

HALCO

HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario

news

HALCO provides free legal services for people living with HIV in Ontario

Dignity

Equity

Justice

Autumn 2017



- HALCO Annual General Meeting, Annual Report and Strategic Plan - page 2
- End Unjust HIV Criminalization – Community Consensus Statement - page 3
- Positive Changes to Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) - page 5
- OHIP+ Prescription Drug Benefits for Children and Youth - page 7
- Increases to Ontario’s Minimum Wage - page 8
- “Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs” Changes Coming - page 8
- More Protection for Ontario Tenants - page 9
- Home Electricity Can No Longer Be Cut Off in Winter - page 9
- Immigration and Citizenship Law Updates - page 10
- Ontario AIDS Network Honour Roll 2017 includes HALCO’s Ryan Peck - page 13
- Legal Information and Legal Advice - page 14
- Getting Help from HALCO – Intake Process for New Inquiries - page 15
- HALCO Staff Update - page 16
- HALCO People: staff, board and funders - page 17
- HALCO Website and Public Legal Education Workshops - page 18
- Membership Information and Statement of Principles - page 19
- Getting Legal Help and HALCO Information - last page**

HALCO 2017 Annual General Meeting, Annual Report 2016-2017 and Strategic Plan 2017-2022

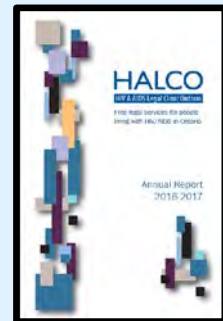
On Tuesday October 17, 2017, we were pleased to host our 2017 Annual General Meeting.

Guest speaker **Chad Clarke** spoke movingly about his personal experience with the criminalization of HIV non-disclosure.

New board members **Robert Maich** and **Robert Newman** were elected. Board members **Jessica Demeria**, **Rodney Kort** and **Neesha Rao** were re-elected. Departing board members **Andrew Mantella** and **Angela Smith**, and continuing board members **Noah Aiken-Klar**, **Marcus McCann**, **Barbara Ncho** and **Judith Odhiambo** were all acknowledged for their innumerable contributions to HALCO. Our current board list is on page 17.

Ryan Peck presented our **Annual Report 2016-2017** and gave a summary of our activities. He acknowledged and thanked HALCO board, staff, and funders.

Rodney Kort presented an overview of our new **Strategic Plan 2017-2022**.



Our Annual Report and Strategic Plan are available on our website:
www.halco.org/2017/news/halco-annual-report-and-strategic-plan

Thank you to everyone who attended and helped to make our meeting a success.

For more information, please call us at 416-340-7790 or toll-free 1-888-705-8889, or send an email to talklaw@halco.org

End Unjust HIV Criminalization Community Consensus Statement

HALCO is a founding member of the Canadian Coalition to Reform HIV Criminalization (CCRHC) / la Coalition canadienne pour réformer la criminalisation du VIH (CCRCV).

CCRHC is a national coalition of people living with HIV, community organizations, lawyers, researchers and others, formed in October 2016 to progressively reform discriminatory and unjust criminal and public health laws and practices that criminalize and regulate people living with HIV in relation to HIV exposure, transmission and non-disclosure in Canada.



In developing the **Community Consensus Statement**, CCRHC undertook, over three months, a bilingual country-wide consultation, online and through in-person workshops, with people living with HIV, community organizations and service providers working in the HIV response, and scientific and legal experts. The purpose of the consultation was to identify appropriate measures that should be taken by federal, provincial and territorial governments to put an end to unwarranted, harmful criminal prosecutions of people living with HIV.



On November 27, 2017, the CCRHC **Community Consensus Statement** was released. The statement calls on the federal, provincial and territorial governments to take specific actions to end unjust criminal prosecutions against people living with HIV. It has been signed by more than 150 HIV and human rights organizations across Canada.

You can read the statement on the CCRHC website:

- English: www.hivcriminalization.ca/community-consensus-statement
- French: www.criminalisationvih.ca/la-declaration-de-consensus-communautaire

(End Unjust HIV Criminalization - continues on page 4)

Why is the Community Consensus Statement needed?

