

# OBA Sections Guide



**OBA • ABO**

**Ontario Bar Association**  
**Association du Barreau de l'Ontario**  
The Ontario Branch of the Canadian Bar Association  
la division ontarienne de l'Association du Barreau Canadien

# Sections

## Consider the benefits of joining Sections:

- ✧ Sections organize and host programs designed to provide you with a quick update in your area of practice. They're a great way to **stay current** AND satisfy the **Law Society's minimum expectation** for professional development!
- ✧ Involvement in Section activities offers **networking** and social opportunities.
- ✧ Sections develop strategic advocacy initiatives – **you'll have input** on legislative reform and on other matters affecting the legal profession.
- ✧ Members of Sections receive **newsletters** containing a wealth of substantive legal and practice-related information.
- ✧ Section membership gives you access to your "Section Members-Only" **website**.

**We invite you to take a moment to review this booklet and learn more about the exciting opportunities available to you through Sections. Now is a good time to enrol: Section activities begin in September and conclude next June. Don't delay—you won't want to miss any opportunity to benefit from what Sections have to offer you.**

*P.S. To enrol in Sections you must first be a CBA/OBA member in good standing.*

## Aboriginal Law

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Aboriginal and treaty rights, self-government, land claims and Aboriginal business ventures are among the intriguing and sometimes controversial topics tackled by this Section. Keep on top of the legal, political, social and economic developments and opportunities involving Canada's Aboriginal communities.

Join this Section and play a roll in shaping legislation and government policy on Aboriginal matters, and meet and hear top lawyers on all sides of issues and Aboriginal leaders debate the topics that make front page news.

[www.oba.org/en/aboriginal/aboriginal\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/aboriginal/aboriginal_en/)

## Administrative Law

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If you deal with administrative tribunals, boards or agencies, this Section is essential to your practice. More and more decisions are being made by administrative bodies at all levels of government and this Section will keep you updated on everything from judicial reviews to the latest regulatory and statutory developments.

Newsletter: Administrative Law  
[www.oba.org/en/administrative/administrative\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/administrative/administrative_en/)

## Alternative Dispute Resolution

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ADR has grown fast! Clients and counsel are talking about how mediation, arbitration and other ADR tools can help settle disputes faster and more efficiently. Find out about the latest ADR techniques, what's working and what's not. ADR is having an impact on almost every practice area. Make sure you're up to speed on how it may affect you and your clients.

Among its many initiatives, the ADR Section has established a "CODE OF CONDUCT" for mediators and negotiated a special rate for mediation insurance available from Moore-McLean for Section members and affiliates.

The "AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN ADR" was created by this section to recognize exceptional contributions and/or achievements of an OBA member in the field of ADR.

Newsletter: Alternative Dispute Resolution  
[www.oba.org/en/adr/adr\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/adr/adr_en/)

## Business Law

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This highly active Section gives you the opportunity to regularly hear and meet the leading experts and opinion makers on new and emerging legal issues affecting businesses. If you have business clients, you can't afford to miss out on the tips, news and industry-specific information that Business Law members receive. If networking and making new contacts is on your To-Do list, this Section is a must!

The Business Law Section plays a key role in advising governments on legislative and policy changes in areas such as corporate governance, secured financing, investor rights and consumer protection. Subcommittees of this Section include Corporate Law, PPSL, Securities, Consumer and Franchising. Find out about changes while they're in the works!

Newsletters: Imperfections and Business Beat  
[www.oba.org/en/business/business\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/business/business_en/)

## Canadian Corporate Counsel Association - Toronto Chapter

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In-house corporate counsel (including government counsel at all levels) are among the fastest-growing segments of the profession and this is their forum. This group is geared to the concerns and needs of corporate counsel and provides members with practical and innovative programs on many topics, ranging from the use of technology to law department management.

Join this group and get vital information on topics such as in-house counsel compensation. Plus, members can help shape initiatives and proposed reforms, such as liability insurance requirements for inside counsel. The sessions of this group may well also be of interest from time to time for private practitioners and offer one of the best networking opportunities for both in-house lawyers and outside counsel.

