

**Social Services
Appeal Board**

**Annual Report
2024/25**



Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that Manitoba is on the Treaty Territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk peoples.

We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis.

We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit.

We respect the spirit and intent of Treaties and Treaty Making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

The Social Services Appeal Board Annual Report for the year 2024/25 can be obtained at the Appeal Board's offices at 7th floor-175 Hargrave Street, Winnipeg MB R3C 3R8; telephone 204-945-3003 or online at http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/ssab/annual_reports.html.

This publication is available in alternate formats upon request by contacting the Accessibility Coordinator at 204-945-3744 or by email at fswebunit@gov.mb.ca.



MINISTER OF FAMILIES

Room 357
Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0V8
CANADA

September 2025

Her Honour the Honourable Anita R. Neville, P.C., O.M.
Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba
Room 235, Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 0V8

May It Please Your Honour:

I have the pleasure of presenting the annual report of the Social Services Appeal Board for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Honourable Nahanni Fontaine
Minister of Families





Families

Social Services Appeal Board
7th Floor – 175 Hargrave Street
Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3C 3R8
T 204-945-3003 F 204-945-1736
www.manitoba.ca

Commission d'appel des services sociaux
175 rue Hargrave, 7^e étage
Winnipeg (MB) R3C 3R8
Tél. : 204 945-3003 Téléc. : 204 945-1736
www.manitoba.ca

September 2025

Honourable Nahanni Fontaine
Minister of Families
Room 357 Legislative Building
Winnipeg MB R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Fontaine:

I am pleased to submit the annual report of the Social Services Appeal Board for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025.

Section 26 of The Social Services Appeal Board Act states that within six months after the end of the government's fiscal year, the appeal board must provide the Minister with a report about the board's activities during that fiscal year.

The board is proud of its continued efforts to provide a fair and impartial appeal process to Manitoba citizens as well as informing and offering recommendations to the Minister related to matters arising from appeal hearings.

Sincerely,

Bobbette Shoffner
Chairperson



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BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Social Services Appeal Board (SSAB) consists of 15 members who are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Members must represent the social, economic, and cultural diversity of the province. They must also exhibit knowledge of the social programs and services that may be appealed. . Members cannot be employees of a minister responsible for an act in which the right of appeal is granted. Each member is appointed for a term of up to two years and may be reappointed for two additional two-year terms.

Staff that support the activities of the board are employed by the Department of Families.

Appeal Board Appointees during the 2024/25 fiscal year:

Chairperson:	Bobbette Shoffner
Vice-Chair:	Amanda Racine (ended February 5, 2025) Marlene Bertrand (effective February 5, 2025)
Members:	Fernand Béasse (effective February 5, 2025) Barbara Craven Maxine Diamond Rajinder Grewal (ended February 5, 2025) Heather Hamelin (effective February 5, 2025) Kimberly Harrison Carole Hébert (effective February 5, 2025) John Helliard (effective February 5, 2025) Prof. Israel Kabashiki (ended February 5, 2025) Sandra Kaufmann (ended February 5, 2025) Songyan Liu Ganpat Lodha Diane Pelly (ended April 30, 2025) Margaret Schroeder (effective February 5, 2025) Thomasina Sinclair (ended February 5, 2025) Hamath Sy Beverly Zarazun

Social Services Appeal Board Staff:

	Gord Greasley, Director Tom Ponech, Hearing Officer (secondment with Manitoba Justice October, 2024) Jessica Welburn, Hearing Officer (effective January, 2025) Colleen Wichers, Office Manager Amanda Nguyen, Administrative Assistant
Legal Counsel:	Megan Smith, Thompson, Dorfman, Sweatman

BOARD BIOGRAPHIES – 2024/25

Bobbette Shoffner, Chairperson

Re-Appointed Chair February 5, 2025

Bobbette is the Executive Director at Mount Carmel Clinic in Winnipeg. She started out as the Director of Early Learning and Parenting Programs and moved into the Executive Director role in 2011. She spent much of her early career as an Early Childhood Educator working with children and families and taught Early Childhood Education at Red River College for several years. She has been involved with numerous boards and community groups including chairing the Manitoba Association of Community Health Centres (MACH) and as a member of the Winnipeg Boldness Project Stewardship group and Gwekaanimad.

