

Soma Ray-Ellis

Chair – Employment & Labour Group

Get in touch

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Executive summary

Soma is one of the leading employment lawyers in Canada. She has built her reputation as a fixer, working diligently and strategically to represent both management and employees alike. Her consistent ability to achieve outstanding results for her clients has not gone unnoticed. In 2025, she was awarded a regular, biweekly column with Canada's largest daily newspaper, the Toronto Star, acting as a trusted voice to help shape public understanding of employment law. Soma is also regularly interviewed by the Canadian media on employment-law related topics.

Soma represents companies and executives in all areas of employment law including wrongful and unjust dismissal, human rights, harassment, rightsizing of workforces, employment and consulting agreements, employment policies, human rights issues, occupational health and safety, workers' compensation, and privacy law issues. She is regarded as a leading expert when conducting harassment and discrimination investigations for various municipalities and corporations. She also regularly assists organizations with in-house training on workplace compliance. Her litigation practice is equally notable and encompasses numerous high-profile cases including her role as lead counsel to Air India at the landmark Air India Inquiry.

Soma is one of the most powerful voices in employment law and is a prolific and widely respected academic author. Her works include the Halsbury's Laws of Canada volume on Discrimination and Human Rights, 670 pages (LexisNexis; 2022, with a 2026 re-issue), the Halsbury's Laws of Canada volume on Employment Law, 884 pages (LexisNexis; 2023 reissue), and the Employment Equity Manual (Carswell). Her influence also extends into the development of the law itself. She co-drafted the original "Rules of Practice" for the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal and assisted in drafting the Law Society of Ontario's Rules of Professional Conduct governing mediation in addition to numerous other academic publications.

Soma led and contributed to several high-profile investigations, including one involving the Toronto Community Housing Corporation. She has represented significant members of society including CEOs, senators, and government officials in highly sensitive matters both nationally and internationally.

EDUCATION

Osgoode Hall Law School, LLB, 1990
University of Toronto, 1987

BAR ADMISSION

Ontario, 1992

Gardiner Roberts

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Soma is an advocate and trusted advisor whose impact reaches far beyond the courtroom. Throughout her career she was sought out for the most complex and high-stakes workplace disputes, where her precision delivers exceptional outcomes. Her ability to navigate both sides of the employment relationship has positioned her as a formidable force in shaping effective resolutions at the highest levels.

Expertise

Employment & Labour
Litigation & Dispute Resolution
Anti-Harassment & Discrimination
Training Programs & Policy Work
Mergers & Acquisitions
Contract Drafting

Media & Insights

Presentations and media highlights

Sofia, Bulgaria – May 2026 – Presented at a Consulegis conference on recent legal changes requiring greater transparency from employers regarding pay arrangements and practical ways to prepare clients for the new regulations

Participated in a Consulegis panel discussion on how the Trump administration's policies have changed the economy, trade, and industrial policies in the Americas, April 2026

Co-chaired an MSI SIG conference on remote work and impact of AI on the workplace, January 2026

Lucerne, Switzerland – May 2025 – Presented on labour law and compliance issues for in-house counsel with assistance from Max Ray-Ellis

New Orleans, the United States of America – January 2025 – Presented on wage transparency laws

Vancouver, Canada – June 2024 – Presented at a Global Law conference on the relationship between Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) and employment law

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Majorca, Spain – May 2023 – Presented on hybrid employees and digital nomads

Bucharest, Romania – May 2023 – Chaired a discussion on “The Role of A.I. in Law and Accounting”

Published article on the topic of “Doing Business in Canada,” for the International Bar Association’s (IBA) Daily Newspaper, 4 November 2025

Interviewed by CTV Toronto at the BlackNorth Initiative Gala, 22 September 2025

Published article on the topic of “Ontario Court of Appeal upholds ‘just cause’ termination clause”, published by Law360 Canada, 10 June 2025

Interviewed by CP24 on the Hudson’s Bay stores closing across the country, and its impact on employees, 4 June 2025

Interviewed by CP24 on Argonauts quarterback Chad Kelly’s return after being suspended for violating the league’s gender-based violence policy, 22 August 2024

Interviewed by CTV Toronto on workers’ high-rise rescue and safety concerns surrounding the incident, 26 June 2024

Interviewed by CP24 on Harvey Weinstein’s sex crimes conviction being overturned, 27 April 2024

Halsbury’s Laws of Canada – Employment (2023 Reissue). This title covers employment law topics such as human rights legislation, employment standards, obligations and duties of the employee, and more.

