



**By Tom Wright**  
Chair, Condominium  
Authority of Ontario



**By Armand Conant**  
Treasurer & Secretary,  
Condominium Authority of Ontario

**Industry Profile**

# The Condominium Authority of Ontario

The CAO is not a Government Agency or an Arm of the Provincial Government. Administrative Authorities Help to Protect Consumer Rights and Public Safety



Today, about 1.6 million Ontarians call a condominium home. As the popularity of condo living continues to grow, condominium owners, residents and directors face unique challenges—namely, making sense of condominium rules, and living in close quarters with others in a shared community.

To support Ontario’s growing condominium community – which now numbers approximately 800,000 residential units and approximately 10,000 residential condominium corporations – the provincial government created the Condominium Authority of Ontario (CAO) to inform owners, residents and directors about their rights and responsibilities, and offer support to solve issues that may arise as efficiently and fairly as possible. The CAO is set to launch its first phase of operations on September 1, 2017.

**What Sort of Organization is the CAO?**

The province created the CAO after an 18-month public engagement process and extensive review of Ontario’s Condominium Act, 1998.

The CAO is an administrative authority, not a government agency or an arm of the provincial government. Administrative authorities help to protect consumer rights and public safety. As an administrative authority, the CAO is not funded by the province or by developers, nor do any of the funds collected go to the provincial government. Rather, it is a non-profit corporation funded via an assessed annual fee payable by each condo corporation.

The CAO is governed by an independent board of directors made up of senior experts from the fields of condominium law, the condominium industry, dispute resolution, technology and administrative authorities. At the time of writing, the CAO’s board of directors is composed of Tom Wright (chair), Frank D’Onofrio (vice-chair), Armand Conant (treasurer and secretary), and Genevieve Chornenki (board director). The CAO is overseen by the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services.

Listen to CAO Treasurer and Secretary Armand Conant speak about the new Condominium Authority of Ontario (CAO) at [www.condopodcasts.com](http://www.condopodcasts.com)

**How Will the CAO Support Condo Communities?**

While condo living is often perceived as more carefree than home ownership, owning or living in a condominium comes with responsibilities and restrictions.

Many condo disputes in Ontario today arise from the fact that the residents are not aware of the law and regulations that apply to condominium living. Part of the CAO’s mandate is to help educate owners and directors with resources designed spe-

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cifically for condominium communities. Informed condominium communities will lead to increased protection for condominium owners, and better, more professional governance of condominium corporations.

### What services Will the CAO Offer?

The CAO will provide information and self-help tools for the public. These tools will eventually include condominium guides for prospective buyers, owners and residents.

The CAO will also launch a self-help issues-resolution mechanism in the form of an online guided pathway that individuals can follow to resolve disagreements independently and quickly.

For more complex issues, the CAO will also administer the Condominium Authority Tribunal (CAT), slated to launch on November 1, 2017. The CAT will provide online mediation and adjudication for a faster, accessible and more cost-effective way to resolve certain types of disputes – particularly between owners and condominium corporations – rather than going to court.

It's important to note that the CAT will handle only specific types of disputes at the outset, starting with records-related disputes. In fact, the largest number of disputes in Ontario condominiums today arise from corporations' records and access to them.

In the future, the CAT intends to handle additional types of disputes, as specified by government regulations. However, the tribunal will not be responsible for issues such as liens, amalgamation, termination, or title to real property.


Once it has legal authority, the CAO expects to launch mandatory training for directors, which will be free and available through an online course. The training will take approximately three hours to complete, will be delivered via short modules of 5-7 minutes, and will be mandatory for condominium directors who are elected, re-elected or appointed after the legislation has been proclaimed. In this way, boards will be better equipped to run their condominium corporations transparently and fairly with accurate and updated information on legislation and condo owner rights.

If delegated, the CAO will also eventually set up and administer a comprehensive and searchable online database of all the province's condominium corporations, thereby promoting accountability in condominium governance.

### And From Here?

This is just the beginning. The CAO is continuing to develop and refine these important tools and services which will continue to grow and evolve gradually over time with input from condominium owners, directors and others in the industry.

These initial online services are what's known in the technology world as the "beta," or pilot, versions. The CAO's strategy is to "crowdsource" feedback from the condo community directly on how best to design their services to meet the needs of condominium communities across the province.

For the CAO to be as helpful and effective as possible, input from condominium communities themselves and from the public is vital. Please share your thoughts via the Contact link at [condoauthorityontario.ca](http://condoauthorityontario.ca). 



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