

**ONTARIO TARGETS CRIMINAL JUSTICE COURT DELAYS IN LONDON***McGuinty Government Introducing New "Justice on Target" Initiative in London*

NEWS

June 3, 2008

Under the province's new *Justice on Target* strategy, Ontario is setting targets to reduce court delays and appearances by 30 per cent over the next four years.

This is the first time the province has set targets to reduce the provincial average of days and court appearances needed to complete a criminal case.

To ensure transparency and accountability, the province is also making available [criminal court statistics](#) to the public for the first time. The public will be able to follow the progress of the [strategy](#) and see the impact on courthouses in their local communities.

The multidisciplinary *Justice on Target* implementation team will be led by [Regional Senior Justice Bruce Durno](#) and [Senior Crown Attorney Kenneth Anthony](#). The team will work with justice sector partners in local courthouses to develop and implement new initiatives that improve coordination, focus justice resources and move cases through the justice system faster.

As part of *Justice on Target*, Ontario is working with [Legal Aid Ontario](#) (LAO) to introduce on-site legal aid and simplified online application to London's courthouse. This initiative reduces unnecessary court appearances by helping accused persons apply for legal aid in their local courthouse and retain a lawyer sooner, allowing cases to move through the justice system faster.

The Middlesex County Courthouse in London is one of nine locations across the province with an on-site legal aid application office. Over the coming months, the province will work with LAO to place legal aid offices with simplified application in an additional 17 criminal court locations in Ontario.

**QUOTES**

"The ability to apply for legal aid right at a courthouse is an effective use of time and resources," said London West MPP and Attorney General Chris Bentley. "It makes perfect sense and it is one of many steps we are taking to reduce unnecessary adjournments and delay in our criminal courts."

"Legal Aid Ontario is committed to working with the province to make the criminal justice system more effective for all of its users," said John McCamus, Chair of Legal Aid Ontario.

**QUICK FACTS**

- It now takes approximately twice as many court appearances and days, on average, to complete a criminal case as it did in 1992.
- In 2007, it took an average of 181 days and 9.4 court appearances to complete a criminal case in London, compared to the provincial average of 205 days and 9.2 court appearances.

- With 600,000 charges entering the system every year, saving one minute per charge could lead to seven years of court time saved.

## LEARN MORE

[Read more about the ministry's new "Justice on Target" strategy](#)

[View appearance statistics from the Middlesex County Courthouse](#)

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