

**The South Asian Legal Clinic
of Ontario (SALCO)
Annual Report 2022**





**Annual General Meeting
South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO)**

Wednesday, November 23, 2022

Virtual AGM via Zoom

**106A - 45 Sheppard Avenue East
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Agenda

**Annual General Meeting
South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO)
Wednesday, November 23, 2022
6:30 pm—7:30pm
Virtual via Zoom Meeting**

6:30 p.m.	Zoom Meeting Opens	All Attendees
6:35 p.m.	AGM Call to Order Land Acknowledgement	Chair, Board of Directors
6:40 p.m.	Approval of 2021 AGM Minutes SALCO Chair's Report Executive Director, Message	Chair, Board of Directors Chair, Board of Directors ED, SALCO
6:45 p.m.	Nominations to SALCO Board of Directors: slate and nominations from the floor via Zoom	Nominations Com., Board of Directors
7:00 p.m.	i) Treasurer's Report on the Audited Financial Statements For Year Ending March 31, 2022	Treasurer, Board of Directors
.	ii) Approval of Auditor	Treasurer, Board of Directors
7:10 p.m.	SALCO 2021/2022 Highlights	SALCO Staff
7:20 p.m.	Adjournment of Meeting	Chair, Board of Directors
7:30 pm	AGM Ends	



We will begin the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario Annual General Meeting 2022 by acknowledging that we are meeting on Indigenous land that has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples from the beginning. As settlers, we are grateful for the opportunity to meet here and we thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land - for thousands of years.

Long before today, as we gather here, there have been Indigenous peoples who have been the stewards of this place. In particular, we acknowledge that the land we meet, work and live on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabek, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit. We also recognize the contributions of Métis, Inuit, and other Indigenous peoples have made, both in shaping and strengthening this community in particular, and our province and country as a whole.

As settlers, this recognition of the contributions and historic importance of Indigenous peoples must also be clearly and overtly connected to our collective commitment to make the promise and the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation real in our communities, and in particular to bring justice for murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls across our country.

**SALCO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - BUSINESS MEETING
AND PANEL PRESENTATION
Wednesday, November 10, 2021, 6:30 pm-8:00pm
Via Zoom, Toronto, Ontario**

1. **Presentation:** The AGM meeting started at 6:35 pm with a welcome by Executive Director, Shalini Konanur and Board Chair, Lisa Amin.
2. **Land Acknowledgement:** Provided by staff lawyer jasleen johal. The land acknowledgement emphasized that the recognition of the contributions and historic importance of Indigenous peoples must also be clearly and overtly connected to our collective commitment to making the promise and the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation real in our communities, and in particular to bring justice for murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls across our country.
3. **Call to Order:** The AGM Business Meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Lisa Amin at 6:42 pm.
4. **Approval of Minutes from AGM on 2020:** The AGM minutes 202 were presented to the membership for approval. No amendments were made.

Motion to Approve: The AGM 2020 Minutes were presented for approval, whereupon motion duly made by Vithu Ramchandran, seconded by Sultana Jahangir, and adopted by majority vote.

Poll results:

Yes – 93%

Abstains – 7%

5. **SALCO Chair and Executive Director's Reports:** The Board Chair, Lisa Amin, presented the Chair's message from the AGM package. The Executive Director, Shalini Konanur, presented the ED's report. The highlights were:
 - **Chair's message:** Lisa discussed that as more data becomes available on the impact of COVID-19, we now know that South Asian communities have had significant and disproportionately worse rates of unemployment, bad health outcomes, gender-based violence, and challenges related to immigration. Lisa mentioned growth in complex immigration cases, and 35% jump in family violence cases. She also emphasized SALCO's continued work on public legal education and law reform work on COVID-19. She also discussed about SALCO's detailed submission to the LAO's modernization process. She thanked her board and the staff for their commitment to SALCO's mandate; and
 - **E.D.'s message:** Shalini mentioned that from her reflections of the past year, it has been a difficult year and mostly difficult for our clients. She mentioned that the challenges we face due to the LAO's limited staff funding, modernization

process and all these impacts tickles down to the clients we serve. She also discussed about the digitalization of the Courts/Tribunals processes, where our clients don't have the date or the technology to meet these requirements and the clinics are struggling to support the clients in these situations with limited resources. SALCO is working with the Color of Poverty- Color of Change in gathering data on racialized people and the impacts of Covid-19. Shalini thanked our funders the LAO, the Federal Government and a tribute to the board for all their voluntary contributions. She acknowledged the work of the staff where they work with clients with severe mental health challenges. She concluded stating that the success of SALCO is because of the commitment of all.

6. Treasurer's Report on Audited Financial Stated for Year Ending March 31, 2021:

SALCO's Treasurer, Alizeh Koharasanee Presented financial statements for March, 2021. She went through the statement of operation:

- Funding: We are largely funded by the LAO but had some other funding related to gender-based violence and Covid relief;
- In terms of the expenses, we did not see much changes this year, except for the cost of digitizing the files and services. There were no issues with the audit;
- SALCO's expenses were largely related to personnel (salary and benefits), and rent, with a very small budget for operating costs that remained unchanged; and
- We ended the financial year with a surplus of all funding of approximately \$37,000.

Motion to approve the audited financial statements was presented for approval, whereupon motion duly made by Sultana Jahangir, Seconded by Karin Baqi.

Poll results:

Yes – 88%

Abstained – 12%

Motion to approve David Burks (Rashidi) as auditors for year ending March 31, 2022 was presented for approval, whereupon motion duly made by Sultana Jahangir, seconded by Jaspal Sangha

Poll results:

Yes – 89%

Abstained – 11%

- 7. Nominations to SALCO Board of Directors:** The nominations committee confirmed that SALCO's by-laws include the election of board members via a slate and that one position is held vacant for a member to run from the floor at the AGM. This was a change that was made in 2016. The committee presented the slate of candidates as per the AGM package (pages 29-30 of the 2020 AGM Report for the bios of the board Members):

a) **Election of Slate of Nominees re-election for the 2021-2022 board term:**

Potential board members on the slate spoke:

- Lisa Amin: Is a human rights, employment, and labour lawyer with a private practice based in Toronto. In addition to her legal work, Lisa has been active for decades in a variety of grassroots social justice, feminist, anti-racist, LGBTQ, and cultural organizations. Lisa has been a member of the board of SALCO since 2019 and has been Chair of the Board for the last two years.
- Husein Panju: Has a strong understanding of the Canadian policy landscape and how SALCO can use its resources to influence public policy and public opinion through securing internal and external buy-in.
- Jaspal Sangha: Is in construction litigation lawyer from Brampton, Ontario. If elected to the Board for a second term, his goals are to play a bigger role within committees and help build a relationship with the South Asian Bar.
- Rashmi Kumar Dhanoa (her last name changed recently to 'Dhanoa'): Is an Assistant Crown Attorney at the Newmarket Crown Attorney's Office. She was a board member for almost a year. Criminal law background.
- Chrishyami Sivaraj: Would be new to the SALCO board. She is a Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) who will soon be taking on the role of Director of HR at the Canada Revenue Agency (Ontario Region). Chrishyami is committed to supporting the important work that SALCO does and ensure their continued success in supporting the most vulnerable. She hopes her extensive HR experience would be an asset to the board.
- Thaniya Jeyachandra (Student Board Member - New board election): Is a second-year law student at the University of Windsor. Having completed her Social Justice Fellowship placement at SALCO as a Summer Student, she saw firsthand the importance of the advocacy and work that SALCO does. She is looking forward to beginning a career in advocacy and litigation.