Right now, people living with HIV in Canada are singled out for criminal prosecutions, convictions and imprisonment for allegedly not disclosing their HIV status to sexual partners—even when there is little or no possibility of transmission. As the federal Justice Minister **Jody Wilson-Raybould** noted last year on World AIDS Day, the criminal justice system has not caught up to the existing science, and the “over-criminalization of HIV non-disclosure” contributes to stigma and undermines public health (www.halco.org/2016/news/federal-government-recognizes-over-criminalization-of-people-with-hiv). Change is long overdue.

What does the Community Consensus Statement call for?

The statement declares that, in accordance with international guidance, criminal prosecutions should be limited to cases of actual, intentional transmission of HIV. To this end, the endorsers of the statement across the country call for the following:

- federal and provincial Attorneys-General should **develop sound prosecutorial guidelines** to preclude unjust HIV prosecutions;
- the federal government should **reform the *Criminal Code*** to limit the unjust use of the criminal law against people living with HIV, including removing HIV non-disclosure from the reach of sexual assault laws; and
- federal, provincial and territorial governments should **support resources and training** to address misinformation, fear and stigma related to HIV, for all actors in the criminal justice system, including police, Crown prosecutors and judges.

How can you help?

You can add your voice by sharing the **Community Consensus Statement** with Minister **Wilson-Raybould** and all of the provincial and territorial ministers of justice by email or tweet.

The CCRHC website includes actions you can take, including email information and pre-written tweets:

- English: www.hivcriminalization.ca/take-action
- French: www.criminalisationvih.ca/passez-a-laction

If you are living with HIV in Ontario and have questions about the criminalization of HIV non-disclosure or other legal concerns, please contact us for free legal advice (see page 15).

Positive Changes to Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

The Ontario government has made some very positive changes to OW and ODSP. The Income Security Advocacy Centre (ISAC) prepared a summary and documents that are available on the ISAC website: <http://incomesecurity.org/public-education/positive-changes-to-ow-and-odsp-changements-positifs-apportes-a-ot-et-au-posph/> (English and French).

ODSP/OW Asset and Gift Limit Increases

The ODSP and OW asset limits have increased:

New ODSP asset limits:

- \$40,000 for single individuals (was \$5,000)
- \$50,000 for couples (was \$7,500)

New OW asset limits:

- \$10,000 for single individuals (was \$2,500)
- \$15,000 for couples (was \$5,000)

For each other dependent, the asset limit is increased by \$500.

As a result of the significant asset limit increases, more people will be eligible for OW and ODSP, and, more people will retain eligibility if they acquire assets while in receipt of OW or ODSP.

The income exemption for cash gifts for both ODSP and OW increased to \$10,000 (was \$6,000) so each member of the benefit can receive up to \$10,000 in gifts in any 12 month period without their benefits being affected. Some gifts and voluntary payments are exempt. Gifts for the following purposes are also exempt now:

- Last month's rent
- Purchase of principle residence
- Certain motor vehicle purchases

In addition, compensation awards for pain and suffering do not affect ODSP entitlement, and such awards up to \$50,000 are exempt for OW recipients.

Assets, gifts and compensation awards must all be reported and some require approval from OW/ODSP.

(Positive Changes - continues on page 6)

Other OW and ODSP Changes

The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Disabled Contributor's Child benefit for the child of someone receiving CPP Disability benefits is now fully exempt. Child support and the CPP Surviving Child (orphan) benefit for the child of a deceased contributor have been fully exempt since late January 2017.

The monthly maximum income deduction for disability-related employment expenses increased to \$1,000 (was \$300).

OW and ODSP Benefit Rate Increases

In addition to the above positive changes, there was a recent 2% increase to the ODSP and OW basic allowance and shelter maximum benefits as well as to some other benefits, including the board and lodging rates, the guide dog benefit, Personal Needs Allowance, and temporary care assistance. The Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD) maximum rate increased from \$480 to \$490 per month.



The Remote Communities Allowance increased by \$50 (to \$267) for the first person in the benefit unit, and by \$25 for each additional person. This benefit is for people living north of the 50th parallel in communities without year-round road access.

The increases started with the cheques that recipients received at the end of September 2017. Some benefits were not increased (for example: special diet allowances).

For more details about the rate increases, please visit the ISAC website: <http://incomesecurity.org/public-education/ow-and-odsp-rates-and-the-ocb-2017/> (English and French).

If you disagree with any ODSP/OW decision, you have the right to request an Internal Review within 30 days. An extension of time to request an IR is possible but may not be granted. You should get legal advice as soon as you find out about a decision.

