



Iler Campbell LLP

Tell us a bit about your co-operative – its origins, purpose and what needs/value your organization provides to the community.

Iler Campbell LLP is a full-service law firm of seven lawyers serving co-operatives, charities, non-profits and socially-minded small businesses. Our experience with Ontario's co-operative movement stretches back more than 40 years. Firm founding partner, Brian Iler, was a key figure in starting many Toronto area co-ops. Today we're proud to serve co-ops from across Ontario. From Brockville west to London; from Gravenhurst south to Beamsville. We count over 100 housing co-ops (non-profit and equity) among our active clients and also many business co-ops, worker co-ops, and other kinds of non-profit co-operatively run organizations. We are also proud to count the Ontario Co-operative Association among our long-time clients. We are passionate about the co-op mission.

How is your co-operative responding to the current needs of the community?

We get it - co-ops have a lot on their plates: member issues; *Human Rights Code*; refinancing; reviewing contracts; managing employees and contractors; writing by-laws; running member meetings; co-ordinating volunteers; writing meeting minutes; and all while staying within a tight budget. We can help with all of that, and almost any other legal matter you are likely to face as a co-operative housing provider. And no bones about it, we know lawyers can be expensive. Our goal is to deliver high quality, prompt, cost effective, legal services that respond to our clients' goals and values. We pride ourselves in clear, legalese-free communication and contracts.

What is your vision for co-operatives in rebuilding the economy post-pandemic?

Whether through our housing co-op clients, our worker co-op clients, or our business co-ops, the sector has an opportunity to insert itself into the post-pandemic world as the best way to rebuild the community from within the community. We're excited that we'll be working in partnership with co-ops to just that.

What does the future of the co-operative sector in Ontario look like to you?

Bright! It has such potential to position itself as an alternative way of delivering important services and housing to Ontarians.

What aspect of OCA's mission/strategic programs do you think is most important as a way to rebuild a more co-operative economy?

It seems to us that the co-op sector suffers from a lack of exposure - people from outside the movement just aren't aware of its potential to deliver services and keep profits local. OCA has a great chance to use this pandemic period to think about how best to heighten the profile of the sector to emerge from COVID 19 even stronger.

Anything else you would like to add?

We're excited to walk beside our co-op friends and clients into the post COVID world.