

Pyzer Criminal Lawyers Outlines Legal Aid Options Ahead of Access to Justice Week

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YORK, ON - October 27, 2026 -
Pyzer Criminal Lawyers has outlined legal representation options for people facing criminal charges in Ontario who cannot afford private legal fees, ahead of Access to Justice Week, running October 26 to 30, 2026. The week is organised by The Action Group on Access to Justice at the Law Society of Ontario.

Jonathan Pyzer and Jasmine Mann are listed in Legal Aid Ontario?s lawyer directory for criminal matters. Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) assesses financial eligibility and whether a legal issue meets its coverage rules. Its criminal certificate policy considers the likelihood of a jail sentence if the person is found guilty. LAO assesses that risk using factors such as the charges, any criminal record and the circumstances of the case.

For households of one to four people, LAO currently lists an annual family income threshold below $45,440 for criminal certificates. It also considers assets and the type of legal problem. Meeting the income threshold alone does not guarantee a certificate.

A legal aid certificate authorises a private lawyer who accepts legal aid work to provide specified services funded by LAO. Some clients may have to repay part or all of those costs under a contribution agreement. Pyzer Criminal Lawyers accepts certificates in more serious cases and asks certificate holders to contact the firm to establish whether it can assist. LAO determines eligibility for funding; the firm separately confirms whether it can take the case.

?Access to justice cannot depend on the size of someone?s bank account,? said Jonathan Pyzer, founder of Pyzer Criminal Lawyers. ?The legal system?s integrity relies on ensuring everyone facing serious criminal charges has proper legal representation, not just those who can afford private fees.?

Beyond Legal Aid Ontario certificates, the firm provides pro bono services, meaning it undertakes legal work without charging legal fees, usually through referrals from social service agencies. Its published policy states that most clients would not qualify for this assistance. These arrangements are separate from LAO-funded representation, and people who do not qualify for a certificate should not assume the firm can represent them free of charge.

Jasmine Mann, a lawyer at the firm, graduated from the Dual Juris Doctor program at the University of Windsor Faculty of Law and the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law. She has worked with JusticeNet, a Canadian non-profit that connects eligible clients with legal professionals who offer reduced fees. JusticeNet?s reduced-fee services are distinct from pro bono representation.

?Having worked with JusticeNet, I understand how challenging it can be for low- and middle-income individuals to find affordable legal representation,? said Mann.

Other LAO services have different eligibility rules. Its published policy provides for bail services without financial eligibility testing. Financially eligible people may also receive legal advice and in-court assistance without assessing the likelihood of a jail sentence. Duty counsel can help with certain court appearances, but this does not mean they will act as a person?s lawyer throughout a case. People seeking assistance can check the requirements for their circumstances directly with LAO.

Information on legal aid eligibility and applications is available at legalaid.on.ca or by calling 1-800-668-8258. The Law Society of Ontario publishes the Access to Justice Week schedule on its website.

About Pyzer Criminal Lawyers

Founded in 2002 by Jonathan Pyzer, Pyzer Criminal Lawyers is a Toronto-based criminal defence law firm.

Its lawyers represent people facing charges including assault, sexual offences, impaired driving, drug offences, theft, weapons charges and homicide in Ontario courts.

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For more information about Pyzer Criminal Lawyers, contact the company here:Pyzer Criminal LawyersJonathan Pyzer+1 416-658-1818media@torontodefencelawyers.com1396 Eglinton Ave W #100, York, ON M6C 2E4, Canada

Pyzer Criminal Lawyers

Pyzer Criminal Lawyers is a Toronto-based criminal defence law firm that has been serving clients across the GTA and Ontario since 2002. We offer a free, confidential consultation. Call (416) 658-1818. Available 24/7.

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