



NEWS

Durham Legal Clinic offers free affidavits of residence

By **Liam McConnell** Oshawa This Week

Friday, April 23, 2021

The Durham Community Legal Clinic (DCLC), a non-profit based in Oshawa's Midtown Mall, has launched a new online tool to provide proof of residence to those who don't have a valid ID.

The app comes as a reaction to the controversial decision by the Ontario government which gave police the authority to stop and card citizens to ensure compliance with the stay-at-home order.

The Ontario government later changed its tune, only allowing police to break up events and gatherings. These new regulations don't include asking for proof of residence.

Shortly after the province's initial announcement, Durham Region Police, along with many other police services, said they would **not randomly stop people**.

Regardless, DCLC says clients have already been asked for residential information and for the reason they are not at home.

"This creates particular problems for people who may not have a fixed residential address," said Fatima Lam, a community legal worker with DCLC, in a statement.

Any Durham resident can receive a sworn Affidavit of Residence from [PandemicLaw.ca](https://pandemiclaw.ca).

The site connects clients to a commissioner of oaths to help write the affidavit.

“Our concern is that law enforcement may use these new powers to inappropriately pressure people who have valid reasons for not being at a place of residence listed on their identifications,” said Omar Ha-Redeye, executive director of DCLC.

DCLC says these affidavits would allay police concerns and help take the pressure off of Service Canada, which is deep in a backlog of identification services.

Toronto lawyer Oscar Strawczynski created the tool in collaboration with legal professionals in Durham Region.

Durham residents can also call DCLC at [905-728-7321](tel:905-728-7321) for help getting an affidavit.