Motion to approve slate of nominees was presented for approval, whereupon motion duly made by Anu Bakshi, seconded by Alizeh Khorasanee

Poll results:

Yes – 86%

Abstain – 14%

b) **Election from the Floor:** Sultana invited for the nominations from the floor:

Sukriti Nagpal: Sukriti expressed her interest to be a board member of SALCO, she is from the South Asian community. As a recent immigrant, she grew up witnessing how our communities are disproportionately affected in many ways. SALCO's work is close to her heart. She's not a lawyer, but she's planning to study law. She's working in the tech industry. She has fundraising and grant writing skills.

Motion to approve the member elected from the floor was presented for approval, whereupon motion duly made by Alizeh Khorasane, seconded by Vithu Ramchandran

Poll results:

Yes – 76%

Abstain – 24%

Items for Discussion:

- Sultana confirmed the election/re-election of all board members. She also mentioned that she is looking forward to working with the team and with Lisa as the chair.
- Lisa congratulated the new Board members and acknowledged that she is excited and looking forward to working with the board.

8. **Adjournment of Business Meeting:** There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting adjournment was presented by the Chair, Lisa Amin.

Motion to Approve: Adjournment of the SALCO Annual General Business Meeting on November 10, 2021 at 7:20 p.m. was presented for approval, whereupon motion duly made by Vithu Ramchandran, seconded by Rezwana Ava, and adopted by majority vote.

Poll results:

Yes – 88%

Abstain – 12%

9. **Notes Post- Business Meeting:**

- Shalini announced that our staff lawyer Silmy Abdullah will be moving on, she acknowledged and thanked Silmy for all her contributions to SALCO. She mentioned that Silmy is an incredible and kind advocate and we hope that we will continue to work with her on issues of GBV.
- Shalini mentioned that Silmy is also a published author and encouraged people to read her book.
- Silmy, thanked Shalini, her colleagues and the board members for all their support throughout her time at SALCO. She mentioned that she would be happy to continue to work with SALCO in a different capacity.

10. Presentation by SALCO Staff: The Impact of Covid-19 on South Asian

communities: Staff members presented on the impacts of Covid-19 on the South Asians and specifically on our clients.

➤ **Iqra Rafiq: Employment**

Iqra spoke about the impacts of Covid -19 on workers, south Asians in particular. A large percentage of low income south Asian workers were affected, mainly in Peel region. As per several published material and statistics, some of the causes for the disproportionate impacts on low income South Asians were:

- *Inability to leave their jobs – only source of income/livelihood;*
- *Immigration status – mostly precarious;*
- *international students, who were not eligible for any government subsidies;*
- *New immigrants, who did not have a network of support;*
- *Lack of education*
- *English language barrier;*
- *Dependency on Temporary Agencies to obtain jobs and the instability of employment due to that;*
- *Working for cash and cannot find another cash job;*
- *The need to support families in and out of Canada.*

Iqra concluded by saying that these workers risk their life to keep the supply chain running and they have to be supported. These are primarily racialized people and that we must support community groups that are advocating for the worker's rights.

➤ **Silmy Abdullah – Immigration**

Immigration cases constitute the bulk of our work. Even during pre-Covid we have routinely seen vulnerable clients, particularly female clients disproportionately impacted due to GBV, DV and poverty, what we have seen through Covid -19 is that these have multiplied.

The challenges faced by these clients are including but not limited to:

- *Unprecedented delays by the IRCC in processing applications*
- *While IRCC is having delays, the CBSA is quick to remove people*
- *IRCC's constant change of policies, not entertaining calls etc.*

Silmy mentioned about a case she litigated recently.

➤ **Shalini – Gender Based Violence**

Shalini mentioned that in her work on GBV since 2008, she would say that this is the hardest year. She has been to the hospital more times this year than all her previous years put together, to see clients in hospital who has faced violence. Shalini listed the following challenges faced by the victims of GBV:

- *Isolation*
- *Financial stress*
- *Precairous immigration status*

- *Family law issues*
- *The lack of understanding of the criminal justice system*

Shalini mentioned that we have been working on the ground, providing direct legal services, systemic advocacy and telling the government to have a National Action Plan to combat GBV issues in our communities.

She also mentioned that the lack of services to the victims of GBV in our communities is appalling and is disgraceful. Due to the structural and institutional barriers that sometimes our clients make the decision to stay in a violent situation because it's safer to stay and it is heartbreaking.

She mentioned about child poverty and about the indigenous communities, that we have not seen the government's commitment in addressing the needs. In terms of recovery, there's very little discussion on Covid recovery or targeted support by the government.

➤ **jasleen – Long-term Health outcomes of South Asians**

Health care in Ontario is far from universal, there's an overwhelming adverse impact on the healthcare of the south Asians, specifically in the Peel region. Mortality and infection rates in Ontario is highest among the south Asian population.

Many clients she worked with who had a surviving spouse back home is no longer alive, some of their family have passed away. These have definitely affected them in many ways. Jasleen also mentioned about the international students in the Peel region and their contributions to the labour market. They were most often in the precarious and under paid labour industry, and there was no support for them despite the common outbreak of Covid-19 in their workplaces.

➤ **Athursh Vaithilingam: Tribunals and Digital Access**

Athursh mentioned that in March 2020, the Landlord and Tenant Board shifted from in-person hearings to online hearings. In this shift, little to no effort has been made to accommodate tenants with mental health issues, who are illiterate or innumerate, or who do not have English as their first language. This is compounded by the fact many low income and rural or remote households lack access to reliable internet and phone services. In short, many tenants lack access to justice. Tribunals Ontario's recent announcement that they will continue with a digital first strategy post pandemic is cause for grave concern.

The AGM ended at 8:00 pm.

Meeting Minutes Presented by: Fareeha Aziz (SALCO Staff Lawyer)

SALCO AGM 2022: Message from the Chair

Welcome to the 2022 Annual General Meeting for the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario. 2021-2022 was another busy year at SALCO.

More recent census data tells us that South Asian communities in Ontario continue to fall into poverty at a higher rate than white Ontarians. Data tells us that South Asians in Ontario also have disproportionately worse experiences in almost every life outcome: poverty, employment, within the justice system, in access to housing, in education, and in health, which we know from the tremendous impact of COVID-19 on South Asian communities.

As the government announces expansion of immigration, many South Asian people are choosing to settle in Ontario, which holds Canada's largest racialized and South Asian populations. South Asian clients and communities continue to report:

- Discrimination in employment (getting, keeping, and being promoted in jobs, and being paid equitably);
- Increases in hate incidents and hate crimes including growing incidents of Islamophobia;
- Broad experiences of discrimination based on race and immigration status;
- Gender-based violence (ex: forced marriage, human trafficking, elder abuse, and intimate partner violence)
- This past year, SALCO also saw more clients calling to talk about horrible treatment from their landlords; and
- International students have reported issues with immigration, harassment in places of study, mental and physical health issues, inability to access income supports, employment law issues, and being mistreated and taken advantage of by landlords, including many South Asian landlords.

SALCO remained busy, continuing with satellite services across the GTA and surrounding areas in person and by phone. SALCO is also meeting clients in person at the SALCO office, in community spaces, shelters, prisons, and hospitals on a case-by-case basis. This past year, SALCO continued to provide significant support through direct services to clients in legal advice, legal brief services, and legal representation in multiple areas of law, including immigration, housing, employment, income maintenance, and family law. This past year SALCO was also delighted to expand its services to include a full-time social worker, and a new federally-funded lawyer to support clients with family and immigration law matters.