[www.oba.org/en/corporate/corporate\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/corporate/corporate_en/)

## Charity and Not-For-Profit Law

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Do you provide services to charities and not-for-profit organizations? If so, you will want to join the Charity and Not-For-Profit Law Section. Charity and not-for-profit law in Ontario is an emerging field of law which is quickly developing into a specialty area. This proactive Section will assist you to provide services to charities or not-for-profit organizations either as legal counsel or as a volunteer.

OBA in conjunction with Associated Medical Services (AMS) created the AMS/JOHN HODGSON AWARD. The Award is presented annually to an OBA member to recognize his or her exceptional contribution and achievement in the charitable community.

Newsletter: Charitable Thoughts  
[www.oba.org/en/charity/charity\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/charity/charity_en/)

## Citizenship and Immigration

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Benefit from the shared information and expertise this Section offers to all citizenship and immigration law practitioners. Members hear about common problems and solutions and work together to develop constructive legislative and policy reforms. This Section has a continuing dialogue with Citizenship and Immigration Canada and is an essential component of any immigration lawyer's practice.

Newsletter: Citizenship & Immigration  
[www.oba.org/en/citizenship/citizenship\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/citizenship/citizenship_en/)

## Civil Litigation

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Class actions, new rules, mediation, appeals, evidentiary issues, litigation trends, and new practice areas. You name it! Each year, this Section runs an impressive roster of useful and essential seminars and forums. Meet up with old friends and new colleagues, plus hone your advocacy skills.

One of the best features of this Section is the chance to exchange views and network with members of the bar and bench at Section events. The Section has several active sub-committees including Bench and Bar, Franchising and the Discovery Review Task Force. Plus, you can also get involved in the Section's responses and proposals on legislative and procedural reforms.

The "Award for Excellence in Civil Litigation" was created by this Section to recognize outstanding contributions and/or achievements by members of the Ontario Bar Association.

Newsletter: Civil Litigation  
[www.oba.org/en/civil/civil\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/civil/civil_en/)

## Constitutional, Civil Liberties and Human Rights

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Join this Section and keep abreast of developments in this exciting area of the law. Issues explored in the past year include gay and lesbian equality rights versus religious freedom, the future of legal aid and the role of the courts and the constitution in relation to electoral politics. Both junior and senior counsel practising criminal law, civil litigation, constitutional law, administrative law and civil rights benefit from joining this Section.

Newsletter: Constitutional  
[www.oba.org/en/constitutional/constitutional\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/constitutional/constitutional_en/)

## Construction Law

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More than sawdust and nails, this Section deals with a broad range of topics concerning commercial, industrial and residential development and construction. The issues debated in its seminars and newsletters affect financial institutions, developers, building trades, property managers, engineers, insurers, architects, owners, sureties, planners and suppliers to the construction industry. Topics covered include relative priorities between mortgagees and lien claimants, the nature of the trust provisions in the *Construction Lien Act*, tendering issues and the increasing popularity of design-build contracts.

Newsletter: Nuts & Bolts  
[www.oba.org/en/construction/construction\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/construction/construction_en/)

## Criminal Justice

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If your practice involves criminal law, don't miss out on the valuable current law and legislative changes you'll get as a Section member. Along with timely and practical information, the Section provides practical advice on running a criminal practice outside the courtroom. You'll also get the opportunity to meet with many leading prosecutors and members of the defence bar and judiciary.

Newsletter: Criminal Justice  
[www.oba.org/en/criminal/criminal\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/criminal/criminal_en/)

## Education Law

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Education law today encompasses many disciplines, including municipal planning, contracts, workplace law, litigation, criminal justice, government relations, school board structures, election law and administrative law, to name a few. This fast-growing Section is among the few forums for lawyers advising educators, with particular emphasis on elementary and secondary school issues.

A unique feature of Education Law Section events is the chance not only to meet fellow practitioners, but also network with educators, parents, school board officials and advocacy groups attending as Section affiliates.

Newsletter: Education Law  
[www.oba.org/en/education/education\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/education/education_en/)

## Entertainment, Media and Communications

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The internet, films, television, radio, newspapers, music, advertising, telecommunications: if your practice involves forms of communication, information products or entertainment, this Section is meant for you. Unparalleled opportunities are offered to network with leading counsel in the entertainment and communications areas.