HALCO provides free legal services for people with HIV in Ontario. If you are living with HIV in Ontario and have questions about this or other legal issues, please contact us (please see page 15).

OHIP+ Prescription Drug Benefits for Children and Youth (age 24 and under)

As of January 1, 2018, all children and youth age 24 and under who live in Ontario and have Ontario Health Insurance Plan coverage will have free prescription drug coverage through the new OHIP+.

OHIP+ coverage is automatic for all babies, children and youth who have OHIP coverage so there is no need to register. With the child's OHIP health card or health care number, pharmacies will fill prescriptions without any charges, dispensing fees, co-payments or deductibles.



OHIP+ and the Trillium Drug Program

Even if your household receives prescription drug coverage under the Trillium Drug Program, your child age 24 or under will be covered through OHIP+. Since you will not be paying for your child's medications, the cost of their medications will not count toward your Trillium deductible.

OHIP+ and other drug insurance plans

OHIP+ will be the first payer for prescriptions for all children and youth 24 years and under who have OHIP coverage.

Students going to university/college in another province

If you are going to university or college in another province, your prescriptions may still be covered by OHIP+ if you:

- continue to have OHIP coverage
- have a valid prescription, and
- get your medications from a pharmacy in Ontario.

Information about getting a "travel supply" of your medication before leaving Ontario is on the Ontario government website:

http://health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/drugs/programs/odb/opdp_travel_supply.aspx

You can find more information about OHIP+ on the Ontario government website:

www.ontario.ca/page/learn-about-ohip-plus

Increases to Ontario's Minimum Wage Started October 1, 2017

Increases to Ontario's minimum wage took effect on October 1, 2017:



- General minimum wage increased to \$11.60 per hour (from \$11.40).
- Student increased to \$10.90 per hour (from \$10.70).
- Liquor Server increased to \$10.10 per hour (from \$9.90).
- Homeworker increased to \$12.80 per hour (from \$12.55).

Further increases will begin in 2018 (see below).

“Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs” Changes Coming

The *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act* was passed in November 2017 and makes significant updates to Ontario's labour/employment laws. The changes will take place in the coming years and include:

- raising general minimum wage to \$14 per hour on January 1, 2018, and to \$15 on January 1, 2019, followed by annual increases at the rate of inflation.
- three weeks of paid vacation after five years with the same employer.
- equal pay for part-time, temporary, casual and seasonal employees doing the same job as full-time employees.
- equal pay for temporary help agency employees doing the same job as employees at the agencies' client companies.
- fairer scheduling including requirement that employees be paid for three hours of work if their shift is cancelled within 48 hours of its scheduled start time.
- personal emergency leave expanded to 10 days per calendar year for all employees, with at least two paid days per year for employees who have been employed for at least a week.
- up to 15 weeks leave when a worker or their child has experienced or is threatened with domestic or sexual violence, including paid leave for the first five days.
- increased enforcement of *Employment Standards Act* and hiring of more enforcement staff.

The *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act* includes many other important changes. You can find more information on the Government of Ontario website:

<https://news.ontario.ca/mol/en/2017/11/modernizing-ontarios-labour-laws-to-create-fairness-and-opportunity-the-fair-workplaces-better-jobs.html>

More Protection for Ontario Tenants

In late May 30, 2017, important changes were made to the law that applies to most residential landlords and tenants in Ontario.

Rent Rules for Private-Market Rental Units

Tenants living in private-market rental units that were first rented after November 1991 now have the same rent rules as other units for annual rent increase guidelines, as well as for additional increases and decreases. Also, no extra rent increases will be allowed for increases in the cost of heat, electricity or water in private market rental units.

Lease Form Will Be Regulated in 2018

New leases will be on a government-regulated form to prevent landlords from using leases that mislead tenants or take away rights.

New Rules for Eviction for “Landlord’s Own Use”

As of September 1, 2017, only individual landlords, not corporations, can end a tenancy so that they or a family member can move into a rental unit (‘landlord’s own use’). The landlord must either pay the tenant one month’s rent or offer the tenant another acceptable rental unit. A landlord who acts in bad faith can face significant fines.

