

CIRO Hearings Assistance Program Application for Self-Represented Respondents

1. About the Program:

The Canadian Investment Regulatory Organization (**CIRO**) has partnered with the National Self-Represented Litigants Project (**NSRLP**) to create the Hearings Assistance Program (**HAP**). The HAP is intended to connect self-represented respondents (**SRRs**) in CIRO disciplinary proceedings with volunteer lawyers who can provide procedural guidance and advice free of charge. It is meant to promote access to and fairness of the hearing process and help respondents better understand and navigate the proceedings.

2. Independence:

CIRO does **not** provide legal advice or legal representation. Volunteer lawyers and the services that they provide to an SRR are completely independent from CIRO.

3. Voluntary Participation:

Participation by both the respondents and volunteer lawyers in the HAP is completely voluntary. CIRO ensures that only qualified lawyers participate in the HAP but does not guarantee that a volunteer lawyer will be available or that any services provided will meet a particular standard.

4. Scope:

Volunteer lawyers in the program provide self-represented respondents with limited-scope assistance. The focus of this assistance is on **procedural** matters that arise during initial appearances and prehearing conferences, and may also include guidance on some preliminary motions, settlement approval hearings, sanctions and submissions on costs. At the discretion of volunteer lawyers, their assistance may include legal advice on substantive matters, but you should not expect this.

5. Instructions:

The volunteer lawyer will only take instructions about your legal matter from you. They will not take instructions from anyone else.

6. Fees:

The HAP is intended to help you find legal assistance **free of charge**. However, please be advised that you may need to pay any disbursements related to your case (e.g., making copies or other out-of-pocket expenses).

7. Termination:

You or the volunteer lawyer can end your working relationship at any time and for any reason by giving written notice. The volunteer lawyer must still follow all professional and ethical rules when ending the relationship.

If neither you nor the volunteer lawyer has ended the relationship earlier, the volunteer lawyer's responsibility to assist you automatically ends once the legal work they agreed to do is finished.

If you choose to end your relationship with the volunteer lawyer before your matter is finished, you will **not** be assigned a new volunteer lawyer to take over.

APPLICATION FORM

Name:	
Address:	
Tel:	
Email:	
Please provide the name and contact details of any lawyer who has assisted you in this proceeding:	

8. **No Assurances:**

Submitting this application does not guarantee that a volunteer lawyer will be able to assist with your case. If there is no volunteer lawyer available, or if any available volunteers have a conflict of interest, you will still be required to continue with your proceeding, either as a self-represented respondent or by retaining a lawyer at your own expense. The provision of the HAP services is subject to conflict-of-interest checks. Participants must disclose any information relevant to the volunteer lawyers' obligation to check for potential conflicts of interest during the intake process. At a minimum, this will include information about all other individuals and institutions involved in your case. It is essential that you provide the information your potential volunteer lawyer needs. CIRO and the NSRLP also make no promises or guarantees about the legal help volunteer lawyers will provide, including but not limited to their competence or any results.

9. **Limitation of Liability:**

You understand and accept the risks of self-representation and of working with volunteer lawyers. CIRO, the NSRLP and volunteer lawyers are **not responsible** to you for any damages of any kind arising from the use of the HAP. This includes issues related to your relationship with a volunteer lawyer, the quality of legal services, or any outcomes related to those services or your proceedings more broadly.

10. **Program Changes:**

As a pilot program that will be subject to ongoing review and evaluation, the HAP may change or be terminated after the pilot period. CIRO will provide reasonable notice of any important updates or changes to the program. CIRO, the NSRLP and volunteer lawyers are not responsible for any unforeseen changes to the program or for any outcomes that may result from those changes.

11. **Governing Law:**

This application and its terms are governed by the laws of the province or territory in Canada where your hearing is taking place.

By applying for the HAP, you confirm that you have read, understood, and agree to its terms.

Name of the applicant:

Signature:

Date: