

Lawsuit by Parishioner Injured While Working Voluntarily at Church Is Dismissed



A parishioner at a church volunteered to help with painting as part of the church's renovations. He fell off a stepladder and suffered a serious head injury. He sued the church, claiming that it had violated its duty to ensure his reasonable safety while he was working voluntarily on the church facility and that it had violated OHS regulations. But a court dismissed the lawsuit. First, the parishioner wasn't a 'worker' under the OHS laws and thus those regulations didn't apply. And even if the safety regulations *did* apply, the church didn't violate them and wasn't negligent. The church didn't ask the parishioner to install trim but he took it upon himself to do so anyway and contrary to his supervisor's instructions. And he fell off the stepladder when working on the trim, not while painting. Moreover, the church had provided a stable ladder, a flat, stable and clean working surface, appropriate ladder use instruction and adequate supervision [[Baltadjian v. The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation for the Diocese of Alexandria](#), [2017] ONSC 61 (CanLII), Jan. 05, 2017].