Newsletter: Entertainment  
[www.oba.org/en/entertainment/entertainment\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/entertainment/entertainment_en/)

## Environmental Law

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The Environmental Law Section is an essential Section for networking within the environmental law and associated business community. If you deal with clients in manufacturing, real estate, development, waste management, lending, the municipal arena, and the many other sectors affected by environmental legislation, Section membership will keep you current on developments in environmental law and will also provide you with important contacts to enhance your practice.

The Environmental Law Section also plays a role in advising governments on proposed reforms and has a regular dialogue with Ministry of Environment representatives. Section sub-committees are highly active in regulatory and policy amendments and reforms.

Newsletter: Environmental Law  
[www.oba.org/en/environment/environment\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/environment/environment_en/)

## Family Law

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From valuations to pension issues to mediation, this Section can help you stay on top of the latest court rulings, legislative developments and procedural news. Members enjoy a wide range of educational programs and the opportunity to meet with members of the judiciary and the family law bar.

The “AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN FAMILY LAW” was created by this Section to recognize contributions and/or achievements by OBA members in the area of Family Law. The award, is presented each year at OBA’s Annual Institute.

Newsletter: Matrimonial Affairs  
[www.oba.org/en/family/family\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/family/family_en/)

## Feminist Legal Analysis

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Whether it’s debating the impact of legislation on women or marketing your law practice, this Section takes a close look at feminist legal issues within both the legal system and the profession. Practitioners and academics alike share ideas in a collegial atmosphere. This Section also plays a major role in advising the OBA and government on law and women. Make contacts that will enrich both your professional and personal life.

Newsletter: Voices  
[www.oba.org/en/feminist/feminist\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/feminist/feminist_en/)

## Health Law

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Patient rights, mental health, confidentiality of health information, and regulation of health professionals are among the many topics debated in this Section's programs and publications. As our population ages, the cost of health care rises and health law is a rapidly growing area for the profession. Join now, get briefed on the issues and meet top experts and professionals in the health care field.

Newsletter: Health Matters  
[www.oba.org/en/health/health\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/health/health_en/)

## Information Technology and E-Commerce

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Perhaps no other area of business and everyday life sees as much change as information technology and e-business, and lawyers must be right there with it. This Section aims to assist new and existing practitioners in getting and staying up-to-the minute with emerging issues, law and industry practices in this fascinating field.

Newsletter: Information Technology  
[www.oba.org/en/it/information\\_technology\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/it/information_technology_en/)

## Insolvency Law

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Corporate-commercial practitioners and litigators dealing with creditors or debtors will find practical and focused programs on enforcement issues, structuring lending transactions and insolvency matters. Reorganizations, receiverships, liquidations, bankruptcies, legislative reforms and developing case law are among the many topics regularly updated and debated by some of the country's top practitioners, academics and regulators.

This is a great place to connect with fellow lawyers and insolvency practitioners thanks to the Section's unique practice of holding joint programs with the Ontario Association of Insolvency Restructuring Practitioners (OAIRP).

Newsletter: Insolvency News  
[www.oba.org/en/insolvency/insolvency\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/insolvency/insolvency_en/)

## Insurance Law

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Advocates for both insurers and insureds meet on common ground for regular reviews of insurance legislative changes, perspectives on the changes from the bench and the bar, developments in the world of personal injury, and practice tips. Keep yourself current and learn the options available to your clients while making friends of your opponents.

Legal and practice concerns of Sections members can be taken to the Executive for consideration and appropriate action.

Newsletter: Insurance Law  
[www.oba.org/en/insolvency/insolvency\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/insolvency/insolvency_en/)

## International Law

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You will benefit from this Section's programs and timely updates if your practice involves international issues, whether commercial transactions or disputes, trade matters, or matters of public interest, human rights, labour or the environment. Lawyers and litigators whose practices touch on these issues are routinely called upon to advise on cross-border issues and also increasingly on international aspects as well. From international contracts to NAFTA/WTO regulations to doing business in developing countries, or the intricacies of human rights and labour treaties, expert speakers and fellow members can help you and your clients navigate the international business minefield.

