

PARALEGAL (PLE)

About the Program

Paralegals are unique to Ontario, providing specified legal services directly to the public for a fee without the supervision of a lawyer. This two-year diploma program prepares you to write the Law Society of Ontario (LSO) licensing examination and become a licensed paralegal in the province, in accordance with the requirements of the Law Society Act. Your learning will focus on both legal ethics and small-business practice so that you'll be prepared to work in a law or paralegal firm, in a government setting or as a self-employed professional.

Your fluency in English is critical for your success and there is a strong focus on effective communication skills, both verbal and written, throughout the program.

Credential Awarded

Ontario College Diploma

Duration

4 Semesters (2 Years)

Starts

September

Program and Course Delivery

This program is offered in person. Students are required to come on campus to attend classes.

Skills

Throughout this program you will develop the following skills:

- Written and verbal communication
- Drafting legal documents
- Advocacy, including examination, cross-examination, submission of arguments
- Legal research and writing
- Ability to analyze and apply legislation to real-life situations
- Negotiation and conflict resolution

Work Experience

Field Placement

Having met all the necessary academic requirements, you will have the opportunity to participate in a four week unpaid field placement at the end of final examinations in fourth semester. With the support and assistance of the school's faculty and staff, you will play an active role in securing your placement. Those wishing to be placed in a court or other government setting will have to provide a police clearance certificate.

Your Career

As a graduate of this program, you will be able to pursue your paralegal licence and operate your own paralegal practice. You may also explore career opportunities within:

- Paralegal firms
- Law firms

- Legal clinics
- Legal departments within government offices

Certifications

Upon successful completion of all the elements of Alternative Dispute Resolution, including full attendance, you will receive an Alternative Dispute Resolution Certificate from Seneca School of Legal, Public and Office Administration.

Professional Accreditation

This program has been accredited by the Law Society of Ontario.

To obtain a paralegal licence, you will have to be:

- A graduate from an accredited program
- Pass a licensing examination, and
- Be of good character

For more information visit the Law Society of Ontario (<https://lso.ca/>).

Paralegal application and licensing fees are not included in any fee schedule quoted by Seneca Polytechnic.

Program of Study

Course Code	Course Name	Weekly Hours
Semester 1		
COM101 or COM111	Communicating Across Contexts Communicating Across Contexts (Enriched)	3
LGL151	Introduction to the Legal System for Paralegals	3
LGL152	Contracts and Torts for Paralegals	4
LGL153	Legal Entities and Relationships	2
LGL154	Computer Applications for Paralegals	2
LGL160	Legal Drafting and Communication	2
plus: General Education Course (1)		3
Semester 2		
LGL156	Administrative Law for Paralegals	3
LGL225	Immigration Law	2
LGL250	Legal Research for Paralegals	3
LGL251	Employment Law For Paralegals	3
LGL252	Residential Landlord and Tenant Law for Paralegals	3
plus: General Education Course (1)		3
Semester 3		
PLA350	Legal Accounting	3
PLE351	Evidence and the Litigation Process	3
PLO352	Criminal Law/Summary Conviction Procedure	3
PLR311	Refugee Law for Paralegals	2
PLT353	Tribunal Practice and Procedure	3
PLY354	Computer Applications for Paralegals	3
plus: General Education Course (1)		3
Semester 4		
FPL491	Field Placement for Paralegals	1

PLC450	Small Claims Court - Practice and Procedure	4
PLD451	Advocacy	4
PLE452	Ethics and Professional Responsibility	3
PLN455	Alternative Dispute Resolution	3
PLO453	Provincial Offences/ Motor Vehicle Offences	3
PLP454	Practice Management and Business Communications	3

Program Learning Outcomes

This Seneca program has been validated by the Credential Validation Service as an Ontario College Credential as required by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

As a graduate, you will be prepared to reliably demonstrate the ability to:

- Articulate and adhere to the permitted scope of paralegal practice and the Paralegal Rules of Conduct and complete all work in compliance with the ethical and professional responsibilities of a Paralegal.
- Manage a paralegal practice and operate a small business, within the Paralegal Rules of Conduct relevant to these matters by effectively utilizing administrative and business management skills.
- Describe the fundamental elements of the Canadian government and legal system, including the Constitution Act, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the organization of the Canadian court system, and the basic principles of property, business and consumer law.
- Articulate and adhere to the basic principles of tort and contract law.
- Conduct legal research and write legal memoranda and reports.
- Adhere to the civil litigation process, within the permitted scope of paralegal practice, and apply procedural and evidentiary rules related to proceedings in the Small Claims Court.
- Describe the principles of criminal law, and adhere to the rules relating to proceedings under the Criminal Code before a summary conviction court.
- Describe the principles of the law of provincial offences, and adhere to the rules relating to proceedings under the Provincial Offences Act before the Ontario Court of Justice.
- Make effective client representation before courts and administrative tribunals within the permitted scope of paralegal practice.
- Compare and contrast various alternate dispute resolution mechanisms, select an appropriate mechanism as required, and explain to the client the potential consequences of the dispute resolution mechanism.
- Adhere to the basic principles of administrative law, and of general practice and procedure before administrative tribunals.

- Articulate and adhere to the principles of employment law, and the practice and procedure related to the administrative tribunals that deal with employment matters.
- Articulate and adhere to residential landlord and tenant law, and the practice and procedure before the Landlord and Tenant Board.
- Draft all necessary documents in a clear, concise and accurate manner.
- Apply basic accounting principles, terminology, and operations to all paralegal obligations related to trust accounts, and the Law Society's requirements for book and record keeping.
- Select and use the appropriate computer software necessary to produce correspondence, spreadsheets, memoranda and legal documents.
- Prepare an employment resume in accordance with professional legal standards.

Admission Requirements

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), or equivalent, or a mature applicant (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/mature-applicants.html>)
- English: Grade 12 C or U, or equivalent course

Canadian citizens and permanent residents may satisfy the English requirements for this program through successful Seneca pre-admission testing. (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/mature-applicants.html>)

Recommended upgrading for applicants who do not meet academic subject requirements. (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/upgrading-options.html>)

Additional Information

Admission to this program is highly competitive. Applicants are ranked based on academic strength, specifically English. Only the top ranked applicants will be offered a seat in the program.

Notes

If you have completed a postsecondary degree or diploma you may apply to the three-semester Paralegal Accelerated program (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/programs/fulltime/PLEA.html>).

Pathways

As a leader in academic pathways, we offer a range of options that will allow you to take your credential further in another Seneca program or a program at a partner institution.

To learn more about your eligibility, visit the Academic Pathways (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/pathways.html>) web page.