Presented at the Commercial List Users’ Committee conference, September 2022

Chaired Consulegis Global Panel Discussion in Dublin, Ireland on “Employment Trends in Canada during Covid-19”, September 2022

Panelist at MSI International Conference on the topic of “Covid protocols in Canada”, March 2022

Chaired online Consulegis Global Panel on “Employment Trends in Canada during Covid-19”, February 2022

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Published volume for Halsbury's Laws of Canada (674 pages), on Discrimination and Human Rights, LexisNexis, 2022

Panelist at Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers on the topic of "Biggest Mistakes Senior Counsel Has Made", January 2021

Published article on the topic of "Termination clauses continue to be under judicial scrutiny in Ontario", published by Law Times, 1 June 2021

Interviewed by CBC National News: The National on the topic of Canadian law as it applies to privacy concerns when employers require their employees to install geo-tracking on their personal mobile phone, 11 April 2021

Interviewed by The Toronto Star on the topic of "People are scared of coming to work': CIBC employees say they want to work remotely following COVID-19 outbreak at Yonge Street call centre", 10 March 2021

Interviewed by CBC News, "Why err on the side of caution as COVID-19 looms in health-care workplaces", July 2020

Keynote Speaker, "Managing the Return to Work in the Midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic What Canadian Employers Need to Know" (Mondaq, webinar), July 2020

Interviewed by Stephen LeDrew on The LeDrew Three-Minute Interview, "What Is Your Employer Legally Required to Do During COVID-19", July 2020

Published article on the topic of "A Covid-19 Lay Off May Not Be Termination", in Labour Notes published by LexisNexis, 15 May 2020

Panel speaker during Q & A on Cross Country Check Up with CBC Radio on the topic of "COVID-19 and how it has disrupted your job", 29 March 2020

Participated during Q & A hosted by The Toronto Star on the topic of "Workers' Rights During the COVID-19 Pandemic", 27 March 2020

Interviewed on CP24 on the topic of "the Harvey Weinstein Conviction and its impact on workplace issues", 24 February 2020

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Interviewed on CP24 Live@Noon and discusses #MeToo, the law and how it played a significant role in the executive departures at McDonald's, November 2019

Participated in a Global meeting of Lawyers in Asunción, Paraguay discussing issues of "Effective Marketing Legal Services in the Electronic Age", October 2019

Presented at University of Toronto, Faculty of Law on the topic of "#MeToo Movement and Risk Management", 30 September 2019

Interviewed by Advocate Daily on the topic of "Societal shift a remedy for gender discrimination", September 2019

Interviewed by Advocate Daily on the topic of "Toxic workplaces a 'lose-lose' proposition for employers", July 2019

Interviewed by Advocate Daily on the topic of "Progressive discipline vital in just-cause terminations", June 2019

Interviewed by Advocate Daily, on the topic of "Despite #MeToo, workplace sexual harassment persists", May 2019

Interviewed on CBC Radio's Ontario Today, "Secret recordings at work", April 2019

Published in The Toronto Star on the topic of "Can employees record conversations in the workplace?", April 2019

Interviewed on CBC Radio's Cross Country Checkup, "Jody Wilson-Raybould's secret SNC Lavalin recordings", March 2019

Interviewed on The John Oakley Show, 640 Toronto, "Top 10 Office Party Don'ts", December 2018

Interviewed on CBC News, "How ready are employers for making rules surrounding legal pot? An employment lawyer tells us guidelines are all over the map", October 2018

Interviewed on CP24, "Employer responsibilities and Canada's cannabis legalization", October 2018

Published in The Globe and Mail on the topic of “Employer readiness ahead of cannabis legalization”, October 2018

Interviewed on CBC News, “Cannabis legalization – are employers ready?”, October 2018

Interviewed on CP24, “Are employers ready for the coming legalization?”, October 2018

Interviewed on CBC News, “‘I feel betrayed by my company’: TTC subway operator barred while using medicinal cannabis”, September 2018

Interviewed on CBC News, “Canada’s legalization and its impact on employer/employee rights”. September 2018

Interviewed on CP24, “Legalization of cannabis and employer/employee rights”, September 2018

Interviewed on CTV News, “New Metrolinx policy ensures employees are ‘Fit For Duty’”, September 2018

Interviewed on Global News, “How Organizations Are Dealing With Sexual Misconduct Allegations”, November 2017

Interviewed on CP24, “Sexual misconduct outings ‘a revolution’”, November 2017

Interviewed on CP24 Live@Noon with Stephen LeDrew, “Sexual assault and harassment and settlements. Is it hush money?”, October 2017