Alongside the challenges of direct legal service, SALCO was actively engaged in public legal education, community development, law reform and in Legal Aid Ontario's continued modernization process, making detailed submissions on the way in which legal clinics will be funded and the way in which LAO may consider a clinic to be "at risk", which could impact funding. SALCO currently has a Service Agreement that extends to March 31, 2025 with Legal Aid Ontario.

To learn more about the work that SALCO has done over the past year, please take a look at the SALCO 2021/2022 Highlights in this AGM package.

None of this would be possible without the hard work and dedication of SALCO staff. Their commitment to SALCO's mandate and to social justice is passionate and inspired. Thank you to Vanathy, Iqra, Anchal, Jasleen, Aruna, Athursh, Fahamida, Maria, Mazahir, and Shalini for all of your hard work.

I would also like to thank my colleagues on the board for their efforts this past year. Recognizing that personal and professional obligations are always competing for your time, your support is greatly appreciated. The board completed work on staff evaluation, financial policies, and has started a by-law review to achieve full compliance with Ontario's *Not-For-Profit Corporations Act*.

Lastly, SALCO is thankful to our funders: Legal Aid Ontario, the United Way Greater Toronto, the Federal Department of Justice, and the Kassam Foundation (for their significant donation to support our work with clients).

Lisa Amin,
Chair, SALCO Board of Directors

SALCO AGM 2022: Message from the Executive Director

In 2022 SALCO continued to provide services and to do advocacy within the pandemic environment through a hybrid model of working from home and the office. I am happy to report that SALCO was able to maintain strong levels of legal casework, public, legal education, and advocacy work through the year despite the continued challenges posed by the pandemic.

2022 provided significant data on just how much COVID-19 impacted the many South Asian communities that SALCO works with. We also saw clients being asked to pay back pandemic benefits that may have been provided to them incorrectly. This has had a devastating impact of low-income clients across the board. 2022 has also seen a growth in poverty rates within South Asian communities that has been compounded by inflation, static levels of social assistance, a low minimum wage, and a significant lack of affordable housing. For our clients with immigration files the picture has been a nightmare, with confusing immigration pilots and policies and very slow immigration processing. SALCO continues to support many clients with either precarious or no immigration status at all including undocumented workers.

Many of you have also heard about the increased rates on intimate partner and other gender-based violence during the pandemic. SALCO saw an approximately 35% increase in calls from clients experiencing gender-based violence in 2021/2022. In the backdrop, the federal government completed a consultation on a National Action Plan Against Gender-based violence that is in the process of being implemented. The distinct issues faced by racialized people facing GBV continue to go largely unaddressed at the systemic / legislative level.

On income maintenance, SALCO worked on several projects around understanding gaps in income support for racialized clients and the barriers created by requiring certain types of “immigration status” to get provincial social assistance and all federal income support benefits. We continue our advocacy to make the Canada Child Benefit accessible to all children in Canada.

In 2022 we also worked with several forced marriage clients both virtually and in person. It seems that forced marriage is still very prevalent in Ontario. SALCO is currently working on updating its own Forced Marriage toolkit to be more reflective of the current options for people facing forced marriage in Canada.

I am very happy to report that in 2022 SALCO committed to its own journey around our obligations to Indigenous communities, including starting to have conversations on what that means, what can be put into action by our organization, and what role we play in educating the communities that we work in.

I am also delighted to report three new funders for SALCO in 2022: i) the United Way Greater Toronto has provided funding to SALCO for a social service worker position. Our social worker has started and will now be able to provide SALCO clients and others with law adjacent social work supports, which helps us to provide a more holistic service for clients; ii) the federal Department of Justice has provided funding for a lawyer to support racialized clients facing family and immigration law questions. The ability to provide more robust family law services is crucial for SALCO clients; and iii) The Kassam Foundation has made a generous donation to SALCO to support capacity to serve people facing gender-based violence. All three opportunities will allow us to continue to enhance service delivery for low-income South Asian people across Ontario.

I am always so grateful to work with such an incredible team of colleagues and our volunteer board members. Their work this year has kept our clinic functioning at high capacity, open to the public (with safety precautions in place), and serving some of the most vulnerable people in Ontario.

SALCO AGM 2022: Message from the Executive Director continued

- ◆ Thank you to SALCO's incredible staff for your commitment, for embracing change, for thinking constantly about what our communities need and how we can remain accessible to serve them, and for your earnest support for each other. It has certainly not been easy to maintain a sense of "team" through the pandemic. Thank you also for your passion in advocating in every space possible to demand support for low-income South Asian communities and for your tireless work to educate our communities on what their rights are;
- ◆ Thank you to the SALCO board for your continued oversight and commitment to the organization. We spent time this year tackling the Legal Aid Ontario modernization of the legal clinic system. The board provided significant support for SALCO's expansion with new staff, considered strategic directions to support the organization, worked on a number of governance / policy updates, and provided diligent oversight on financial management. Particular thank you to our Chair, Lisa Amin, who has shown tremendous leadership and taken significant time related to LAO modernization, and to our Treasurer, Alizeh Khorasaneh, who provides incredible oversight of SALCO's fiscal management;
- ◆ Thank you to all of our funders for your support of our work. We would not be able to do this critical work with the support of Legal Aid Ontario, the federal Canada Summer Jobs Program, the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, the United Way Greater Toronto, and the Federal Department of Justice, and the Kassam Foundation; and
- ◆ Thank you to our community partners and to the communities that we serve. The strength I see daily in the actions of our own clients and communities is an inspiration to me.

Ethno-racial clinics, like SALCO, serve a particular critical gap – they address barriers to service for low-income racialized clients who have faced systemic issues in access to justice and access to other legal aid services. SALCO's client-centered model (linguistic services, cultural competence, satellites in community) is a great example of how legal clinics are able to provide holistic services to their low-income clients. Our newest census data (just released) confirms that South Asians are Ontario's and Canada's largest racialized population and that unfortunately our communities continue to fall into poverty at disproportionately higher rates. It is critical that we focus every effort to ensure the sustainability of SALCO and its direct legal services and advocacy on behalf of our communities. We must continue to advocate against the ways in which systemic racism and discrimination impact almost every life outcome for the communities we serve – We must demand equity and equality.

Shalini Konanur
Executive Director / Lawyer

SOUTH ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC OF ONTARIO

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MARCH 31, 2022

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of
South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements***Opinion***

We have audited the financial statements of South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario ("the Organization"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2022, the statement of operations, the statement of changes in net assets, and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario as at March 31, 2022, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Matter

The financial statements of the Organization for the year ended March 31, 2021 (prior to adjustments that were applied to restate certain comparative information explained in Notes 7 & 9) were audited by the Organization's former auditor. An unqualified audit opinion was issued on those financial statements on July 14, 2021.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing these financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (Continued)

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Richmond Hill, Ontario
July 27, 2022

Rashidi LLP

Chartered Professional Accountant
Licensed Public Accountant

SOUTH ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC OF ONTARIO

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT MARCH 31, 2022

ASSETS

	<u>Legal Aid Fund</u>	<u>Legal Disbursement Fund</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Forced Marriage Fund</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u> <u>(Notes 6, 7)</u>
Current						
Cash	\$ 20,474	\$ 15,119	\$ 142,594	\$ 15,757	\$ 193,944	\$ 173,311
Accounts receivable	-	-	1,800	-	1,800	-
Grants receivable	-	-	-	-	-	15,919
HST recoverable	12,169	16	1,002	-	13,187	19,419
Prepaid expenses	10,821	-	-	-	10,821	12,567
	43,464	15,135	145,396	15,757	219,752	221,216
Interfund balances	8,443	-	(8,443)	-	-	-
	\$ 51,907	\$ 15,135	\$ 136,953	\$ 15,757	\$ 219,752	\$ 221,216