Journal and Newsletter:  
Canadian International Lawyer and The Globetrotter  
[www.oba.org/en/insolvency/insolvency\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/insolvency/insolvency_en/)

## Labour Relations

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What's new? What's changed? What's coming? Join the Labour Relations Section and, in a relaxed, collegial environment, learn about the latest legal developments.

The Section's programs bring experts together to discuss the significant new issues impacting on the practice of labour law, including arbitral and Labour Board decisions, employment standards, collective bargaining, government initiatives and legislative changes, effective advocacy and dispute resolution. Whether you represent employers, trade unions, or are a neutral – you will find this is an enjoyable way to stay current on what is happening in the labour field.

Newsletter: Labour Relations  
[www.oba.org/en/labour/labour\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/labour/labour_en/)

## Law Practice Management

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Learn about the latest techniques and trends that can help your practice prosper. Marketing, technology, recruiting, finance – these and many other law office management topics have been presented in programs by this Section. It's what they never taught you in law school, but information no lawyer can do without.

[www.oba.org/en/lpm/law\\_practice\\_management\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/lpm/law_practice_management_en/)

## Municipal Law

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Connect with some of the leading players in municipal law and government and get the inside track on today's latest legislative changes and court decisions involving all aspects of this practice, from assessment and expropriation to licensing and planning matters. This is a key Section to join if your practice includes private or public sector clients that have dealings with municipalities or if you act for municipalities.

This Section hosts regular dinner meetings and features high profile speakers, such as an annual address by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Chair of the OMB.

Newsletter: Municipal Law  
[www.oba.org/en/municipal/municipal\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/municipal/municipal_en/)

## Natural Resources and Energy

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Current topics affecting the mining, electricity and oil and gas sectors are addressed, including the newly opened Ontario electricity market, changes in applicable securities, environmental and tax legislation, as well as industry initiatives and experiences domestically and internationally. Corporate-commercial lawyers and litigators working in the natural resources area will benefit from the chance to meet and network with major players and advisors in this sector.

Newsletter: The Resource  
[www.oba.org/en/natural/natural\\_resources\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/natural/natural_resources_en/)

## Pensions and Benefits

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Pension and benefit issues are taking on considerable importance and this Section can help position you and your practice to deal with the emerging issues. This Section deals extensively with the establishment, funding, administration and regulation of pension plans, profit-sharing plans, deferred compensation arrangements, and other employee benefit plans in both the public and private sectors.

Newsletter: Pensions and Benefits  
[www.oba.org/en/pensions/pensions\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/pensions/pensions_en/)

## Privacy Law

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There has never been a better time than now to be a member of the Privacy Law Section and to learn more about privacy law. The impact of privacy law is pervasive – it affects litigation, business law, employment, health, technology, immigration, criminal law and many other areas. Don't be caught off-guard; there is no better way to learn about the application of privacy law than through membership in the Privacy Law Section. Joining the Section is the best way to find out how the public and private sector privacy laws affect you and your clients.

Newsletter: Personally Yours  
[www.oba.org/en/privacy/privacy\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/privacy/privacy_en/)

## Public Sector Lawyers

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Although public and government sector lawyers make up 13% of the practicing bar in Ontario, until now there has been no vehicle to promote the collective interests of this bar. This Section offers a unique forum to exchange ideas, to network, to learn practices and procedures used by counterparts, and to promote career advancement. It is also an excellent vehicle to reinforce the role you play in ensuring that government action is respectful of the rule of law and the Constitution.

Newsletter: Public Sector Lawyers  
[www.oba.org/en/publicsector/public\\_sector\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/publicsector/public_sector_en/)

## Real Property

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If your practice touches upon any aspect of real property law, then you must enrol in this Section now! Whether you act for lenders, purchasers, vendors, landlords, tenants or developers, this Section's initiatives, materials, publications and programs are aimed at helping you. As a recognized spokesperson, the Section is tackling critical issues such as REBBA, title insurance, and electronic registration, to protect the interest of the real estate bar.

The Section created the "AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN REAL ESTATE", which recognizes outstanding achievement in Real Property law. The award, sponsored by Teranet, is presented each year at OBA's Annual Institute.

