

Tribunal Watch Ontario

Mission Statement and Operating Principles¹

Tribunal Watch Ontario is a public interest organization with a mission to monitor Ontario's judicial tribunal system, advocate for adjudicative independence, and promote access to justice. We will monitor new appointments to ensure that candidates are selected following a competitive process. We will advocate for appointment and re-appointment processes that are inclusive, transparent, merit-based, and free from political influence. We will advocate for dispute resolution processes that are fair, expert, timely and accessible.

Operating Principles

1. While our work may require criticism of government decisions, including a failure to act, our perspective will always be non-partisan.
2. We will seek to establish partnerships with other organizations with common goals.
3. We will recognize and respect the fact that some supporters cannot be publicly identified.
4. We will not engage in any individual case, either of people who have appeared before tribunals or people who were not appointed or re-appointed to a tribunal.

Structure

Tribunal Watch Ontario consists of a Steering Committee, an Advisory Council, and Working Groups.

The Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is responsible for planning and implementing the organization's vision and strategies. This includes day-to-day operations such as managing the website, mailing lists, and media and social media communications. It responds to developments in the judicial tribunal sector and develops research and policy ideas and positions in consultation with the Advisory Council. It advocates for systemic changes in laws, processes and allocation of resources for Ontario's judicial tribunals.

¹ This is an initial statement. It is anticipated that it will be reviewed from time to time as the work of the organization progresses.

The Advisory Council

The Advisory Council will be comprised of about 15 members who will represent important voices from inside and outside the tribunal sector. The members of the Council will initially be invited by the Steering Committee. Subsequently, the Council will invite new members as required in consultation with the Steering Committee.

The general purpose of the Council is to support and contribute to the work of Tribunal Watch Ontario and provide particular expertise and strategic insights. A more detailed working relationship between the Steering Committee and the Council will be developed after the Council is established.

Tribunal Working Groups

Tribunal Working Groups allow for in-depth analysis of issues pertinent to specific tribunals. The work of each Group will vary as the circumstances of each tribunal are different. It is anticipated that they may do the following:

- Develop contacts and partnerships with relevant groups and individuals
- Monitor appointments and re-appointments at the tribunal
- Document what has happened to the tribunal and how it has been affected by appointment and re-appointment decisions
- Monitor processes for evaluation of adjudicators
- Monitor the accessibility of the tribunal, particularly for self-represented parties
- Identify barriers, including budget issues, to the effective operation of the tribunal
- Propose structural changes that might enhance the effective operation of the tribunal.

The Working Groups will report to the Steering Committee. They will not make public statements on behalf of Tribunal Watch without approval.