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current						
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 39,912	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 39,912	\$ 55,742
Grants repayable (Note 6,7)	-	-	-	-	-	8,535
	39,912	-	-	-	39,912	64,277
Fund balances	11,995	15,135	136,953	15,757	179,840	156,939
	\$ 51,907	\$ 15,135	\$ 136,953	\$ 15,757	\$ 219,752	\$ 221,216

Approved on behalf of the Board:



Director



Director

(The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements)

SOUTH ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC OF ONTARIO
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022

	<u>Legal Aid Fund</u>	<u>Legal Disbursement Fund</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Forced Marriage Fund</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u> <u>(Notes 6, 7)</u>
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 12,567	\$ 11,720	\$ 116,895	\$ 15,757	\$ 156,939	\$ 127,754
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	<u>(572)</u>	<u>3,415</u>	<u>20,058</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>22,901</u>	<u>29,185</u>
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ 11,995</u>	<u>\$ 15,135</u>	<u>\$ 136,953</u>	<u>\$ 15,757</u>	<u>\$ 179,840</u>	<u>\$ 156,939</u>

(The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements)

SOUTH ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC OF ONTARIO

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022

	Legal Aid Fund	Legal Disbursement Fund	General Fund	Forced Marriage Fund	2022	2021 (Notes 6, 7)
Revenue						
Grants (Note 3)	\$ 928,716	\$ 6,000	\$ 40,904	\$ -	\$ 975,620	\$ 951,729
Interest & other income (Note 10)	197	6	7,746	-	7,949	39,558
	<u>928,913</u>	<u>6,006</u>	<u>48,650</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>983,569</u>	<u>991,287</u>
Expenses						
Salaries & benefits	771,830	-	26,001	-	797,831	788,982
Occupancy	81,823	-	-	-	81,823	65,748
Travel	5,142	-	-	-	5,142	6,309
Communication & publicity	2,851	-	700	-	3,551	7,747
Purchased services	20,398	-	-	-	20,398	19,934
Equipment	11,867	-	-	-	11,867	12,140
Professional dues	15,196	-	-	-	15,196	16,681
Library	627	-	-	-	627	807
Supplies & services	19,751	3	1,891	-	21,645	39,767
Legal disbursements	-	2,588	-	-	2,588	2,540
Project expenses	-	-	-	-	-	1,447
	<u>929,485</u>	<u>2,591</u>	<u>28,592</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>960,668</u>	<u>962,102</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses (Notes 6,7)	\$ (572)	\$ 3,415	\$ 20,058	\$ -	\$ 22,901	\$ 29,185

(The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements)

SOUTH ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC OF ONTARIO
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u> (Notes 6, 7)
Cash provided by (used in)		
Operating activities		
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	\$ 22,901	\$ 29,185
Changes in non-cash working capital items		
Accounts receivable	(1,800)	-
Grants receivable	15,919	(15,919)
HST recoverable	6,232	(12,673)
Prepaid expenses	1,746	(644)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(15,830)	6,567
Grants Repayable	(8,535)	(3,577)
	<u>(2,268)</u>	<u>(26,246)</u>
Increase in cash during the year	20,633	2,939
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of the year	<u>173,311</u>	<u>170,372</u>
Cash and cash equivalents, end of the year	<u>\$ 193,944</u>	<u>\$ 173,311</u>

(The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements)

SOUTH ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC OF ONTARIO
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022

INCORPORATION AND PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION:

The South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario ("SALCO") was incorporated in Ontario on February 6, 2001 as a not-for-profit organization without share capital.

SALCO was established to increase access to the justice system for low-income South Asians in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner.

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES:

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations set out in Part III of the CPA Canada Handbook - Accounting.

Outlined below are those policies considered particularly significant:

a) Revenue recognition

Contributions

The Organization uses the deferral method in accounting for contributions which include donations, government grants and other contributions.

Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Operating grants and contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Grants approved but not received at the end of an accounting period are accrued. Where a portion of the grant relates to a future period, it is deferred and recognized in that subsequent period.

Fees for services

Fees for services are recognized as revenue when services are rendered.

Investment income

Investment income consists of interest earned from short-term deposits and savings accounts held with Canadian banks. Interest income is recorded as earned when received.

All other income

All other income including membership fees and recovery of costs are recognized as revenue when earned and the related services are provided.

b) Expense Recognition

Expenses are recognized on the accrual basis.

SOUTH ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC OF ONTARIO

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES: (Continued)

c) Income taxes

The organization is a not-for-profit organization under the Income Tax Act (Canada) and, as such, is exempt from income taxes.

d) Contributed Services

Volunteers contribute significant time to assist the organization in carrying out its services and activities. Because of the difficulty of determining their fair value, contributed services are not recognized in the financial statements.

e) Financial instruments

Financial instruments consist of cash, accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities. Financial instruments are initially recorded at historical cost. If subsequent circumstances indicate that a decline in the fair market value of a financial asset is other than temporary, the financial instrument is written down to its fair market value. Unless otherwise indicated, it is management's opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant interest, currency or credit risks arising from these financial instruments. The fair market value of these instruments approximate recorded amounts because of the short period to receipt or payment of cash.

f) Capital Assets

Property, plant and equipment are initially recorded at acquisition cost. Amortization is provided at the following rates which are formulated to charge operations with the cost of the property and equipment over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Furniture and fixtures	20% Straight-line
Leasehold Improvements	20% Straight-line

Amortization is recognized in expenses when the asset is available for use. The above rates are reviewed annually to ensure they are appropriate. Any changes are adjusted for on a prospective basis. If there is an indication that the assets may be impaired, an impairment test is performed that compares carrying amount to net recoverable amount. There were no impairment indicators in 2022.

g) Internally restricted funds

The Organization has internally restricted net assets to be used for specific purposes. These funds are not available for operations without approval of the Board. The internally restricted reserve funds are as follows:

General Fund

These funds are used to provide a range of legal and paralegal services, including information, advice and representation, to low-income individuals and families.

SOUTH ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC OF ONTARIO
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES: (Continued)

g) Internally restricted funds (Continued)

Legal Disbursements Fund

These funds are used to provide for certain direct expenses incurred in the representation of the organization client's in legal proceedings.

Legal Aid Fund

This fund holds the operating surpluses of the organization that have been funded by Legal Aid Ontario and are used to fund future operational expenditures related to legal aid activities.

Forced Marriage Fund

These funds are used to provide for certain direct expenses incurred in the representation of the organization client's in forced marriage cases.

2. CAPITAL ASSETS:

	<u>2022</u>			<u>2021</u>
	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Accumulated Amortization</u>	<u>Net Book Value</u>	<u>Net Book Value</u>
Leasehold improvements	\$ 17,995	\$ 17,995	\$ -	\$ -
Furniture	20,373	20,373	-	-
	<u>\$ 38,368</u>	<u>\$ 38,368</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

Amortization for the year is \$0 (2021 - \$0).