Home Electricity Can No Longer Be Cut-Off in Winter

The Ontario Electricity Board (OEB) issued a Decision and Order on November 2, 2017:

- banning licensed electricity distributors and energy retailers from disconnecting homes for non-payment during the winter (November 15 to April 30 every year).
- requiring that homes that are currently disconnected due to non-payment must be reconnected without charge. In the future, any homes disconnected for non-payment will have to be reconnected by November 15.
- banning the use of load control devices on homes during the winter.

You can find more information on the OEB website:

www.oeb.ca/newsroom/2017/ban-disconnection-homes-winter-customers-electricity-distributors-frequently-asked

Immigration and Citizenship Law Updates

Immigration Law Update: “Dependent Child” Age Increased

(This update will be available in French on our website soon.)

The government has made changes to Canada’s immigration law that will benefit people who want to bring their children to Canada.

In most cases, the law allows a person to include “dependent children” in their application for permanent residence. The law also allows Canadian citizens and permanent residents to sponsor their dependent children to come to Canada.

The definition of “dependent child” for Canada’s immigration laws changed on October 24, 2017, and is now a child under 22 years of age.

As we reported previously, between August 1, 2014 and October 23, 2017, the maximum age for a dependent child was under 19 years. The government has now reinstated the maximum age for a dependent child to under 22 years.

Children who are 22 years of age or older and who are dependent on the parent because of a disability are still considered dependent children. Other children 22 years of age or older are not considered dependent, even if they are full-time students.

This change to the age of dependent children only applies to permanent resident applications made on or after October 24, 2017. It does not apply to any application in process at the time of the change; however, the government has introduced a special public policy that will allow many people to add a young adult child to an application that was in process on October 24, 2017, or to an application that was finalized between May 3, 2017 and October 23, 2017.

The special public policy applies to people who:

- have or had an application for permanent residence in process at any time between May 3, 2017 and October 23, 2017 and;
- have a child who is unmarried/not a common-law partner and was:
 - 19, 20, or 21 years old on May 3, 2017 (if the application was submitted before that date), or
 - 19, 20, or 21 years old when the permanent residence application was received (if the application was submitted between May 3, 2017 and October 23, 2017).

(“Dependent Child” Age Increased - continues on page11)

To add a child under the special public policy, people must notify Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) by January 31, 2018 by using the IRCC form found online at:

<https://secure.cic.gc.ca/enquiries-renseignements/canada-case-cas-eng.aspx>

The child added under the special public policy can be:

- processed as part of the parent’s application, if it is not yet finalized, or
- sponsored in the Family Class within one year of the parent being granted permanent residence.

Families whose child turned 22 before May 3, 2017 will not benefit from this special public policy. People with applications in process who cannot use the special public policy may consider withdrawing the application and re-applying, or requesting the addition of the dependent child to the application on humanitarian grounds.

It can be complicated to determine who meets the definition of dependent child or whether a child might be eligible to be added to an application under the special public policy. We encourage people living with HIV in Ontario to contact HALCO for free legal advice (see page 15).

(Information above was adapted from the Canadian Counsel for Refugees website: <http://ccrweb.ca/sites/ccrweb.ca/files/age-dependants-practical-2017.pdf>)

Citizenship Law Update

On June 19, 2017, the Federal government passed Bill C-6, which made several changes to make it easier for permanent residents to become Canadian citizens.

Some of the changes came into effect on June 19, 2017, but many of the most important changes came into effect on October 11, 2017.

Some of the most important changes are:

- **Change to the length of residence in Canada required:** As of October 11, 2017, applicants now have to be physically present in Canada for three years (1,095 days) out of the last five years before applying for citizenship. Under the previous law, permanent residents had to be physically present in Canada for four years (1,460 days) within the last six years before applying for citizenship.

(Citizenship Law Update - continues on page 12)

(Citizenship Law Update - continued from page 11)

- **Reinstatement of the credit for time physically present in Canada before permanent residence:** As of October 11, 2017, each day a person has spent in Canada as a temporary resident or protected person (Convention refugee) can count as a half-day toward meeting the physical presence requirement for citizenship, to a maximum of 365 days. This change means that people who have spent time in Canada as a temporary resident or protected person could be eligible to apply for citizenship as early as 2 years after they become permanent residents. Under the previous law, people could not count the time they spent in Canada before becoming a permanent resident towards the physical presence requirement.
- **Change to who is required to meet the language and knowledge requirements for citizenship:** As of October 11, only applicants between 18 and 54 years must meet the language and knowledge requirements, which include writing the citizenship test. Under the previous law, applicants between 14 and 64 had to meet the language and knowledge requirements for citizenship.