Interviewed on CP24 Live@Noon with Stephen LeDrew, “Sears’ CCAA application”, July 2017

Interviewed on CBC Newsworld, “The rights of employees in the event of a CCAA application”, Summer 2017

Interviewed on Global TV, “The Effect of Legalization of Marijuana in the Workplace”, April 2017

Interviewed on CP24 Live@Noon with Stephen LeDrew, together with client, James Barker, the former General Manager of the Toronto Argonauts, “James Barker’s departure from the Argos”, February 2017

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Interviewed on CP24 Live@Noon with Stephen LeDrew, “Professional firefighters ‘double hatting’ as volunteers in smaller communities”, January 2017

Interviewed on CP24 Live@Noon with Stephen LeDrew, about client “Mathieu Chantelois, the immediate last Executive Director of Pride Toronto’s resignation and subsequent controversy including issues involving Black Lives Matter”, August 2016

resented at a Global Conference of Lawyers in Shanghai, China on the topic of “The Use Of Social Media To Educate People On Employment Related Rights”, October 2016

Presented at the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association Conference on the topic of “Employment Law 101: Sex, Drugs and Money”, October 2016

Presented at a Global Conference of Lawyers in Milan, Italy on the topic of “Enforceability of Non-Competition Covenants”, May 2016

Presented at the Law Society of Upper Canada’s The Six-Minute Employment Lawyer on the topic of “Breaches of the Employment Standards Act, 2000”, May 2016

Interviewed on CTV National News with Katie Simpson, “Hydro One employee terminated upon making sexist comments on television”, May 2015

Interviewed on CP24 Live@Noon with Stephen LeDrew, “Can what you do in your personal life cost you your job?”, May 2015

Presented at a Global Conference of Lawyers in Cape Town, South Africa on the topic of “Effectiveness of Non-Competition Clauses in Employment Contracts”, October 2015

Published Halsbury’s Laws of Canada volume on Employment Law, 785 pages (Lexis Nexis; 2015)

Blogs

Examining former NHL player Kyle Beach’s sexual abuse lawsuit from a Canadian Employment law perspective

28 October 2021

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Ontario's New Stay Home Order Effective January 14, 2021

13 January 2021

Can your boss force you to take the COVID-19 vaccine?

11 December 2020

A COVID-19 lay off may not be termination

21 April 2020

Federal government announces significant change to Emergency Wage Subsidy

8 April 2020

Top 10 Work Refusal Questions for Employers and Employees during the COVID-19 Pandemic

6 April 2020

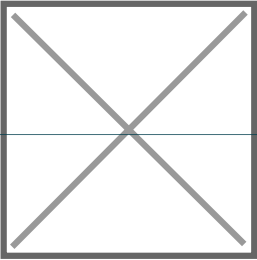
New Ontario Legislation To Protect Workers: COVID-19

20 March 2020

Media

Soma Ray-Ellis speaks about the BlackNorth Initiative at its annual gala

22 September 2025



Soma Ray-Ellis – Hudson's Bay Closures Impact on Employees (CP24)

4 June 2025



Soma Ray-Ellis speaks to CP24 on Argonauts quarterback Chad Kelly's return after suspension

28 August 2024

Soma Ray-Ellis speaks to CTV Toronto on workers' high-rise rescue

26 June 2024

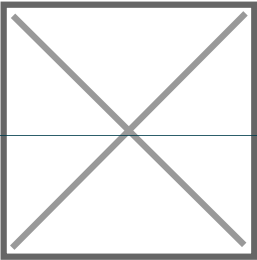
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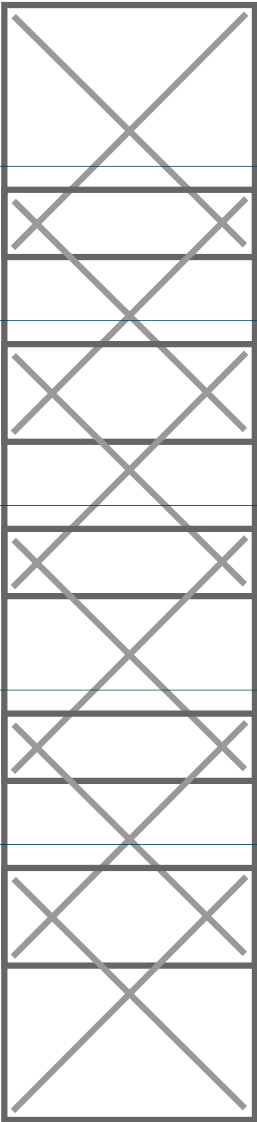
**Soma Ray-Ellis is interviewed live on air by CP24 re:
Harvey Weinstein**