3. GRANTS:

Grants are comprised of the following:

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Legal Aid Ontario (LAO)	\$ 934,716	\$ 896,089
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians	29,970	-
Employment & Social Development Canada	5,534	4,350
Women's Shelters Canada	5,400	9,600
YWCA	-	21,500
Canadian Red Cross	-	20,190
	<u>\$ 975,620</u>	<u>\$ 951,729</u>

SOUTH ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC OF ONTARIO

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022

4. USE OF ESTIMATES:

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenditures during the reported period. Significant items subject to such estimates and assumptions include the useful lives of capital assets, prepaid membership dues and year-end accrued liabilities. Actual results could differ from management's best estimates as additional information becomes available in the future.

5. CAPITAL MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE:

The organization includes cash, accounts payable and accrued liabilities, deferred operating grant revenue, and net assets in its capital management consideration. The organization's objectives when managing capital are to safeguard its ability to continue as a going concern and continue to execute its mandate within the restrictions that the organization is not in receipt of core funding.

The organization monitors these items to assess its ability to fulfil its ongoing financial obligations. The organization relies primarily on grants, fundraising and donations to fund its operations and makes adjustments to its budgeted expenditures in light of changes. The organization is not subject to externally imposed capital requirements.

The organization is dependant on government grants for continued operations.

6. GRANT REPAYMENT

Where SALCO incurs a surplus from the annual budgeted operating funds provided by Legal Aid Ontario (Legal Aid Fund), such a surplus does not constitute earned grant revenue and is repayable to Legal Aid Ontario. Where SALCO retains a surplus for a project specifically funded by Legal Aid Ontario outside of SALCO's core funding, that surplus does not constitute earned grant revenue and is either repayable to Legal Aid Ontario or requested to be transferred to another clinic that is taking over management of that project.

7. PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENT:

Legal Aid Ontario, during the fiscal year covered by these financial statements, has reallocated the surplus from the previous fiscal year by reducing the 2022 funding paid to SALCO by that amount. These statements have reduced the revenue from grants for the 2021 fiscal year by the amount calculated. The effect on these financial statements is as follows:

	As previously reported	Adjusted	Difference
Revenue from Grants 2021 fiscal period	\$ 960,264	\$ 951,729	\$ 8,535
Grants Repayable as at Mar 31, 2021	\$ -	\$ 8,535	\$ 8,535
Closing Surplus 2021 fiscal period	\$ 165,474	\$ 156,939	\$ 8,535

SOUTH ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC OF ONTARIO
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022

8. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS - RISK MANAGEMENT:

a) *Interest Rate Risk*

Interest rate risk is the risk of potential financial loss caused by fluctuations in their fair value of future cash flow of financial instruments due to changes in market interest rates.

b) *Credit Risk*

Credit risk is the potential for financial loss should a counter-party in a transaction fail to meet its obligations.

c) *Currency Risk*

Currency risk is the risk of potential change in price of one currency against another currency.

The organization's financial instruments consist of cash, accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities. Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant interest, credit or currency risks. The fair value of these financial instruments approximates their carrying values.

The extent of the organization's exposure to the above risks did not change during 2022.

9. RECLASSIFICATION OF COMPARATIVE FIGURES:

a) The 2021 comparative financial statements were prepared by the Organization's former auditor.

b) Certain of the 2021 comparative figures have been reclassified to conform with the current year's presentation.

10. OTHER INCOME - WAGE SUBSIDY:

During the 2021 fiscal year, the organization applied for the Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employers (TWSE) made available by the Federal government in response to COVID-19. The TWSE was made available to eligible employer's who continued to incur payroll costs for the period of March to June 2020. During the 2021 fiscal year, the organization received \$15,014 from the TWSE and has recognized the rebate as other income in the Statement of Operations.

SALCO AGM 2022

Board of Directors: Nominations Slate

Alizeh Khorasane (Running for Re-Election: Board Term 2022-2024): Alizeh has served on the SALCO Board of Directors as a Board Members from November 2020 to present. Alizeh is the board's current Treasurer where she oversees SALCO's day-to-day expenses, SALCO's audit, and the updating and creation of financial management policies. Alizeh oversees the due diligence required for accountable, transparent, efficient, and effective financial management at the clinic. As Treasurer Alizeh has a solid understanding of SALCO's financial structure and funding. Alizeh is a CPA (Chartered Professional Accountant) and is also a CA and CFA. She currently works with the Ontario Securities Commission with a focus on compliance and risk management. Alizeh has also volunteered her time with War Against Rape in Pakistan, and is connected to the work that SALCO does in multiple South Asian communities in Ontario.

Sultana Jahangir (Running for Re-Election: Board Term 2022-2024): Sultana has served on the SALCO Board of Directors from 2018 to present. She is re-applying to serve a third and final term in accordance with SALCO's by-laws. Sultana is the founder of SAWRO, now known as SAWIS, South Asian Women and Immigrants' Services. Sultana has been the Executive Director of SAWIS since 2007. SAWIS is a grassroots member-led non-profit community-based organization operated by community women to serve the Bengali community and other South Asian communities. Sultana has 25+ years of diverse experience building grass-roots organizations among equity seeking groups, including work with impoverished Bangladeshi urban workers, undocumented immigrants in New York City and marginalized immigrant women in Scarborough, Ontario. Sultana is deeply aware of the legal issues that impact low-income South Asian communities in Canada. Her grassroots, community experience has been a tremendous asset to the SALCO board of directors.

Kish Mahmud (Running for Election: Board Term 2022-2024): Kish Mahmud is running to become a new board member at SALCO. She is currently a Commercial Account Manager, RBC Commercial. Her role includes the implementation of robust market plan to achieve and exceed growth targets ensuring client centric execution and the analysis of financial statements for Not for Profit Clients. Kish has an extensive background in banking and financial management. Kish is hoping to leverage her education, work experience in the not for profit sector as well as her personal life experience with an organization whose values aligned with her own. She hopes to bring her own diverse background to the Board. Having both South Asian and Indigenous heritage, she feels strongly that the work the SALCO does is essential to create a healthy and sustainable ecosystem for an equitable future for all.

Swarna Suresh Tyagi (Running for Election: Board Term 2022-2024): Swarna Suresh Tyagi is running to become a new board member at SALCO. Swarna is currently pursuing her Masters in Social Work at the University of Toronto as an international student from India. She is also assisting Dr. Rupaleem Bhuyan on a project on 'Promoting Economic Inclusion among Racialized Migrant Women through Transformation Resilience' funded by Institute of Gender and the Economy. Swarna recognizes the important work that SALCO continues to do for South Asian newcomers to Canada. As an international student from India, moving to Toronto during the pandemic was not an easy task. Swarna was able to see how, in addition to the financial burden, our legal status affects various aspects of our lives including access to housing, health care, and employment, coupled with the compounding psychological and emotional effects of emigrating from our home country. Swarna hopes that joining SALCO's Board of Directors will help to amplify the issues that international students and newcomers grapple with including access to justice / legal supports.

SALCO AGM 2022

Proposed Slate of Nominees to the Board of Directors (con't...)

Student Board Member Position:

Thaniya Jeyachandra (Running for Re-Election for Student Board Member: Board Term 2022-2023):

Thaniya is a third-year law student at the University of Windsor. Having completed her Social Justice Fellowship placement at SALCO as a Summer Student, she saw firsthand the importance of the advocacy and work that SALCO does. This encouraged her to explore advocacy through mooting and is a member of the Wilson Moot team. Thaniya has always had a passion for being involved in her community. She was a member of the Hamilton Youth Advisory Council and has volunteered as Chair of the Junior Board for Hamilton and District Extend-A-Family, an organization that helps families who have children with special needs and the. She has also volunteered with John Howard Society of Niagara's justice services. During her undergraduate studies, Thaniya volunteered at the Lorch Refugee Camp and UNICEF Frankfurt while living in Germany. In her second year of law school Thaniya was the second-year representative for Windsor's chapter of Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers (CARL) and the Co-Chair of the Women In Law's law needs feminism campaign. She is looking forward to beginning a career in advocacy and litigation.