Some Other Citizenship Law Changes

Applicants for citizenship no longer have to state an intention to reside in Canada after they become citizens. Applicants are still required to file a tax return for three tax years within the five years immediately before applying for citizenship (if required by the Income Tax Act). Permanent residents who are in jail, on probation, or serving a conditional sentence are not allowed to take the citizenship oath or count that time towards the physical presence requirement. Permanent residents are also not allowed to take the citizenship oath while they are facing criminal charges. Minor children (under age 18 years) can qualify for citizenship without having a Canadian parent.

Refugees: Important Information about Applying for Canadian Citizenship

It is important to get legal advice before you apply for Canadian citizenship if you were accepted as a refugee in Canada and:

- you have been back to the country that was the basis of your refugee claim or you have applied for a passport from that country,
- you were accepted as a refugee by another country, or
- you misrepresented or did not disclose significant facts that were relevant to your refugee claim in Canada.

If you were accepted as a refugee in Canada, you should not travel to your country or apply for a passport from your country until you get legal advice.

HALCO provides free legal advice for people living with HIV in Ontario about Canada's immigration, refugee and citizenship laws (please see page 15).

Ontario AIDS Network Honour Roll 2017 Includes HALCO's Ryan Peck

The Ontario AIDS Network (OAN) held its annual Honour Roll Celebration on Wednesday November 15, 2017.

Ryan Peck, HALCO executive director, and **Richard Elliott**, executive director of the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, each received the **Social Justice in HIV/AIDS Award**.

Christian Hui and **Adrian Betts** each received the **Person with HIV/AIDS Leadership Award**.

Maureen Owino and **Anthony Mohamed** each received the **Caring Hands Award**.

In accepting his award, Ryan highlighted the work of HALCO and its partners, and stressed the vital importance of engaging in both front-line and systemic activities. Ryan dedicated the award to all the people with HIV who day after day trust HALCO with the most sensitive of information during the most trying of times.

The OAN website explains the Honour Roll:

The Ontario AIDS Network (OAN) Honour Roll is a celebration of outstanding leadership and achievement within the HIV/AIDS movement in Ontario. It acknowledges the long-term and consistent contributions of individuals and organizations that use their experiences, skills, resources and voices to champion the cause of HIV/AIDS. The recipients of an Honour Roll Award will have contributed to reducing the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS, promoted the empowerment of people living with HIV/AIDS, and extended the capacity of the community movement as a major response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ontario.

You can find more information on the OAN website: <https://oan.red/honour-roll/>.

Legal Information and Legal Advice

It is important to understand the difference between legal information and legal advice.

Legal information is general and includes information that someone tells you and information in pamphlets, newsletters, websites, etc. Legal information can help you:

- identify a legal problem or issue.
- prepare to get legal advice.
- find legal advice.

Legal Advice is about you and your situation. Each person's situation is different and the laws change all the time. If you have a question or problem, you need legal advice.

Who Can Give Legal Advice

Generally, only licensed lawyers and paralegals can provide legal advice in Ontario. There are some exceptions (see link below), but for most individuals in Ontario who have a legal question or problem, a licensed lawyer or paralegal would be the most appropriate source for legal advice.



The Law Society of Upper Canada (LSUC) regulates the provision of legal services in Ontario. The LSUC:

- regulates who can provide legal services.
- licenses lawyers and paralegals.
- sets rules for lawyers and paralegals, including rules related to confidentiality, insurance, and continuing professional development requirements.
- provides complaint mechanisms.



For more information about who can provide legal advice, please visit the LSUC website: www.lsuc.on.ca/for-the-public.

For more information about getting legal advice from HALCO, please see page 15. For general information about getting legal help, please see the last page.

Getting Help from HALCO

- Intake Process for New Inquiries

HALCO provides free legal services for people living with HIV in Ontario. Anyone living with HIV in Ontario can call us for free legal advice, information and referrals. There is no financial eligibility for our legal advice service.

We take new inquiries for legal advice during our intake hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. You can call us at 416-340-7790 or toll-free at 1-888-705-8889. The person who has the question or legal problem should be the one to contact us. Interpreters are available.

