

# **COBA 2011 Handout**

## **SOCIAL BENEFITS TRIBUNAL STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **OBJECTIVE**

The basic function of the Stakeholders Consultative Committee is to provide a forum for the Social Benefits Tribunal and representatives of appellants and respondents – i.e. – the stakeholders to exchange information and views on operational and procedural matters of the Tribunal. The objective is to foster constructive working relationships between all participants, develop best practices, coordinate resources and activities, increase communications and consultations, and develop common expectations.

### **FUNCTIONS**

- To discuss operational procedures and suggest improvements and coordination of resources and practices between stakeholders and the Tribunal – this may include electronic filing, scheduling, etc.
- To review proposed rules, guidelines, practice directions, adjudication strategies, etc. and offer views on how these would affect the stakeholders
- To offer ideas and methods for improving the Tribunal's forms, informational material, website, etc.

The Committee will not make decisions. It will not address the issues listed below:

- Specifics of individual cases
- Interpretations of the relevant legislation
- Conduct of individual members and staff
- Issues related to the policy-making function of the Ministry
- Issues relating to legislative amendments

The Committee must operate in the context of the SBT being an independent adjudicative tribunal. As such, the representatives from the Appellants and from the Respondents will be treated impartially.

## **ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP**

The Consultative Committee will be administered through the office of the Chair of the Tribunal. The members of the Committee shall be determined by the Chair of the SBT from time to time.

For purposes of transparency and impartiality, and to fully respect the adjudicative independence of the SBT, the Ministry of Community and Social Services should participate only in the role of being a representative of a Respondent.

Although certain organizations will be requested to provide names of representatives on the Committee, the persons who sit as members of the Committee will not be presumed to speak on behalf of or bind their organization unless that is clearly stated. All members of the Committee are welcome to contribute their personal ideas and viewpoints.

The following is the preliminary list of members, which may be reviewed from time to time:

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## **MEETINGS**

The Consultative Committee will meet three times each year. The preferred timing is Monday afternoon from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., to allow for travel time from nearby regions. The location will be the head office of the Social Benefits Tribunal at 1075 Bay Street, Toronto (7<sup>th</sup> floor), but participants outside of the Toronto area may be connected by teleconference and speaker phone.

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

A summary of each meeting will be drafted by the Tribunal, and circulated for comment from the attendees. The meeting summary shall not be circulated publicly until it has been confirmed as a final version.

## **REVIEW OF MANDATE OF THE STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

After eighteen months of operation, a review of the Committee's work and mandate will be done to determine if changes or improvements are necessary.

**DATE:** July 14, 2010