

Early Intervention Program (EIP)

In addition to its ongoing efforts to promote consistency, transparency and overall fairness in its adjudication, the WSIAT is committed to efficiency. In order to promote efficiency in adjudication, the WSIAT has created the Early Intervention Program (EIP).

The EIP is a process that allows parties to resolve suitable cases without a formal oral or written hearing, by providing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services (for single-party appeals) and mediation (for two-party appeals).

There are many benefits for parties that participate in ADR and mediation offered through the EIP. These may include:

- more direct participation and ownership in the outcome of the appeal
- removing the uncertainty of the outcome in the traditional adjudication process
- less expenditure of time and resources for the parties and the WSIAT when compared to the traditional adjudication process
- sparing vulnerable witnesses from having to testify
- helping preserve worker/employer relationships (in the case of two-party appeals)

The EIP is committed to the Tribunal's core objective of delivering high-quality, administrative justice. So, while the EIP strives to be agile and efficient, it remains committed to the principles of natural justice as well as to fairness and integrity. This means that not all cases are suitable for the EIP. Cases where testimony is likely to play a significant role in the outcome of the appeal, for example, are generally not suitable for the EIP.

The EIP consists of a Program Lead, Vice-Chairs who are specifically designated by the Chair, four Dispute Resolution Officers (DROs) and an Appeals Services Officer (ASO).

Participating in the EIP in either ADR or mediation is strictly confidential and voluntary. There is no prejudice to any party that participates in the EIP because parties can opt out of the process at any time and exercise their right to have their appeal adjudicated before a Vice-Chair or Panel, who will have no knowledge of the party's discussions in the EIP.

Parties can request ADR or mediation on the Confirmation of Appeal (COA) form or by contacting the WSIAT. In some instances, the WSIAT may, on its own initiative, contact a party and invite that party to participate in ADR or mediation. Ultimately, it is the WSIAT that determines whether or not a case is suitable for this program.

Parties who wish to participate in either ADR or mediation must sign a consent form, which sets out their roles and responsibilities as well as their confidentiality obligations.

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