

## **New Report Released on Use of Social Media by Judicial Officers**

OTTAWA - The Canadian Centre for Court Technology (CCCT) today released a discussion paper entitled [\*The Use of Social Media by Canadian Judicial Officers\*](#).

This ground-breaking discussion paper examines the complex issues surrounding the use by judges and tribunal members of social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn. The foundation of the discussion paper is an unprecedented survey of Canadian judicial officers. Responses from almost 700 participants (approximately 500 in English and 200 in French) provide valuable information about their use of, and opinions on, social media.

After a review of the responses, and consideration of what is currently available as guidance to judicial officers as well as examples of the implications of social media use, the discussion paper concludes with the recommendation that all judicial officers “have a duty to ensure that they understand the advantages, disadvantages and risks of the use of social media in personal and professional contexts and conduct themselves accordingly.”

The paper also concludes that existing policies, principles, codes of conduct or guidelines are inadequate to respond to that duty and suggests that until more guidance is provided, “judicial officers should use social media with caution, keeping in mind the above principles.”

As a reflection of that duty and the current inadequacies, the paper includes recommendations that all leaders of courts and of tribunals and all organizations involved with judicial officers consider taking a variety of initiatives, including creating mandatory education programs as well as voluntary training programs and amending codes of conduct that will enable judicial officers to respond to these complex and evolving issues.

The discussion paper was drafted by a working group composed of federally - and provincially - appointed judges, tribunal members, academics, and lawyers. The working group was chaired by Justice Fran Kiteley of the Ontario Superior Court who is co-chair of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Centre for Court Technology.

The discussion paper has been sent to all members of the working group, all members of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Centre for Court Technology and organizations which participated in the survey or are involved in the issue.

The CCCT-CCTJ is a not-for-profit corporation whose mission is to promote the modernization of court services through the use of technology solutions.

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