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April 11, 2025

Key Takeaways: Co-Chairs of Civil Rules Review Working Group Present Proposed Civil Rules Reform

On April 10, 2025, Justice Boswell and Allison Speigel, the Co-Chairs of the Working Group responsible for preparing the Civil Rules Review, presented the Phase 2 Consultation Paper to The Advocates' Society via Zoom. It was their first presentation to the bar at large following the release of the Consultation Paper on April 1, 2025. They advised that over 1,200 members of the Ontario bar had joined the Zoom presentation.

The Co-Chairs spent most of the presentation reviewing their mandate from the Chief Justice of Ontario and the Attorney General and outlining the key changes from the current *Rules of Civil Procedure*. For Lenczner Slaght's summary of the key changes, [click here](#).

In my view, there were five key takeaways from the presentation beyond what is written in the Consultation Paper:

1. The Chief Justice's goal remains to implement changes in January 2026, despite a two-month delay earlier this year resulting from the provincial election.
2. The Chief Justice and the Attorney General reviewed and approved the release of the Consultation Paper before it was published. By implication, the bar should be taking the contents of the Consultation Paper seriously.
3. The Working Group is aware that their proposed changes will put pressure on defendants and their insurers to respond to all litigation promptly. The changes are motivated in part by a desire to have prompter responses on the defence side, especially when insurers are involved.
4. Document disclosure and consequences for failure to disclose remain on the Working Group's list of issues to discuss and is in fact an agenda item for a subsequent Working Group meeting. This suggests document disclosure is an area where we can potentially expect to see further changes from the content of the Consultation

Paper before it is submitted to the Attorney General and Chief Justice for final decision-making on which proposal(s) to approve.

5. How to transition to the new *Rules* also remains to be decided, and the Working Group continues to consider what and how long the transition period will be. The greatest consideration in that respect appears to be judicial resources.

It remains to be seen whether, and if so, how much, the recommendations set out in the Consultation Paper change before they are delivered to the Chief Justice and the Attorney General later this year. The Working Group's aim is to deliver their final policy proposals within two months after the June 15, 2025 deadline for comments from the bar.