

## Ontario condo owners will soon have a less expensive way to handle issues

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Many condo owners know that when it comes to resolving issues, whether it's with a developer, a condo board or a condo neighbour, it can become a pricey and timely endeavour with hours spent in court.

This may soon change if a new Condominium Authority is created according to the Ontario government's recently proposed Protecting Condominium Owners Act.

The Act will be overhauled for the first time in 16 years, which would affect 1.3 million Ontario residents.

The Condominium Authority will provide services, such as dispute resolution and mediation services to handle problems such as noise complaints, bylaw infractions or issues attaining financial documents from the condo board or directors, which could drop the price of resolving the issue to hundreds of dollars from thousands.

It will be funded by fees charged to condo developers, along with a \$1 monthly fee charged to condo owners, [Consumer Services Minister David Oraziotti told the Canadian Press](#).

Ontario will see more condo dwellers in the near future with 50 per cent of new home construction being condominiums and the Act aims to provide clear and comprehensive rules to prevent owners from facing extra unexpected condo fee increases when buying a newly built condo.

For example, some developers will put clauses that have them owning the a condo's common areas, such as the lobby, which is then leased back to the condo board and lead to higher condo fees for owners.

"It's about clear language contracts that are transparent," Oraziotti told CP. "The condo buyer will get a guide through the Condo Authority so they understand and know their rights, they ask the right questions."

Any homebuyers looking to purchase a condo unit in a building that was converted into a condo will now qualify for limited coverage under Tarion's new home warranty program.

Condos will hopefully also see better management with the creation of a Condo Manager Licensing Authority, which will provide training, regulation, licensing and a new code of ethics for the 2,500

managers who manage the province's 10,000 condo developments.

Under the new legislation, there will also be changes to condo board operations to improve transparency and accountability and prevent financial and organizational mismanagement.

Some of these changes include making it easier for owners to call a vote of the condo board, requiring boards to regularly report to owners on issues such as insurance or legal problems and requiring the adequate amount of the development's reserve fund to be easily understood by owners so cost increases are not unexpected.

Board directors will also be required to undergo training before taking on the position.

If you bought a newly built property, whether as an [investment](#) or for personal use, you could qualify for an [HST housing rebate](#). With the help of Rebate4U, put some money back into your pocket by filing a claim with the CRA. We strive to provide our clients with the most professional and quality service in obtaining rebates for their new and extensively renovated homes. We are proud to offer our clients the most personal and attentive service, and we make sure that all of our clients are 100% satisfied.