

Notice to the Public and Legal Profession

Resuming Administrative Dismissal Notices and Orders

Ministry of the Attorney General / Court Services Division / Wednesday, February 28, 2024

Ontario's *Rules of Civil Procedure*, *Rules of the Small Claims Court* and *Family Law Rules* require court staff to administratively dismiss eligible cases after the expiry of certain timelines.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, procedural timelines (including administrative dismissal timelines under the court rules) were suspended from March 16 to September 13, 2020, by O. Reg. 73/20 under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (and continued under the *Reopening Ontario Act*).

After September 13, 2020, the Superior Court of Justice and Ontario Court of Justice confirmed direction for court staff to continue to refrain from administratively dismissing civil, small claims, Divisional Court, and family matters. This continued suspension enabled court staff to prioritize matters that would best assist litigants and move cases forward (e.g., scheduling hearings and addressing urgent matters).

Effective May 13, 2024, court staff will resume issuing and serving administrative dismissal notices and/or orders for delay for civil, Small Claims Court, Divisional Court, and family matters. This includes issuing dismissal notices and orders that have been on hold since March 16, 2020. Court staff are resuming administrative dismissals as part of the return to normal court operations following the COVID-19 pandemic. Administrative dismissals under the court rules are intended to promote the timely resolution of legal disputes, discourage delays, and increase efficiencies in the court system.

Litigants are strongly encouraged to seek the advice of a lawyer or paralegal about the consequences of an administrative dismissal of their case. If you think your case was dismissed in error, you can contact the court office where your case was being heard to discuss next steps.

Given potential impacts on court scheduling, it is anticipated that it will take about one year to action all the dismissal notices and orders that have been on hold since March 16, 2020. The ministry is asking for your patience.

If you have a question regarding a case that became eligible for dismissal on or before May 10, 2024, please contact the MAG Contact Centre at 1-800-980-4962 or 647-438-0403. If your question relates to a case that became eligible for administrative dismissal on or after May 13, 2024, please contact the local court location where the case is being heard. You can find a List of Ontario Court Addresses and contact information on the Ministry of the Attorney General's website: www.ontario.ca/locations/courts.