

Summary Profile for Valerie Jepson

Valerie Jepson is Counsel for the Office of the Integrity Commissioner, a position she has held since 2007. She joined the Office of the Integrity Commissioner after having practiced for five years as a litigator in the private sector.

Ms. Jepson was drawn to a role in the public sector – and with the provincial Integrity Commissioner in particular – because of her deeply held belief that public service ought to be valued. Through her work at the Office of the Integrity Commissioner Ms. Jepson has solidified her view and she believes that institutions like integrity commissioners have a key role to play toward improving the public’s confidence in elected officials and government.

Ms. Jepson advises the Integrity Commissioner on all aspects of her mandate including the *Members’ Integrity Act, 1994*, the code of conduct for MPPs in Ontario; the *Lobbyists Registration Act, 1998*, which establishes the Ontario Lobbyists Registry; and the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006*, which sets out the code of conduct of Ministers’ Staff and establishes a “whistle-blowing” or the disclosure of wrongdoing framework in the Ontario Public Service. This advice includes case-specific issues as well as supporting the Commissioner to make recommendations for reform in almost all areas of responsibility.

The disclosure of wrongdoing framework came into force in 2007, around the same time that Ms. Jepson joined the Office. One of Ms. Jepson’s key initial responsibilities was to recommend and implement office policies and procedures for dealing with disclosures of wrongdoing about the Ontario Public Service. Having successfully developed and deployed clear office policies and guidelines, Ms. Jepson oversees intake activities, advises the Commissioner about jurisdiction and disposition on files and, when necessary, carries out investigations under the disclosure of wrongdoing framework.

Ms. Jepson is a member of the Law Society of Upper Canada (2004) and the Law Society of Alberta (2002). She articulated and practiced in the litigation group at Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP in Calgary, Alberta. Her practice involved insurance, bankruptcy and insolvency, commercial tenancies, contract, estates and oil and gas litigation.

From August 2004 until July 2007, Ms. Jepson practiced in the labour and employment law litigation group of the Toronto firm, Hodgson Shields LLP. Her practice involved all aspects of labour relations and employment litigation, including collective bargaining, arbitrations, human rights, employment standards and employment disputes.

Ms. Jepson is an instructor for the Canadian Administrative Law course at the University of Toronto Internationally Trained Lawyers Program and she has twice been appointed as an adjunct professor for the Global Professional LLM at the University of Toronto.

Ms. Jepson is active in the OBA Public Lawyers Section and since 2009 has held various positions on the executive. She has published articles in the OBA Public Lawyers Sections newsletter and chaired several continuing legal education sessions.

Prior to obtaining her LL.B. at the University of Victoria in 2001, she received her B.A. (Major-Political Science, Minor-Communication Studies) from the University of Calgary. Ms. Jepson grew up in Calgary, but has called Toronto home since 2004.