Newsletter: The Abstract Page  
[www.oba.org/en/property/property\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/property/property_en/)

## Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

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Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Committee (SOGIC) was founded in 1994 and became a Section in 2004. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity's mandate is three-fold. Firstly, its main focus is on the substantive equality rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered and two-spirited people. Secondly, it provides a vital forum for the exchange of information on sexual orientation and gender identity for those members who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered or two-spirited. Thirdly, it provides public education through CLE and professional development programmes to address issues relevant to those members who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered or two-spirited and/or to those members who deal with issues around sexual orientation and gender identity in their practice.

[www.oba.org/en/sogic/sogic\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/sogic/sogic_en/)

## Sole, Small Firm and General Practice

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Want to make sure you're up to speed on the issues facing sole or small firm practitioners? No one should be without membership in this valuable Section. Geared to your unique needs, this Section can help you manage your practice, keep up with the latest trends and network with fellow practitioners.

[www.oba.org/en/generalpractice/general\\_practice\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/generalpractice/general_practice_en/)

## Taxation Law

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Tax practitioners won't want to miss the networking opportunities and informative programs offered by this Section. Exchange valuable insights with fellow tax law colleagues and members of the judicial and regulatory communities. The on-line discussion forum allows members of the Section to discuss legislative developments and other aspects of a tax practice.

Newsletter: Taxation Law  
[www.oba.org/en/taxation/taxation\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/taxation/taxation_en/)

## Trusts and Estates

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Changing demographics have generated considerable interest by practitioners in estate planning, administration and litigation. This popular Section offers up-to-date news of common law and legislative changes affecting the establishment and administration of will, trusts, and estates, including mental incompetence and taxation issues. Meet and exchange ideas and information with some of the top practitioners in the field.

In 2002, the Section created the “AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TRUSTS AND ESTATES”, which recognizes exceptional contributions and/or achievements in estates law to be awarded at the annual end-of-term dinner.

Newsletter: Deadbeat  
[www.oba.org/en/trusts/trusts\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/trusts/trusts_en/)

## Workers' Compensation

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This Section provides the latest information on issues and developments in workers' compensation law, including changes in legislation, caselaw, WSIB policies, and WSIAT practices. The Section is truly unique as it offers worker and employer advocates, Tribunal and Board lawyers and adjudicators, and non-lawyers working in the field a neutral and congenial forum to constructively discuss and to learn about issues of common interest. The newsletter contains lively comments on current policy issues and caselaw. If your clients need advice on workers' compensation or workplace issues, such as occupational diseases, job-related mental stress, WSIB employer audits and investigations, the right to sue and alternative remedies, this Section will be invaluable!

The Section created the “RON ELLIS AWARD” to recognize exceptional achievement in the field of workers' compensation law. It is awarded annually at the year-end program.

Newsletter: Workers' Compensation  
[www.oba.org/en/worker/workers\\_comp\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/worker/workers_comp_en/)

## Young Lawyers Division

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Starting out, you want all the help and inside tips you can get and this Division offers it to young members of the profession throughout the province. If you're under 40 or been in practice for 10 years or less, you can't afford to miss out on what YLD can deliver. First, this Division features a practical and fact-filled series of seminars and events giving you knowledge you can use in your practice today. Next, you have the opportunity to mix and mingle with many of the leading names in law, government and the judiciary. Plus, you'll meet fellow practitioners and create networks that pay dividends throughout your career.

The Division holds programs regularly in Toronto, London and Ottawa.

Newsletter: Young Lawyers  
[www.oba.org/en/yld/yld\\_en/](http://www.oba.org/en/yld/yld_en/)

## SECTIONS

- network
- share information
- interact
- develop essential skills

## NEWSLETTERS

- update your reference materials
- keep your library current

## ADVOCACY

- participate in the legislative process
- help shape legal reform
- improve the image of the profession

## ON-LINE FORUMS

- communicate with members
- discuss issues
- discover solutions
- explore opportunities

## COMMITTEES

- volunteer
- be heard

## CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

- personal & professional development
- invest in your learning

## PREFERRED SUPPLIER DISCOUNTS

- save money
- improve your bottom line purchasing power

**Make a Difference!**

**Enjoy Belonging!**

For more information on becoming a CBA/OBA member  
please contact:

Membership Department  
1-800-668-8900 or (416) 869-1047



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