Marlene Bertrand, Vice Chair

Appointed February 5, 2025

Marlene is a social justice advocate/specialist in the field of family violence. She has devoted most of her life to the betterment of women and children caught in the cycle of family violence.

Marlene was the founding Director of the Women's Shelter in Brandon in 1973 and has served on several boards and commissions since that time. She also served on several provincial and national research teams over the years.

One of Marlene's valued accomplishments, including the development of program standards in partnership with frontline service providers for the 33 non-governmental agencies, is that she was responsible for the Manitoba Family Violence Prevention Program as Director.

Marlene's experience includes working one-on-one with and advocating for individuals and families. Third world countries often requested the Federal and Manitoba Governments to have Marlene attend their countries to work with them in developing a local service response regarding domestic violence.

Marlene was appointed to the Order of Canada and the Order of Manitoba in recognition of her work in the social services field. The ensuing press release read, in part "*...the driving force behind one of Canada's most advanced networks of community resources, Marlene Bertrand has helped shape public policy at the local, provincial and national levels.*"

It has been said by the Minister that originally hired her, the Honourable Harold Gilleshammer, that Marlene is the epitome of what good governance stands for.

Her proudest accomplishment was her 55-year marriage to her best friend.

Fernand Béasse

Appointed February 5, 2025

Fernand (Fern) is retired, having worked in ironwork for 15 years and then as registered nurse for 31 years. In his retirement, Fern has become a builder. He also volunteers at the Dauphin

United Church as chairperson and is the president of the Dauphin Agricultural Heritage Club celebrating Canada's agricultural heritage. He also assists new immigrants by volunteering his time to give driving instruction so they can obtain their license.

Barbara Craven

Re-Appointed February 5, 2025

Barbara is a former Agencies, Boards and Commissions officer and the former director of administration with the Province of Manitoba. Previous to that she was responsible for the bookkeeping for the family business. Barb was very active in community events, organizing hockey and baseball tournaments as well as volunteering with other community organizations.

Maxine Diamond

Re-Appointed February 5, 2025

Maxine has been the office manager for Dr. R. Diamond Dental Corp. for 43 years. She has a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Manitoba and a MAT from the University of Hartford.

Heather Hamelin

Appointed February 5, 2025

Heather has a Bachelor of Social Work Degree from the University of Manitoba, and a Human Resources Certificate from the University of Manitoba Continuing Education Program.

Her employment in the field of Social Services includes twelve years at the City of Winnipeg Social Services Department, three years with the Department of Education as the Manager of Labour Market Partnerships, and sixteen years with the Social Services Appeal Board as Director.

She has sat on a number of Boards and Advisory Committees, including President of Racquetball Manitoba, Board member for Youth Employment Services and Member of the Advisory Council for Anishinabe Owayishi.

Kimberley Harrison

Re-Appointed February 5, 2025

Kim is a retired Civil Servant with over 30 years of experience working for the provincial government. She spent the majority of her career with the Department of Families serving in several management positions. Kim has also gained experience as a Manager with the Department of Justice and a Human Resource Consultant with the Civil Service Commission.

After her retirement, Kim held a position with the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba prior to being accepted to the Board.

Kim brings to the Board many years of experience interpreting, analyzing and applying legislation and ensuring that all participants are treated fairly and with respect.

Carole Hébert***Appointed February 5, 2025***

Carole is a retired school principal who continues to share her expertise and passion for education in her post-retirement career. She works as a consultant with French Immersion school leaders through the *Bureau de l'éducation française*, supporting school teams in fostering high-quality French-language learning environments. In addition, Carole teaches part-time at the Université de Saint-Boniface in the Faculty of Education, where she works with Educational Assistants, helping them develop the skills and confidence needed to support students effectively.