One Regular Board Member Position Vacant For Election from the Floor:

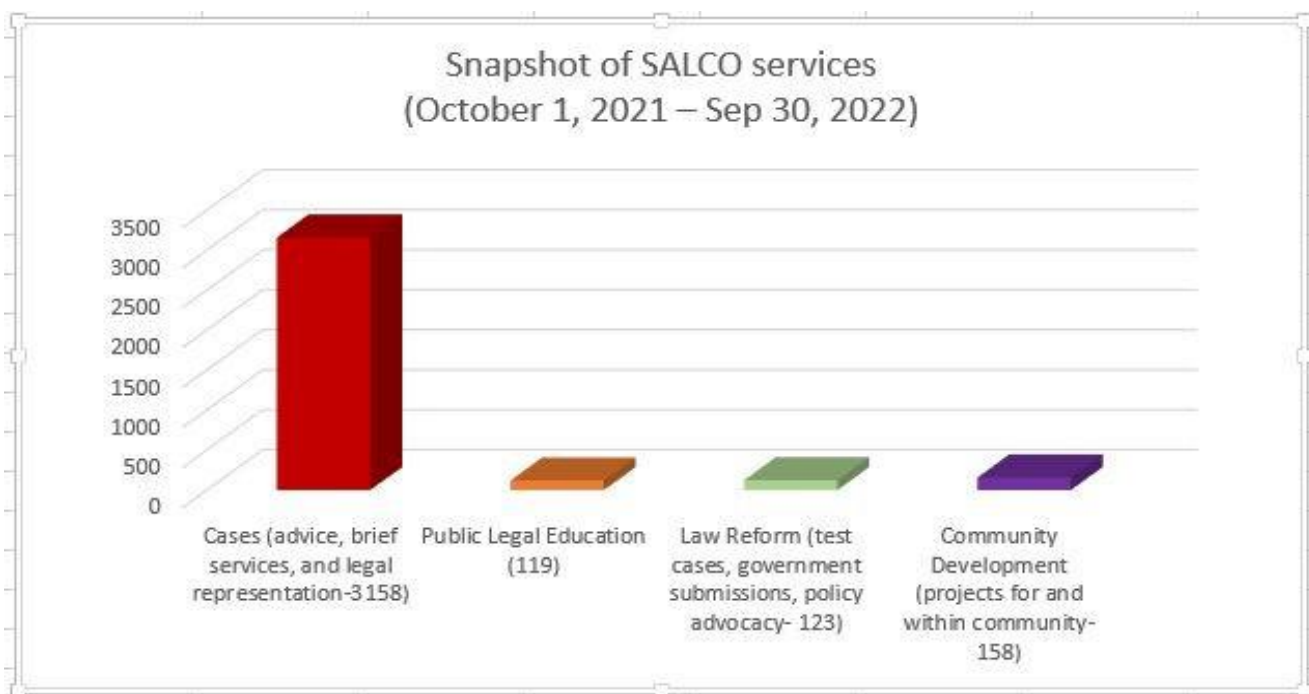
Please note that 1 regular board member position has been left vacant as per our bylaws for election from the floor. If you are interested in joining the board and feel comfortable to do so please consider noting your interest at the AGM meeting. You will be asked to provide a short presentation on your background and interest in joining the board. If more than one person is interested those running from the floor will be presented to the membership for election to the board.

SALCO 2021/2022 Highlights (Joint Staff Report)

Introduction:

2021-2022 has been a busy year at SALCO, bringing with it many new developments and challenges as low income South Asian communities in Ontario continue to be affected disproportionately coming out of the pandemic and by the continued impacts of systemic racism and discrimination. SALCO continues to fulfill its mandate to provide direct legal services, to conduct public legal education, to advocate through law reform, and to support our communities through several community development initiatives. In addition to a lot of direct legal services we have continued success in public legal education, law reforms, and community development projects that seek systemic change for the issues that impact South Asian clients.

- ◆ South Asian was the single largest visible minority group, accounting for 29.6% of visible minorities and 8.7% of Ontario's total population;
- ◆ 207,380 South Asian people in Ontario live in poverty. That is approximately 18% of the South Asian population of Ontario. By contrast, 11% of the non-racialized people in Ontario live in poverty. South Asians continue to live in poverty at disproportionate rates; and
- ◆ The top South Asian languages spoken in Ontario are Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Bengali, and Gujarati.
- ◆ South Asian people had more illness and higher death rates from COVID-19



SALCO 2021/2022 Highlights (Joint Staff Report)

Casework:

- ◆ To ensure safety for our staff and the communities we serve, SALCO has shifted to a hybrid model whereby staff meet twice weekly in office, while working remotely for the remainder of the week; this facilitates both in person and remote meetings with clients.
- ◆ In 2021/2022 SALCO worked on several complex immigration cases including several applications for judicial review to the Federal Court, stay motion applications to stop deportation of clients, a positive answer to a request to reopen an H&C, applications for permanent residence and temporary resident permits in cases of family violence and violence in the workplace, sponsorship appeals for low-income families, and a number of applications for permanent residence on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. SALCO has also supported clients with positive Stage 1 H&C decisions where the process has been stalled by complications related to their complex histories and delays by service providers and government agencies (e.g. where ID cards have not been issued on time, police clearance certificates are delayed, etc). The clinic supported a client with appealing to the Immigration Appeal Division a refusal of her spousal sponsorship application due to misrepresentation.
- ◆ Staff helped clients overcome unique challenges to their immigration claims, such as supporting houseless clients to obtain additional documents for permanent resident cards applications, serving clients with complex mental health and substance-use barriers, and completing PRRAs for clients who are being held in immigration detention.
- ◆ Staff supported an elderly client in a case wherein the client unjustly lost \$85 000 in a scam and is now seeking civil recourse



SALCO 2021/2022 Highlights (Joint Staff Report)

Casework (continued):

- ◆ SALCO supported many low-income tenants during an increasingly trying time for renters in an unaffordable market. The LTB's remote format, which is being implemented for the majority of cases, presented multiple accessibility and procedural fairness challenges to low income tenants. Staff worked on housing issues, fighting evictions, advising tenants on fair and reasonable repayment plans, Toronto Community Housing-tenant negotiations, and successfully advocating to maintain housing for clients on the verge of eviction, including diverting clients from falling prey to eviction when defaulting on a repayment plan under Bill 184.



- ◆ The clinic maintained a large volume of income security related cases, including in large part appeals for Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Works benefits, as well as appeals before the Social Security Tribunal; the clinic saw a large number of appeals for medical issues and overpayments, and helped many individuals with complex health challenges receive the financial support they are entitled to under the law. Staff assisted clients with the digital first approach of the Social Benefits Tribunal, which present technical barriers to access, and fetters clients' ability to comfortably testify in this format.
- ◆ SALCO continued to experience an increase in calls from clients experiencing gender-based violence. Staff supported clients with family law advice, temporary resident permit applications under the family violence class, and support for clients who lost their immigration status due to fraudulent claims by their former partners. SALCO provided advice to several clients facing the threat of forced marriage, and assisted in bringing nine clients back to Canada after they had been taken to their family's country of origin for a forced marriage, as well as helping clients a number of clients establish safety plans (Including 8 High school students).