One of our HALCO caseworkers is assigned to respond to new intakes each intake day. You do not need an appointment for intake but depending on how busy we are, you may have to wait to speak with the caseworker on intake.

For new immigration/refugee inquiries: our reception takes information to book an appointment for you with one of our two immigration lawyers (you can choose a phone or in-person appointment).

Many legal matters have time limits called “limitation periods”. Please contact us as soon as you have a question or problem so that we can have enough time to try to help.

Some matters may be complex and take a long time, while others may be brief. Depending on your question, the caseworker may need to do some research, consult another HALCO staff member, and/or refer you to another service.

Through our intake process, our staff may:

- assess your legal issue or issues
- talk about the laws and rules that may apply
- explain your options
- help you decide what to do
- help you to take action by:
 - helping you to represent yourself
 - representing you for your case, or
 - referring you.



Sometimes we may not be able to help or we may not be able to get the result that you would like. We welcome your feedback and we also have a Complaint Process if you are not satisfied with our services.

Reluctant farewell to retiring staff lawyer John Nelson

After more than 13 years as a staff lawyer with HALCO, John Nelson retired in 2017. John articulated at HALCO in 2003, and joined as a staff lawyer the following year. His skill, work ethic, empathy and compassion cannot be overstated. John's popularity with clients is legendary. John literally helped people with thousands of legal issues. HALCO staff and students also benefitted tremendously from John's knowledge, insight, commitment to our clients, and efforts to ensure access to justice. We miss John dearly and wish him all the best in his retirement.

Glenn Betteridge is now a permanent staff lawyer

We are very pleased that Glenn, who joined us last year on contract, is now a permanent staff lawyer. Glenn returned to HALCO and the community legal clinic system in September 2016 after a number of years away.

Congratulations to Clare McMullen-Crummey and her family on the birth of her child

HALCO staff were delighted when staff lawyer Clare's child was born in September. We wish Clare and her family all the best.

Welcome Jack Martin (staff lawyer – contract)

We were very pleased when Jack joined us in September 2017 as a staff lawyer providing immigration law services while Clare is on leave. Jack has worked in immigration law for many years, both in private practice and as the first director of Legal Aid Ontario's Refugee Law Office. We and our clients are benefitting from Jack's knowledge and commitment.

Welcome Robin Nobleman (staff lawyer)

As a law student, Robin worked at HALCO in the summer of 2013 and impressed us with her skill and dedication. After articling and working in the private bar, she returned to HALCO in October 2017 as a staff lawyer. We are delighted to have Robin back.

Wishing staff lawyer Julia Brown all the best

Julia joined us as a staff lawyer last year. During her time with us, Julia assisted many clients by providing legal advice and representation on a wide variety of legal issues. In October 2017, she left to join the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly as a staff litigation lawyer (contract). We wish Julia all the best in her new position (and are very happy that she remains in the legal clinic system).

For a list of our current staff, please see page 17.

HALCO

HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario

People

HALCO Staff

- **Alexander Hood** (articling student)
- **Amy Secord** (director of administration)
- **Amy Wah** (staff lawyer)
- **Clare McMullen-Crummey**
(staff lawyer - on leave)
- **Glenn Betteridge** (staff lawyer)
- **Jack Martin** (staff lawyer)
- **Jill McNall** (community legal worker)
- **Khalid Janmohamed** (staff lawyer)
- **Meagan Johnston** (staff lawyer)
- **Rick Lobodzinski** (admin. assistant)
- **Robin Nobleman** (staff lawyer)
- **Ryan Peck** (executive director/lawyer)

HALCO Board of Directors

HALCO's skilled and dedicated volunteer board members oversee our governance:

- **Barbara Ncho**
- **Jessica Demeria**
- **Judith Odhiambo**
- **Marcus McCann**
- **Neesha Rao**
- **Noah Aiken-Klar**
- **Robert Maich**
- **Robert Newman**
- **Rodney Kort**

For more information about our board and board committees, please contact us or visit

Get Involved on our website:

www.halco.org/get-involved.

HALCO Thanks Funders and Supporters

- Core Funders**
- Legal Aid Ontario
 - AIDS Bureau, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
- Funding Partner**
- M-A-C AIDS Fund
- ViiV Healthcare**
- grant in support of our 2017-2018 articling program
- Individuals**
- To all those who support us in so many ways: thank you!