Outside of her professional commitments, Carole enjoys spending time with her family, especially in the great outdoors. She is actively involved in her community, volunteering with seniors, and she has a love for travelling, always eager to explore new places and cultures.

John Helliard***Appointed February 5, 2025***

John has worked in the Social Services field for over 40 years. He retired from the Manitoba Government in 2016 as a Case Coordinator with Employment and Income Assistance (EIA). He worked with EIA participants in developing job plans that dealt with their barriers and concerns in finding employment or volunteer positions.

John has a B.A. in Economics from the University of Manitoba. He also has worked for several other Social Programs, including Student Aid, Employment Insurance, Human Rights and Employment and Immigration.

John has always volunteered. Presently, he is the President of Share the Magic (book giveaway program), Treasurer and Board member at his church, Board member at Osborne Village Resources Centre (OVR) and Constituency President with a political party. In the past, he has been President of Darwin School Parent Association, a basketball and soccer coach, and he has volunteered for many one-time events including the Canada Games and Pan Am Games.

Songyan Liu***Re-Appointed February 5, 2025***

Songyan is a retired biomedical researcher. He has dedicated his time to engaging in various volunteer activities within the community. He serves as the Executive Vice President of the Winnipeg Chinese Senior Association, as well as the Vice President of the South Winnipeg Community Centre. Furthermore, he sits on the board of the Winnipeg Chinese Cultural and Community Centre.

Ganpat Lodha***Re-Appointed February 5, 2025***

Ganpat is a retired earth scientist with extensive experience in exploration for new mineral deposits and Oil & Gas resources. His discipline of study allows him to follow issues related to

climate change. Since retirement he has actively volunteered for engineers & geoscientists self regulatory body, “Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba.” He has also served on the Folklorama board for six years, the Mental Health Review Board for three years and the Discipline Committee - College of Registered Nurses for four years. He has also been helping with the Sharing Circle of Wellness program at Hindu Society of Manitoba for the last 12 years.

Margaret Schroeder***Appointed February 5, 2025***

Over the years, Margaret has volunteered in the community with youth groups, particularly Scouts Canada, both as a Leader and a Group Commissioner for her local Scouting Group.

After her children grew up, she stopped working with youth and threw herself into work, completing a two-year full-time college course and working for CUPE.

Margaret is currently the full-time President of CUPE Local 204, representing health care workers throughout Manitoba. When not working for the union, she works as a Health Information Manager with CancerCare Manitoba.

Hamath Sy***Re-Appointed February 5, 2025***

Hamath is a retired director and senior manager for Canadian National Railway, South America. He also served as a Member of the Board of Regents, University of Winnipeg 2017-2021, and lectured a Financial Management course at the Université of Saint Boniface, Winnipeg Manitoba. Since retiring he is a Post-Grad instructor of logistics, economics, and enterprise risk management courses at Manitoba Institute of Trade and Technology (MITT). He continues to serve as a board member of the Mauro Institute of Peace and Justice at Saint Paul’s College, University of Manitoba. Hamath is bilingual; he speaks French and English and is a volunteer at the African Communities of Manitoba Inc. (ACOMI).

Beverly Zarazun***Re-Appointed February 5, 2025***

Beverly is a retired civil servant. She was employed for many years in the departments of Health, Energy and Mines, and Industry, Trade and Tourism. Prior to employment with the province, she worked for the Transcona-Springfield School Division as an office administrator. She is a board member of Springfield Seniors Heritage Housing Inc., a volunteer group working to provide housing for seniors in the RM of Springfield. Bev was born and raised in Brandon but moved to Winnipeg when she graduated from Business College. Bev and her husband, Adam, have two children, four grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

JURISDICTION OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES

APPEAL BOARD

The Social Services Appeal Board (SSAB) is the independent appeal body for the majority of programs and services provided by the Department of Families. The board reports directly to the Minister of Families.

