

Practice Direction on Communicating with the Child and Family Services Review Board

Practice Directions (PD) support the Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSRB) Rules of Procedure and provide guidance about what the CFSRB expects of the parties and, in turn, what the parties can expect from the CFSRB. They assist in understanding the Rules.

Contact Information

The CFSRB requires complete and accurate contact information. If your contact information changes, you must immediately advise the CFSRB and all other parties in writing.

If you have checked our website and still have problems communicating with the CFSRB or following these directions, contact the CFSRB's customer service line at 416-327-0111 or toll-free at 1-888-777-3616.

Representatives

A party who is represented must communicate with the CFSRB through their representative. CFSRB staff will send materials including hearing notices and directions to the party and to the representative. It is the representative's responsibility to keep his or her client informed.

A representative who ceases to represent a party must notify the CFSRB and all other parties in writing.

Communicating with the CFSRB

All file-related communications with the CFSRB, including email, must be addressed to the Registrar. Email communications must be addressed to CFSRB@ontario.ca. It is not appropriate to write directly to the Associate Chair, a Vice-Chair or a Member.

Communications from the CFSRB

The CFSRB will predominantly send documents to the parties by email or fax. Where a party has chosen to correspond by regular mail, the CFSRB will communicate with the party by regular mail.

Communicating with Other Parties

When a party sends correspondence, submissions and documents to the CFSRB other than the initial application or appeal, that party must also send all such materials to all other parties.

Email Communication

The CFSRB allows communication by email which can be an efficient and effective method. Where an applicant wishes to communicate by email with the CFSRB, consent must be provided in the appropriate field on CFSRB application forms. In the application, the applicant confirms the email address and authorizes the CFSRB to use email for all appeal related correspondence. The CFSRB will not communicate by email without consent.

Communication through email regarding specific CFSRB files will be added to the file in the same way as letters and faxes, in order to ensure openness and transparency to all parties involved with the files. Emails will also be stored electronically by the CFSRB.

If a party has inadvertently copied other people or organizations that are not named as a party to the appeal, the CFSRB may request the sender to remove the unrelated parties and resubmit the email, where deemed necessary.

The CFSRB will respond to all forms of communication in a time-appropriate manner, consistent with the Ontario Public Service Common Service Standards and its own rules and procedures.

Emails received after 5 p.m. are considered to be received on the next day that is not a holiday. If an email requires urgent attention, the sender should contact the CFSRB by telephone. Contact the CFSRB at 416-327-0111 or toll-free at 1-888-777 to ensure the request has been received and will be actioned.

Reference Line

All written communications must include the CFSRB file number (except where filing an initial application or appeal) and the applicant or appellant's name.

Where communications with the CFSRB are by email, the subject line must include the CFSRB file number and the body of the email must briefly describe the attached documents.

Documents

Proof of Delivery of Documents

Parties must indicate when and by what method documents and submissions were delivered to the other parties in the application or appeal. Delivery to the parties should be cc'd in an email or noted in the body of the email.

Documents to be Filed Once

Parties should not file multiple copies of any documents or correspondence unless directed by the CFSRB.

Documents to be Filed in Single Appeal Proceeding

Some applicants/appellants or representatives may be participating in more than one application or appeal. In order to maintain the privacy of individual proceedings, communications and documents relating to individual applications or appeals cannot be combined or sent together. Documents relating to each application or appeal must be filed separately.

The exception to this is where more than one application or appeal for the same applicant or appellant is combined into one proceeding.

Each communication with the CFSRB must be limited to a single proceeding and the CFSRB files that are the subject of that proceeding. This is meant to protect the privacy of the proceedings.

Filing of Hearing Documents

The CFSRB accepts materials that parties are relying on for a hearing by mail, fax or email. All submissions must be indexed. Electronic materials must be in PDF format and bookmarked.

Communication of CFSRB Decisions

The CFSRB issues decisions to the parties and their representatives to an application or appeal predominantly by email, unless a party has chosen to correspond with the CFSRB by another method.

CFSRB decisions and interim decisions are posted on the CanLII website (canlii.org) which can be accessed free of charge. A link to the CanLII website is posted under [Decisions](http://tribunalsontario.ca/CFSRB) on the CFSRB website (tribunalsontario.ca/CFSRB).

Documents and Materials

Attachments

All documents, including correspondence, submissions and the CFSRB forms, must be sent as an attachment to an email. The body of the email must provide a brief description of the attached documents.

Forms

Completed forms that are filed by email must be sent as attachments to the email. Where a form requires that one or more documents must be attached to that form, the documents must be attached to the same email to which the form is attached.

Technical Specifications

File Size

There is no limit on the number of the documents that can be attached to an email provided the total size of the email, including any attachments, does not exceed 35 mb. Please contact the Registrar for direction on how to file documents that exceed 35 mb.

Format

All documents filed electronically must be submitted in Adobe PDF or Microsoft Word format.

Social Media and External Websites

The CFSRB cannot accept email communications which include links to social media sites or any other external websites. If a party seeks to rely on social media information or external website content as evidence in an appeal, the information must be put before the CFSRB in documentary form, as printouts or electronic documents.

Failure to Comply with this Practice Direction

Communications that do not comply with this Practice Direction may be returned and the party will be instructed to refile according to these directions and the rules.

Repetitive or Inappropriate Communications

The CFSRB may refuse to accept communications that are unduly lengthy, repetitive or disrespectful of any other participant or the CFSRB.

The CFSRB may vary the approach to communicating, where appropriate, and make such orders or give such directions regarding communications in proceedings before it to avoid an abuse of the tribunal's process.

Electronic Communications

The board may refuse to accept any document or attachment emailed to the board, where a party does not comply with the provisions in this Practice Direction.

Failure to comply with the CFSRB's procedures for email communications may result in an order or direction prohibiting the person from using that method of communication.

Attachments that do not meet the formatting guidelines may be not be accepted by the CFSRB and may be returned to the sender or disposed of.