27 April 2024



**Soma Ray-Ellis – Employer
Responsibilities & Cannabis
(CP24)**

9 October 2018



**Soma Ray-Ellis Global News
– Go Transit/Metrolinx**

7 May 2018

**Soma Ray-Ellis CP24 –
Starbucks Scalding Water
Case**

18 January 2018

**Soma Ray-Ellis Global News
– Tim Horton’s Worker
Clawbacks**

15 January 2018

**Soma Ray-Ellis CP24 – Tim
Horton’s Worker Clawbacks**

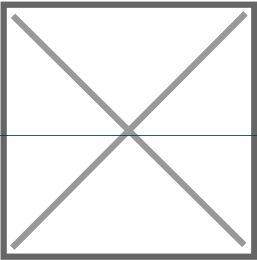
15 January 2018

**Soma Ray-Ellis’s Global
News – How Organizations
Are Dealing With Sexual
Misconduct Allegations**

29 November 2017

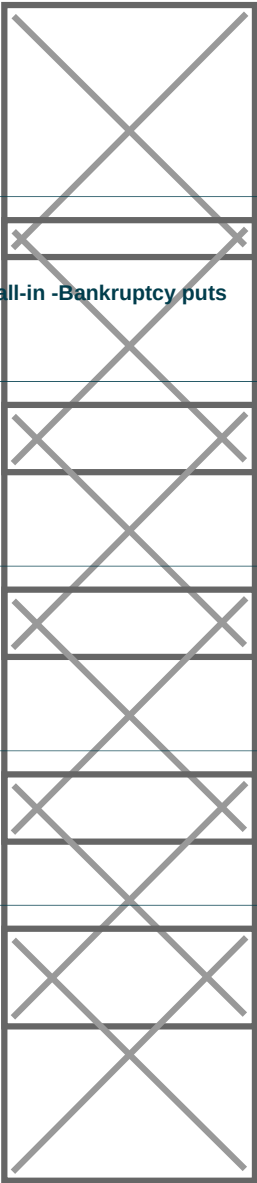
**Soma Ray Ellis’ CP24 Live – Sexual misconduct outings
‘a revolution’**

29 November 2017



**Soma Ray Ellis’ CP24 Live at
Noon – Settlements in
harassment cases not ‘hush
money’**

25 October 2017



**Soma Ray Ellis’ CP24 Live at
Noon – Political analysis and call-in -Bankruptcy puts
Sears employees in peril**

23 June 2017

**Soma Ray-Ellis’s CBC News
interview on the rights for
Sears Canada employees**

22 June 2017

**Soma Ray-Ellis’s Global
News interview on legalizing
pot Public perceptions**

2 April 2017

**Soma Ray-Ellis’s CP24
interview with the Argos’ GM**

1 February 2017

**Soma Ray-Ellis’s CP24
interview on charges facing
firefighters**

27 January 2017

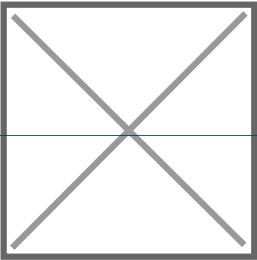
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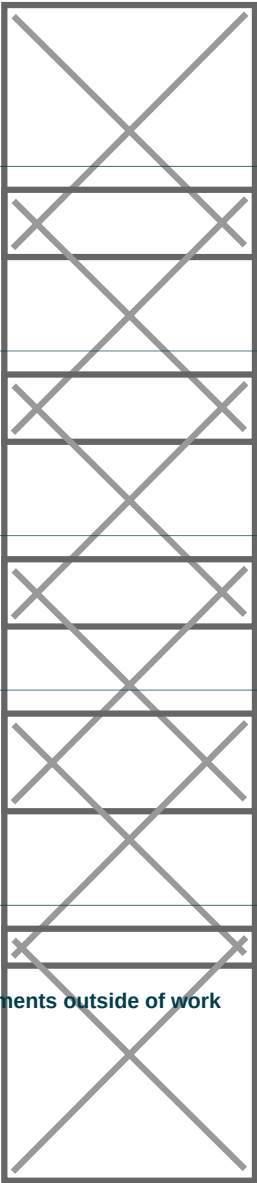
Soma Ray-Ellis’s CP24 interview on the ex-Pride director and the allegations