The SSAB was first established in 1959 by *The Department of Welfare Act*. In 1974, that Act was repealed and the SSAB continued under the provisions within *The Social Services Administration Act*. On February 18, 2002, *The Social Services Appeal Board Act* was proclaimed.

Under *The Social Services Appeal Board Act*, the board has the ability to determine its own administrative policies and procedures. The board's decisions cannot be overturned by the minister's office. Only the board, through a reconsideration of its decision, or the Court of Appeal, may overturn a decision.

There are several different decisions that can be appealed. These are summarized below:

Adoption Agency Licensing

Under Section 9 of *The Adoption Act*, an individual may file an appeal with the board if the director refuses to issue a license for an adoption agency. An individual may also file an appeal if a license that was previously issued has been suspended, cancelled or not renewed.

Child Care Facility Licensing

A person who is refused a license for the operation of a child care facility other than a foster home or whose license is suspended, cancelled or refused renewal may appeal this decision to the board under Section 8(5) of *The Child and Family Services Act*.

Child Care Licensing and Subsidies

Section 20 of *The Community Child Care Standards Act* allows the board to hear appeals on the following four issues:

- the refusal to issue a license to a child care facility
- the suspension or revocation of a child care facility license
- the imposition of terms or conditions on a child care facility license
- the denial or amount of a child care subsidy

Child Care Qualifications Certification

Section 30 of *The Community Care Standards Act* allows a person to appeal when they do not agree with the Director's decision regarding their application for a child care certificate.

Financial Assistance Programs

Employment and Income Assistance Program AND Rent Assist

Subsection 9(3) of *The Manitoba Assistance Act* gives an individual the right to appeal to the board for the following reasons:

- a. he or she was not allowed to apply or re-apply for income assistance or general assistance or shelter assistance
- b. his or her request for income assistance, general assistance or shelter assistance or for an increase in income assistance, general assistance or shelter assistance was not decided upon within a reasonable time
- c. his or her application for income assistance, general assistance, or shelter assistance was denied
- d. his or her income assistance, general assistance or shelter assistance was cancelled, suspended, varied or withheld
- e. the amount of income assistance, general assistance or shelter assistance granted is insufficient to meet his or her needs

Manitoba Supports for Persons with Disabilities

The Manitoba Supports program is an income support program for persons with severe and prolonged disabilities. The program provides enhanced financial benefits, reduced red tape and other benefits tailored to the unique needs of persons with disabilities. An individual may be appeal a decision of the department for the following reasons:

- a. they were not allowed to apply or re-apply for disability support, shelter support or any other payment or service under this Act;
- b. their application was not decided within a reasonable time;
- c. their application was denied;
- d. their disability support, shelter support or any other payment or service under this Act was discontinued, reduced, varied or suspended; or
- e. the amount of disability support, shelter support or other payments under this Act, or the level of services provided under this Act, is insufficient to meet their needs.

55 PLUS Junior Component

The Junior Component of the 55 PLUS Program provides applicants with the right to appeal to the board if an applicant is told that they are not eligible to receive benefits under the 55 PLUS Program. An appeal may also be filed if an individual disagrees with the level of benefits that they are receiving under the program. The right to appeal for these reasons is granted under Section 9 of the Income Supplement for Persons Not Eligible for Old Age Security Benefits (55 PLUS) regulation of *The Social Services Administration Act*.

Manitoba Prenatal Benefit

If an individual disagrees with the assessment or re-assessment of their Manitoba Prenatal Benefit, the individual can appeal the decision under Section 12 of the Manitoba Prenatal Benefit regulation under *The Social Services Administration Act*.

Residential Care Facility Licensing

A person may appeal to the board the department's decision to deny, suspend or cancel a license for a residential care facility. An individual may also file an appeal with the board if a letter of approval relating to a residential care facility is cancelled or suspended. The right to appeal these decisions for adult facilities is granted under Section 13 of *The Social Services Administration Act*.

