



**THE AUTHORIZED COURT TRANSCRIPTIONIST
ASSOCIATION of ONTARIO**
www.actao.ca

Dear ACT:

Great news!

We have actually formed an Association!! Long overdue - much needed - and finally happening.

"Unity is strength...when there is teamwork and collaboration,
wonderful things can be achieved." -- *Mattie Stepanek*

The Authorized Court Transcriptionist Association of Ontario was incorporated under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act on February 19, 2019. All ACTs are welcome to become members!

Once we complete our initial membership drive, we plan to start by canvassing members to determine what issues are most important to them. On the basis of that information, we can develop an action plan to tackle those issues.

We also hope to form committees within the Association so that members can work together in smaller groups on areas that are of interest to them, such as website improvements, membership, conference planning, group discounts and developing a process for the annual election of officers.

Some of the things we can deal with in a productive focussed manner are:

1. Group health insurance.
2. Group access/discount to Westlaw.
3. Discounts on supplies.
4. An annual meeting where we can all meet in person to discuss issues and make positive plans for our profession.
5. Continuing education workshops.
6. Free listing on the website with your contact info, a bio and your picture, if you want to post one.
7. Introduce "new to the profession" ACTS to experienced ACTS who are willing to provide one-on-one mentorship to newly authorized ACTS.

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8. Stop Legal Aid Ontario from setting their own rates and ignoring the regulations: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r14094> and <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/050002>
9. Work hand-in-hand with the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) to monitor and enforce improvements to recordings and annotations.
10. Petition MAG for improvements to training and accreditation of new ACTS.
11. Petition MAG to conduct regular and meaningful reviews of the per page rate, which was set in 2014 after remaining stagnant for 27 years.
12. Become a unified voice to provide input to MAG on issues that affect us.

The issue of Legal Aid Ontario setting their own "rates" and a policy which conflicts and ignores the regulations for payment of court transcripts will be a serious consideration. Fortunately, we have a lawyer who has indicated a willingness to represent the Association on this issue.

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." --*Helen Keller*

The Association has a website with both a public-facing section and a members-only section.

The members-only section is a private log-in section where we can post information on current and predicted issues affecting ACTS. We will explore and investigate ways to deal with these issues in a productive, prudent and professional manner.

The Association website also has a public section, providing members of the Association with access to a place to advertise their services by posting contact information, a short biography and description of the services they offer.

The website will remain a work in progress so members can make suggestions on the content they would like to see published.

We are hoping all ACTs will become members. The more members we have, the higher the discounts we will receive and the stronger we will be as a professional association working together to reach our goals – maintaining and guarding the integrity of the record, providing excellent service in producing certified Ontario court transcripts, while supporting and inspiring each other.

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Initially, membership fees for the Association will be by voluntary dues. The voluntary dues will be used to cover administrative costs such as the monthly charge for maintaining the website. If the voluntary dues fail to cover the administrative costs of maintaining the Association and the website, this will be revisited at a general meeting.

To become a member go to the website www.actao.ca where you can make your membership request. Please watch for emails from hello.actao@outlook.com and add this new Association email address to your contacts so you'll be sure to receive emails we sent out to members.

If you would like to volunteer to help with the continued formation of the Association by becoming a founding member, by working together for the good of our profession, you are more than welcome! ~ Our success is dependent upon the vital support we can each offer by working together in this Association!

"The strength of the team is each individual member.
The strength of each member is the team." --*Phil Jackson*

Thank you, founding members:

Linda Dejong, Carolyn Ivanoff, Liz Logan, Joan MacPherson, Shelley Smith

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