



**Bencher**  
Election

**Élection**  
du Conseil  
2019

## Stephen H. Parker

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Prior to defending drivers in 1986, I served as a police officer for 15 years. I have been practising in the POA courts for over 32 years. I was appointed in 2006 to the original Paralegal Standing Committee which worked to establish the paralegal competencies, rules of conduct and regulations. I was licensed in March of 2008. I later served on the working group with the Law Society to revise the competencies for the new paralegal licencing exam. I was the first President of the Ontario Paralegal Association between 2014 and 2018, where I was instrumental in the cancelling of the Attorney General's proposed AMPS for moving violations and I also participated in the Family Legal Services Review.

I have been involved with the Law Society and the development of paralegal regulation in various capacities for the past 18 years. Having worked with the Law Society, I know how they work. I believe I know how they think. That helped in my early committee work. This will be a huge advantage going forward.

### Education

I have always felt that the current, Basic Entry Level Competencies fall far short of what should be required. I want to see the curriculum for paralegal studies include much more time spent on subjects such as the rules of evidence, trial/tribunal procedure and the art of examination and cross-examination. I don't consider the compressed courses currently offered by some colleges provide the competences required.

### Licence Exemptions

Since my initial involvement, in 2002, with the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Law Society and continuing with my time on the original Paralegal Standing Committee, I have argued for the elimination of licence exemptions. There are still a few remaining; not the least of which is the exemption for prosecutors. With the pending downloading to municipalities of Provincial Offences Act Part III prosecutions, this provides the ideal opportunity to eliminate this exemption and to require all non-lawyer prosecutors to be licensed as paralegals.

### Bill C-75

Bill C-75 has created a huge access to justice issue with the maximum penalty increase of summary convictions going from 6 months to 2 years less a day. I hope to be able to convince the Law Society that the licensing & regulation of paralegals in Ontario is the type of programme envisaged under s. 802.1 of the Criminal Code. And it would be in the public interest for the Law Society to lobby the Attorney General to obtain approval.

### Family Law

I will continue to pursue the provision in the Bonkalo Report that paralegals should be able to represent a party before the Ontario court of Justice on family issues, pursuant to the permitted scope of practice.