

**Social Benefits
Tribunal**

1075 Bay Street 7th Floor
Toronto ON M5S 2B1
Fax.: (416) 326-5135

**Tribunal
de l'aide sociale**

1075 rue Bay 7^e étage
Toronto ON M5S 2B1
Télec. : (416) 326-5135



Priority Post

January 9, 2007

Mr. Robert T. Chisholm
[REDACTED]

Ottawa, ON
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Chisholm:

Re: Social Benefits Tribunal File No. 0605-04207

Thank you for your letter of December 13, 2006 with your request to have observers present at the hearing of your appeal on January 17, 2007.

I regret to inform you that the Tribunal does not agree to the presence of these observers. The *Ontario Works Act, 1997* establishes the Social Benefits Tribunal and provides for its authority to conduct hearings. Subsection 66(1) of the Act states that despite the Statutory Powers Procedure Act, all hearings of the Tribunal shall be heard in private.

While you may request that a person attend the hearing with you as an observer to offer support, this person will also be advised that the hearing is held in private and that the matters discussed are confidential.

I understand this appeal is important to you but you should also be aware that the decisions of the Tribunal are not binding on other panels of the Tribunal or on the courts. A decision will not be of precedent value for the issues you raise. The hearing, moreover, will only deal with the issue under appeal, that of the assessment and recovery of an overpayment. Your concern over other broader issues will need to be dealt with in another forum.

I hope this information is of assistance to you.

Yours truly

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Lee".

Mary Lee
General Manager

cc. Mr. R. Fox, Case Presenting Officer, City of Ottawa