- ◆ Staff assisted in compiling an OEG Class Action Claim. Settled two employment law matters for clients terminated on human rights discrimination grounds (one for taking parental leave).

- ◆ Assisted a client with a federal court judicial review of an overpayment decision on the collection of the Canada Emergency Relief Benefit (CERB)

- ◆ SALCO also welcomed two new staff members: our social support worker, Maria Ali, and our advice lawyer for immigration and family law matters, Mazahir Walji. Maria will be introducing in-house support for clients who so often experience a need for informed social support and connection to relevant services alongside their legal needs. Mazahir will be responsible for expanding the capacity of the clinic's family law practice, as well as supporting his peers in addressing the massive volume of immigration intakes which SALCO sees.
- ◆ The majority of Family Law clients have sought advice on Divorce, Spousal Support and Child Support; numerous matters have involved a component of domestic violence where authorities have been involved.
- ◆ The social support worker role began in September 2022, and thus far, our staff has assisted clients with the social assistance benefits, housing, education, employment, immigration and citizenship-related issues. Primarily, clients are seeking appropriate referrals within their respective communities. She has provided services to clients in finding suitable housing options, applying for educational program through second career, connecting client's to employment agencies, guiding clients through the ODSP application process, as well as other application processes, like citizenship, child care subsidy, and the housing subsidy application.

SALCO 2021/2022 Highlights (Joint Staff Report)

Public Legal Education:

- ◆ Between October 1, 2021–September 30, 2022, SALCO conducted 119 public legal education (PLE) sessions. All of these sessions were either for low-income communities, front-line service providers, government, and other NGO stakeholders.
- ◆ Through our collaboration with Toronto East Employment and Immigration Law Services (TEEILS), we launched our Tareekh pe Tareekh campaign to increase awareness on employment law rights in South Asian Languages. The campaign features a series of videos in various languages, each of which focuses on different elements of employment law, and commonly asked questions. Through this campaign we have already collected 26 videos and counting. Each week, 2-3 videos are posted, reaching over 3000 social media accounts since early September 2022. Our top videos have gained over 1000 views so far.
- ◆ SALCO conducted a training for the Federal Court for Asian Heritage month to highlight information about South Asian communities across Canada and how the federal court can improve its incorporation of an equity lens to judicial processes
- ◆ SALCO conducted 6 webinars for the Ontario Association of Social Workers, highlighting the unique challenges faces by South Asians and especially immigrants in different areas of law, including immigration, income security, and housing justice. These sessions had very high attendance, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive; one example: “This presenter is my favourite of the all OASW webinars I have watched.”
- ◆ To meet the needs of one of our largest client communities, 4 PLEs were conducted entirely in the Tamil language. These sessions were done through partnerships with Frontline Community Services, The Neighbourhood Organization, Settlement and Family Support Services and Markham Public Library and Tamil Civic Action.



SALCO 2021/2022 Highlights (Joint Staff Report)

Public Legal Education (continued):

- ◆ Staff continued to tailor legal education materials to match the needs and capabilities of each community audience, such as tenants in RGI-housing, Indo-Caribbean seniors groups, settlement agency workers. Overall, staff delivered education on wills and estates, housing and tenant advocacy, forced marriage, immigration 101, municipal elections for newcomers, income security, employment law, COVID-19 related changes to legal and financial aid, gender-based violence education, and so on.
- ◆ SALCO created a Pre-Removal Risk Assessment toolkit, which is now in the process of being translated into multiple South Asian languages. This toolkit will form the basis of a project to create language-specific immigration tools and education for the most disproportionately-overrepresented South Asian communities facing immigration detention and removal. This project is being supported by the Refugee Law Office in assessing needs of non-status people who speak South Asian languages and are currently in immigration detention.
- ◆ Through a project with Maggie's, SALCO contributed to growing an up-to-date legal resource handout folder covering multiple areas of law, targeted towards supporting people who experience heightened precarity in their employment, immigration status, housing, and other areas due to the criminalization and stigmatization of sex work.



Law Reform:

- ◆ SALCO provided submissions to a number of different groups, on a range of subjects, including: Bill C-5, An Act to Amend the Criminal Code and Controlled Drugs and Substance Act Related to Mandatory Minimums, phase 2 of Canada's Employment Insurance modernization consultation, advocacy to the Prime Minister and Minister of Immigration in support of the Status for All campaign spearheaded by Migrant Rights Network.



- ◆ SALCO prepared a written statement for the UNCSW 67 (Commission on the Status of Women) which is scheduled for March 6 to March 17, 2023.

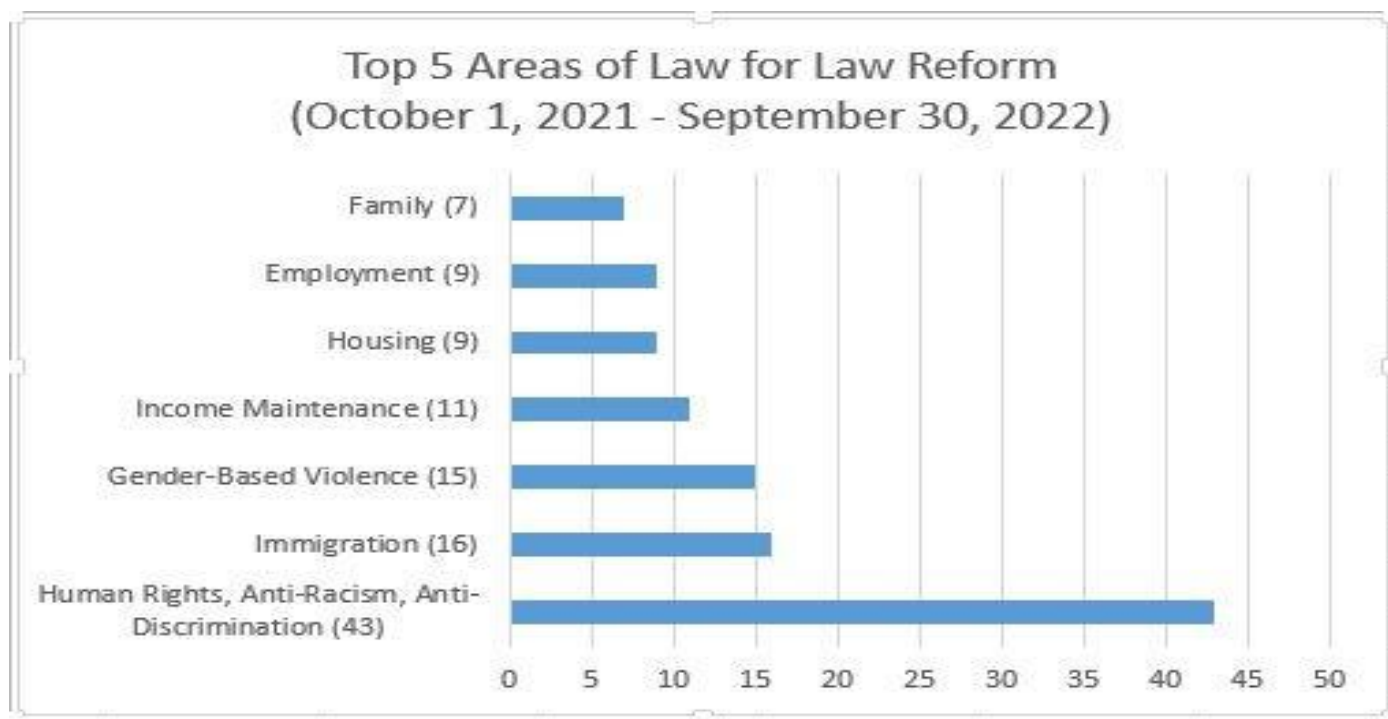
- ◆ As part of a broader push for better and more widely-available affordable housing solutions, SALCO advocated for legalized room housing in Scarborough and organized its advocacy with the Scarborough Voices and Power in Community Coalition.

