

Administrative Tribunals in Saskatchewan

- Administrative Tribunals play an important role in our community. They provide a form of redress, mostly in disputes between an individual and government.
- Their role is to serve as an extension of the executive branch of government on matters that require independent decision-making, free from political influence, and in some cases as alternatives to the courts.
- They were created to provide an affordable, effective and timely alternative to government bureaucracy and the courts.
- As of 2007, Ombudsman Saskatchewan identified 55 boards and commissions in Saskatchewan that it considered to be administrative tribunals.
- A common characteristic of administrative tribunals is that they are created and governed by statute.
- Administrative tribunals in Saskatchewan review a broad range of government decisions that deal with many different aspects of most citizen's daily lives, such as employment, human rights, regulation of agriculture and food, utilities, housing, social assistance, insurance and vehicle regulation, and more.
- Some fulfill a regulatory function such as the Milk Control Board that manages the production and distribution of milk or the Financial Services Commission that protects consumers through the regulation of the Saskatchewan financial market.
- Others have an adjudicative function, such as the Labour Relations Board, which deals with disputes under the Trade Union Act, or the Human Rights Tribunal, which deals with complaints under the Human Rights Code.
- Whether regulatory or adjudicative, many tribunals make decisions that may deeply affect the lives of private citizens. They are the determiners of fact, and their decisions have consequences to the parties, just as decisions of a court or governmental decisions can also seriously affect the lives of parties.

Tribunal Process

- Typically, when a matter goes before a tribunal, the parties involved:
 - Contact or are referred to the tribunal.
 - Are provided with a hearing date.
 - Prepare for the hearing by gathering relevant information.
 - Attend the hearing with or without an advocate or lawyer and present their case.
- The tribunal, upon hearing all the information, can make a decision at that time or reserve it for a later date.
- The complainant then receives the final decision, which may or may not be in writing.
- The entire process from start to finish can take a few days or a few months or, in extreme cases, several years.