HALCO is a registered charity and welcomes donations. Tax receipts are issued for donations of \$20.00 or more. You can make a donation by clicking on the **DONATE** button on our website at www.halco.org or by contacting us (see last page).

HALCO Website: www.halco.org



Our **What's New** website sidebar helps keep you up-to-date on current issues, announcements, events and more.

Our **Areas of Law** pages include information about many different legal topics:
www.halco.org/areas-of-law.

You can apply to become a member of HALCO or to renew your HALCO membership:
www.halco.org/getinvolved/membership.

HALCO Public Legal Education Workshops

HALCO staff organize, conduct and participate in public legal education events across Ontario and provide workshops on topics of interest to people with HIV as well as HIV-related legal issues for the broader community. We also hold a series of free legal education workshops at our office twice a year that is open to everyone.

Please contact us or visit the **Public Legal Education** section of our website for more information: www.halco.org/our-services/public-legal-education.

Our workshop legal topics include:

- HIV and the Law Overview
- HIV Disclosure and the Law: Criminal and Public Health Issues
- HIV and Immigration Law
- HIV and Privacy Law
- HIV and Private Insurance
- HIV and Employment Law
- HIV and Human Rights
- Medical Cannabis (marijuana)
- Planning for illness: legal information for people living with HIV in Ontario

Please contact us if you would like to request a workshop or our participation in an event (see last page for HALCO contact information).

HALCO Membership

HALCO's work is supported by our members. HALCO membership is free and renewed every 3 years. Please offer your support by becoming a member of HALCO.

If you are a resident of Ontario age 18 years or older, and you agree with our **Statement of Principles** (below), you can apply for HALCO membership.

Membership applications can be made:

- on our HALCO website: www.halco.org/get-involved/membership.
- by contacting us to ask for a membership application form by mail (please see last page for HALCO contact information).

Please note that HALCO membership has no effect on eligibility to receive legal services from HALCO.

Statement of Principles of the HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario Adopted January 30, 2006, by the Board of Directors

It is agreed that:

1. People living with HIV/AIDS are confronted with unique legal problems of enormous proportions and complexity;
2. Those best equipped to make choices regarding HIV/AIDS issues and problems are those individuals who are HIV positive themselves;
3. People living with HIV/AIDS must have control over their own lives;
4. The HIV/AIDS affected communities are very diverse and are confronted by overwhelming challenges derived from both their diversity and from their common experience as people living with HIV/AIDS;
5. It is necessary to create and foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of people living with HIV/AIDS; and
6. The confidentiality, bodily security, autonomy and privacy of people living with HIV/AIDS must be respected, which include but are not limited to:
 - a) the right of individuals to exercise control over their own medical treatment;
 - b) the right of individuals to exercise control over decisions concerning their own socio-economic position;
 - c) the right of all persons living with HIV/AIDS to be fully informed of all processes and procedures in which their interests are in any way involved; and
 - d) the right of all persons living with HIV/AIDS to consent, or withhold their consent, in all matters affecting them.



HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario

HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario

Telephone: 416-340-7790 / 1-888-705-8889
55 University Avenue, Suite 1400 (14th floor)
Toronto, Ontario M5J 2H7

website: www.halco.org



Getting Legal Help

If you are living with HIV in Ontario and have a legal question or problem, please contact us for free legal advice at 416-340-7790 or toll-free 1-888-705-8889. For more information, please see page 15.

Others in Ontario can contact their local community legal clinic to find out about local services: www.legalaid.on.ca/clinics

HALCO takes new inquiries on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (not on Wednesdays). A HALCO caseworker is assigned to deal with new inquiries each day.

HALCO is a “scent-reduced environment” - please avoid wearing fragrances or scented products when coming to our office.

HALCO is a registered charity funded by Legal Aid Ontario, the AIDS Bureau of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and other sources including corporate, foundation and individual donors. We welcome **donations**.

HALCO news contains **general information only. It is not legal advice.**

Laws, policies and practices can and often do change.

If you have a legal question or problem, you need legal advice. Please contact HALCO, your local legal clinic or a lawyer for legal advice.

HALCO news newsletter is published by the HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario (HALCO) and is distributed free to our members, interested individuals, agencies and organizations.

Previous editions are on our website: www.halco.org/our-services/our-publications.

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