



# Awanish Sinha

Partner  
Co-Lead | Public Sector

Toronto

[asinha@mccarthy.ca](mailto:asinha@mccarthy.ca)

t. +1 416-601-8030

## Bar Admission

Ontario 2001

## Law School

McGill University

## Industries

Public Sector  
Infrastructure  
Energy & Resources  
Power  
Cannabis  
Gaming and Licensing

## Practices

Litigation and Dispute Resolution  
Public Law  
Procurement

## Strategic Issues

ESG and Sustainability

## Awi solves problems.

Awi is a partner in our litigation group and Co-Lead | Public Sector. He advises clients on extraordinary circumstances that involve political risk, unforeseen circumstances and transformative strategy projects. Decision-makers value his ability to see around corners, separate key information from background noise, and find creative solutions for uncertain times.

### Political Law

Awi has the premiere political law practice in Canada, with unique experience in high-profile matters. He balances an adroit command of the political ethics rules and procedures with a deep understanding of the realpolitik at play. He represents senior public office holders and major corporations in high-profile parliamentary committee proceedings and investigations by the Conflict of Interest & Ethics Commissioner, the Commissioner of Lobbying, the Canada Elections Commissioner, provincial Integrity Commissioners, and Auditors General. Leaders trust Awi in these high-stakes scenarios to identify core issues, map risks and recommend real actions.

His mandates are confidential.

### Crisis Management

Awi serves clients when disaster strikes. He has provided crisis readiness and response strategies to clients grappling with physical catastrophes, corporate violations of public trust and executive malfeasance. Awi specializes in practical, real-time legal advice to coordinate with – not compete with - business priorities and public communications responsibilities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Awi advised on a number of critical pathways for organizations struggling to navigate business disruption, government programs and reputational risk.

His mandates are confidential.

### MT | Public Sector

Awi and his partners [Gillian Kerr](#) and [Matthew Kelleher](#) are the Co-Leads of McCarthy Tétrault | Public Sector, a special strategy group that serves clients to navigate legal issues at the intersection of politics, public policy and business. MT | Public Sector has elite experience advising on novel regulatory regimes, major commercial projects with government stakeholders, and visionary projects.

Some of their mandates include:

- **Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment (MLSE): COVID-Era Return-to-Play:** During the pandemic, MT | Public Sector acted for MLSE in its regulatory, public health and government negotiation processes for the

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iterative return to play for the National Hockey League (NHL), the National Basketball Association (NBA) and Major League Soccer (MLS) in Canada, including for MLSE's winning bid to host the 2020 NHL "Playoffs Bubble" in Toronto and the 2021 return from Tampa Bay of the Toronto Raptors for the 2021/2022 season.

- **VAX-PASS Initiative:** Leading on legal thinking for the viability of COVID-19 vaccine passports for private businesses, MT | Public Sector worked with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Toronto Regional Board of Trade to create the [VAX-PASS Tenets](#), a set of guidelines to create community standards for vaccine verification, and host forums for corporate citizen coordination on the issue, including the [VAX-LAW SYMPOSIUM](#). With subject matter experts on labour, administrative and governance law, Awi advised many companies on the safest path to a safe workplace.
- **Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG): Closure of Ontario Casinos:** At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic's reach in Canada, as an organization on the leading edge of government responsibility for COVID safety, OLG executed the coordinated, immediate shutdown of all casinos and table-gaming facilities in Ontario. MT | Public Sector advised on the myriad of commercial, administrative and public law issues drawn into this swift but intricate process.
- **Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO): Creation of Ontario Cannabis Stores (OCS):** MT | Public Sector advised the Crown corporation on the regulatory structure, commercial structure and operations matrix for the creation of OCS, the largest cannabis purchasing entity in the world. We continue as counsel for OCS as it grows and evolves.
- **Uber: Canadian strategy:** MT | Public Sector advises Uber Canada on a variety of matters related to evolving regulation of the ride-sharing space provincially and federally, including major litigation with government actors.

Awi also maintains a leading commercial litigation practice, specializing in large-scale **infrastructure, energy, and innovation projects that have a significant public policy component**. In 2021, he was ranked among *Lexpert* magazine's "Leading Litigators" and as a Leading Lawyer in Infrastructure, Energy and in Litigation.

## Designations

- Awi was a finalist for *Canadian Lawyer Magazine's* 2021 list of Most Influential Lawyers in Canada in the Government/Association category. He is a commentator of note on macro-level [legal, political and business issues](#).
- Awi serves as McCarthy Tétrault's ambassador to *Legal Leaders in Diversity*. He is a sought after voice on [diversity and inclusion issues](#) in the Canadian business community.
- For four years he served as the firm's United Way Campaign Co-Chair.
- In 2014, he became the youngest ever recipient of the *South Asian Bar Association (SABA)* Legal Excellence Award.

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- Awi serves on the board of the *Canadian Club: Toronto*, one of Canada's oldest and most respected events organizations for speakers on critical topics in the Canadian conversation.
- Awi serves on the board of the Tim Hortons Foundation, which funds one of the most robust philanthropic camp and life skills education programs in the world.
- In 2021, Awi served as an advisor on special issues to the *Liberal Party of Canada* for the federal election.

## Awards & Rankings

### Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory

Leading Lawyer: Infrastructure Law, Litigation - Corporate Commercial

### Lexpert Special Edition: Infrastructure

Leading Lawyer

### Lexpert Special Edition: Litigation

Leading Lawyer

### South Asian Bar Association - 2014

Legal Excellence Award

## Recent Experience

- **Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment receives federal, provincial and municipal COVID-19 safety approvals for the return of the Toronto Raptors to Canada for the upcoming NBA basketball season**  
September 10, 2021
- **MLSE announces "Bringing Toronto Back to Its Feet" program**  
April 24, 2020

## Recent Insights

- **What you need to know before you contribute or attend fundraisers during the Ontario municipal elections**  
October 20, 2022
- **What you need to know before you advertise as a third party during the municipal elections in Ontario**  
October 20, 2022
- **The Strong Mayors Act, and its (potentially) unique impact on the 2022 Ontario Municipal Elections in Toronto and Ottawa**  
October 20, 2022
- **The Votes are In – 2022 Ontario Election Results**

June 03, 2022

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## Events

- **The Reckoning of Roe v. Wade - In Conversation with Alexia D. Korberg, Co-Counsel to Jackson Women's Health Clinic before the Supreme Court of the United States in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health**  
May 26, 2022
- **Federal Budget 2022: Impacts & Implications for Doing Business in Canada**  
April 13, 2022
- **12th Annual National Retail and Consumer Markets Summit**  
February 23, 2022
- **MT Business Transformation Series: Corporate/Climate/Change**  
February 09, 2022