Community Living disABILITY Services (Eligibility and Individual Care Plan)

The board is responsible for hearing appeals regarding *The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act* (now *The Adults Living With An Intellectual Disability Act*). Section 16 of the Act allows individuals to appeal when a person's eligibility for entrance into the program is denied, or there is a dispute concerning an individual's support services plan.

THE APPEAL AND HEARING PROCESS

On November 3, 2022, *The Social Services Appeal Board Amendment Act* came into force. The Act made significant changes to the appeal process, improving the ability of the board to provide a fair, impartial and informal appeal process for Manitobans affected by decisions made by certain social services programs. The changes provide the board with the authority to dismiss certain appeals without a hearing, to hold hearings on the written record, and to hold hearings in front of a single panel member.

Appeals are accepted by mail, email, fax, or in person at the board office. An appeal can be made in the form of a handwritten letter or by filling out the Notice of Appeal form. The appeal must be in writing and submitted within 30 days from the time the appellant receives the decision they are appealing, although the board may extend this time period.

Once an appeal is received, it is screened against board criteria for summary dismissal and for single-member panels. If the appeal is screened for summary dismissal, the appellant is provided with an opportunity to argue that a hearing should be held. The board will not dismiss an appeal until after the appellant has had an opportunity to respond to the dismissal referral.

An appeal that has not been referred for summary dismissal may be sent to a single-member panel, for a hearing on the written record. Before the hearing, the appellant and the department are provided with an opportunity to provide further arguments and evidence concerning the appeal.

When an appeal is sent to a three-member panel, a copy of the Notice of Appeal is sent to the respondent (the department that made the decision). The respondent is required to prepare a report outlining why the decision was made, and to include any documented evidence upon which the decision was made.

A copy of the respondent's report and a Notice of Hearing is sent to the appellant. The board is required to hold the hearing within 35 days after the appeal is received, unless the appellant agrees to a longer time.

The board has the power to summon witnesses if required.

The appellant may bring a person to the appeal to support them or help them present their case, but this is not a requirement.

At the hearing, three members of the board will sit as a panel to hear the appeal. The appellant is required to attend, as is a representative for the relevant program. Each party provides a short presentation and the board may ask any questions they need in order to make their decision. The board's decision is made in private following the hearing. A letter with the decision and the reasons for the decision is mailed to the appellant within 15 days.

Decisions made by the board are subject to reconsideration or application for leave to appeal from the Court of Appeal.

More detailed information about the SSAB's Policies and Procedures can be found at: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/ssab/index.html>.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

In 2024/25, the annual budget for the Social Services Appeal Board was \$479,000 consisting of \$414,000 for staff and board salaries and benefits, and \$65,000 for operating costs. Actual expenditures were \$420,000.

The board members' per diem payments are salary expenses.

09.3D Social Services Appeal Board

Expenditures by Sub-Appropriation	Actual 2024/25 \$(000)	FTEs*	Authority 2024/25 \$(000s)	Variance Over/(Under) \$(000s)	Expl. No.
Salaries and Employee Benefits	374	4.00	390	(16)	1
Other Expenditures	46		65	(19)	
Total Sub-Appropriation	420	4.00	455	(35)	

* Full time equivalents do not include board positions.

