and firmly believe in the value of the OAA Technology Program, and the skills and abilities of all individuals who were Licensed Technologists OAA. For more than two decades, the OAA has been issuing licences to technologists in the architectural discipline under the OAA Technology Program.

Our efforts to establish this program were in direct response to successive requests by Attorneys General to recognize and license a para-profession.

Of the 150 Lic.Tech.OAAs that have had their licences voided, 44 were operating architectural design firms, offering services to the public. **This means there are also many members of the public in Ontario that have also been affected, given their projects have been dramatically impacted by this outcome.**

The contribution of these professionals in carrying out the work within Ontario's architectural practices is significant. Most of those 44 that had been operating a practice were providing critical design services, specifically related to housing. **It is important, and certainly in the public interest, that these individuals be permitted to resume services as quickly as possible given the housing crisis in this province.**

On behalf of the OAA, I appreciate the cooperation of your staff, as well as Ministry staff, in exploring the necessary legislative amendment over the past few weeks. I am requesting a meeting to further discuss this urgent situation and to review the necessary regulatory changes to the *Architects Act* that will facilitate the issuance of Limited Licences by the OAA to individuals in the architectural discipline.

The OAA enjoys a longstanding and collaborative relationship with government. We look forward to working with you to address the matter at hand and to continue protecting the public interest.

Sincerely,



Settimo Vilardi, Architect  
M.Arch., OAA, MRAIC, LEED AP® BD+C  
President