18 August 2016



Soma Ray-Ellis’s CP24 News interview about the Jian Ghomeshi trial decision

31 December 2015



Soma Ray-Ellis’s CP24 interview about employee comments on social media

31 December 2015

Soma Ray-Ellis’s Live at Noon interview about Jian Ghomeshi on CP24

31 December 2015

Soma Ray-Ellis talks about Jian Ghomeshi on CP24

31 December 2015

Soma Ray-Ellis’s CP24 News interview about employee rights when getting paid in cash

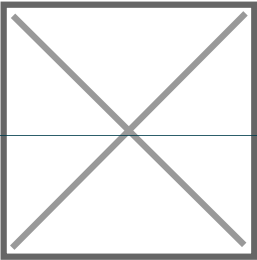
27 June 2015

Soma Ray-Ellis’s CTV News interview about employee comments outside of work

1 May 2015

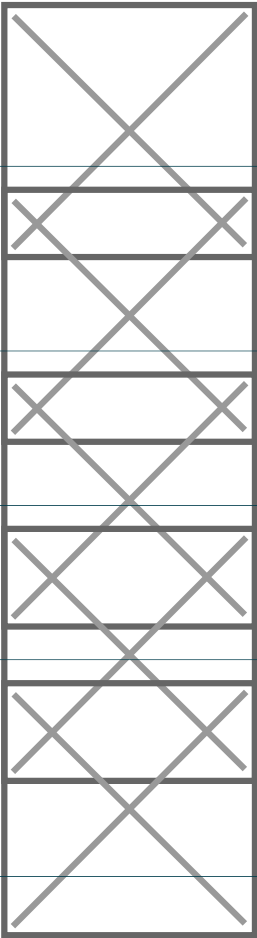
Soma Ray-Ellis’s CP24 News interview about Toronto city and labour union talks

31 December 2014



Soma Ray-Ellis’s City TV News interview about Uber drivers

31 December 2014



Soma Ray – Ellis talks Teachers Strike on Global News

31 December 2014

Soma Ray-Ellis talks about Gene Jones on CP24

24 April 2014

Soma Ray – Ellis talks Teachers Strike on CP-24

10 January 2013

Soma Ray – Ellis talks about cost of firing TTC GM Gary Webster on CP-24

22 February 2012

News

Soma Ray-Ellis interviewed on CP24 in relation to the New York appeals court overturning the Harvey Weinstein conviction

26 April 2024

Should employers use productivity monitoring software?

17 October 2022

Soma Ray-Ellis spoke at the Commercial List Users’ Committee’s Education Day Conference

19 September 2022

Soma Ray-Ellis interviewed by Law Times regarding Termination clauses

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21 May 2021

Soma Ray-Ellis interviewed on CBC's The National

12 April 2021

Soma Ray-Ellis quoted in the Toronto Star

10 March 2021

Soma Ray-Ellis interviewed by CBC News regarding COVID-19 and the Precautionary Principle

24 July 2020

Soma Ray-Ellis Interviewed by Stephen LeDrew Regarding Employer Responsibilities During COVID-19

7 July 2020

Soma Ray-Ellis Interviewed by the Philanthropist Regarding Legal Questions Related to COVID-19 Lay Offs

22 April 2020

Soma Ray-Ellis appears nationally on CBC Radio as part of expert panel to discuss COVID-19

29 March 2020

Ontario Employer Preparedness Checklist For COVID-19

17 March 2020

Soma Ray-Ellis interviewed by CP24 Live@Noon

5 November 2019

Soma Ray-Ellis interviewed by Advocate Daily regarding gender discrimination

5 September 2019

Soma Ray-Ellis discusses how toxic workplaces are a lose-lose proposition for employers with Advocate Daily

24 July 2019

Publications

IBA Daily Newspaper – Doing Business in Canada

4 November 2025

Ontario Court of Appeal upholds 'just cause' termination clause

8 August 2025

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Memberships and recognition

Board memberships

- Toronto Philharmonia
 - The Haliburton Club (in support of Scouts Canada)
 - The South Asian Bar Association
 - GS1
-

Recognition

- Business Leadership Award (Women Entrepreneurs of Canada)
- Lawyer of the Year (SABA)
- Recognized by Post City Magazine as one of Toronto's Best Labour & Employment Lawyers
- Elected Chair, Employment Law Group Consulegis
- Elected Co-Chair, Employment Law Group, MSI