SALCO 2021/2022 Highlights (Joint Staff Report)

Law Reform (Continued):

Staff participated in a number of consultations, including:

- ◆ ongoing consultations held by the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) and Social Benefits Tribunal (SBT) concerning the digital first approach for hearings that was first introduced as a COVID-19 measure and which has created major access to justice barriers for clients, which our clinic sees regularly,
- ◆ A meeting between Canada Border Services Agency management and clinics and community organizations, where we advocated for changes to CBSA policy and practices, including CBSA officers' treatment of non-status women who are survivors of gender-based violence
- ◆ SALCO advocated with caseworkers from other legal aid clinics before TESS regarding necessary and humane reforms to Ontario Works' funeral coverage policy for deceased social assistance recipients.
- ◆ Provided Submissions to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination for Canada's upcoming review in 2023
- ◆ SALCO secured "ECOSOC" status for SALCO at the United Nations – This status allows NGOs to participate fully in the UN system and recognizes an organizations special expertise in matters related to different UN conventions / proceedings
- ◆ Worked on several test cases – i) *Toussaint* (implementing international treaty rights through domestic courts). SALCO was successful in its request to intervene and to make arguments against the government's motion to strike down the claim. The court agreed that the claim will go ahead, ii) *AGBC (defining the test for public litigation at the Supreme Court of Canada)*, iii) *Haseeb v. Imperial Oil* (intervention status granted in a case that will look at discrimination in employment law based on immigration status), iv) *Safe Third Country* appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada (tried to get intervenor status but was not granted status to intervene).



SALCO 2021/2022 Highlights (Joint Staff Report)

Community Development:

◆ SALCO staff maintained memberships and relationships with a number of organizations and partners, including on: the Advisory Committee for CCMW's Gender-Based Violence Project, Ontario Project for Interclinic Community Organizing (OPICCO) and the Association of Community Legal Clinic of Ontario (ACLCO) executive, the Steering Committee for Social Assistance, the Rights of Non-Status Women Network, the Inter-Clinic Immigration Working Group, and the Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention.

◆ SALCO contributed as a member of a number of advisory committees, including:

◆ The Advisory Committee for U of T Research Project on children's aid and children with precarious immigration status

◆ The Advisory Committee for the National Alliance Project of Racialized Refugee and Immigrant Women

◆ The Advisory Member of the Anti-Hate Coalition (working on submissions around submission on new on-line hate legislation at the federal level)

◆ The Advisory Member of the CASSA Project on Toxic Masculinity and South Asian communities

◆ The Advisory Member on the Riverdale Community Hub's Project on Islamophobia

◆ SALCO is working with Tamil Bar Association and Tamil social support workers on building a coalition to better connect service providers for the Tamil community.

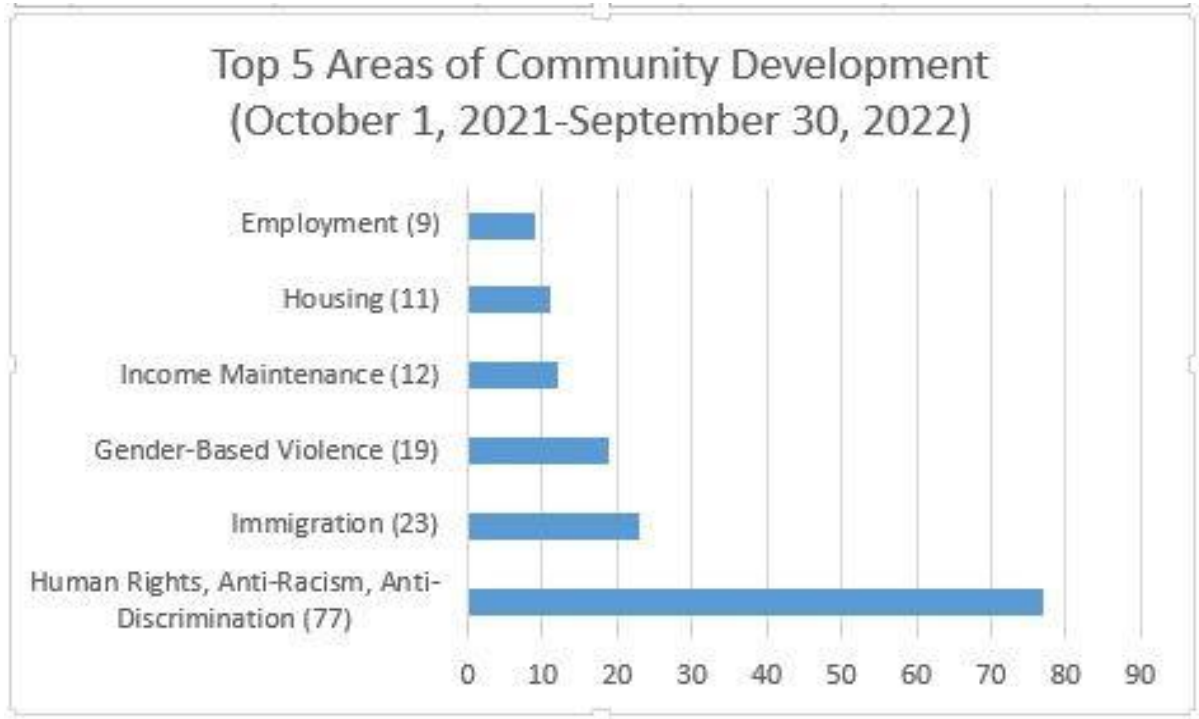
◆ SALCO made contributions to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives "Alternative Federal Budget 2023", co-authoring chapters on racism and immigration

◆ Input was provided by SALCO for the Oxfam Feminist Scorecard 2022



SALCO 2021/2022 Staff Reports

Community Development and Webinar highlights




 South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario
 PROUDLY PRESENTS
**2022 GRASSROOTS TRAILBLAZERS
 IN SOCIAL JUSTICE**
DATE: WEDNESDAY JUNE 29, 2022
TIME: 12:00-1:30 PM

Please register via:
<https://tinyurl.com/SALCOtrailblazers2022>

We are pleased to invite you to join us for a webinar conversation with:
 Kudai Centre
 Naujawan Support Network
 Unit 2 Community Space
 East York and Goodwood Tenants Unions

Come learn about the important social justice advocacy and grassroots organizing engaged in by these organizations, and join us in celebrating the difference that they have made in our communities!



BEYOND THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: SOUTH ASIAN SETTLER RESPONSIBILITIES



BINISH AHMED MAYA MENEZES NEDRA RODRIGO NASUMA KHAN

With Special Opening Remarks from Thunder Sharma

MAY 25 2022 | 6.30-8.30 PM | ZOOM

In recognition of Asian heritage month, join SALCO for an exciting roundtable conversation to interrogate and challenge ourselves individually and collectively on our responsibilities as South Asians living on Indigenous land, here in Canada.

REGISTER AT:
tinyurl.com/SALCOMAY25



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SALCO ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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jasleen kaur johal, Staff Lawyer

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