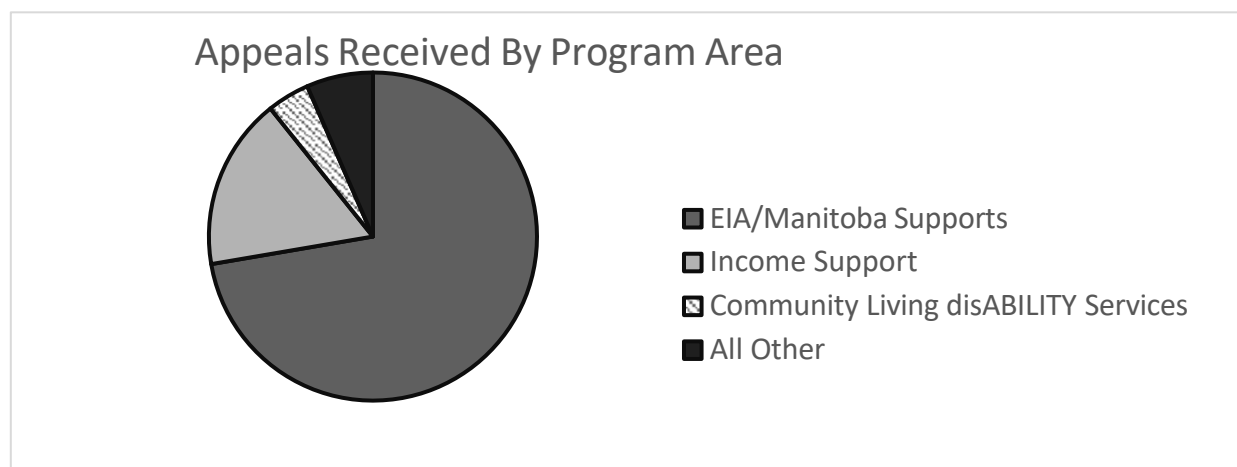
1. Lower board per diems due to fewer hearing days than anticipated

Board members are paid a per diem when they attend hearings, meetings, and training sessions. For a full day, the Chairperson receives \$243.00 and board members receive \$139.00. For a half day, the Chairperson receives \$138.00 and board members receive \$79.00.

APPEAL ACTIVITY

	2024/25	2023/24
TOTAL APPEALS FILED	549	468
Employment and Income Assistance	322	308
Manitoba Supports for Persons with Disability	75	44
Income Support	93	68
- Rent Assist	62	45
- 55 Plus	6	6
- Child Care Subsidy	21	17
- Prenatal Benefit	4	0
Community Living disABILITY Services	23	34
- Child Care Licensing	2	3
- Child Care Qualifications	26	2
- Residential Care - Adult	1	1
- Residential Care - Child	2	0
- No Appealable Program –out of jurisdiction*	5	8

* Not within the jurisdiction of SSAB (e.g. Employment Insurance)



Appeals Received by Disposition:

	2024/25	%*	2023/24	%*
Allowed	17	3	25	5
Varied	17	3	10	2
Withdrawn Resolved	120	22	81	17
Outcome Favourable to Appellant	154	28	116	25
Dismissed/Summarily Dismissed	239	44	228	49
Withdrawn Clarified	17	3	20	4
Outcome Unfavourable to Appellant	256	47	248	53
Outside Jurisdiction	8	1	18	4
Withdrawn Abandoned/Did Not Appear	63	11	41	9
Referred back	9	2	5	1
Other	0	0	2	0
Process Closures**	80	15	66	14
Still in process	59	11	38	8
TOTAL	549	100	468	100

In 2024/25, all statistics are reported as of March 31, 2025.

Notes:

- 1 A resolved appeal means that some action was taken by the department to address the concerns raised in the appeal.
- 2 An abandoned appeal means that the Appeal Board was unable to contact the appellant and the appeal was closed.
- 3 A clarified appeal means that an explanation by the department caused the appeal to be withdrawn.
4. "Other" refers to an appeal taken which the Board convened but found no decision.

* Numbers may not add due to rounding

** A file that is closed as withdrawn – abandoned/did not appear, is referred back to the Department of Families by the Board or is deemed out of jurisdiction.

Appeals Summarily Dismissed 2024/25:

TOTAL APPEALS REFERRED	Dismissed	Sent to Single Panel	Sent to Full Panel	Total
Employment and Income Assistance	74	0	4	78
Manitoba Supports for Persons with Disabilities	10	0	0	10
Income Support	4	0	0	4
- Rent Assist	1	0	0	1
- 55 Plus	3	0	0	3
- Child Care Subsidy	0	0	0	0
- Prenatal Benefit	0	0	0	0
Community Living disABILITY Services	2	0	2	4
Other	6	0	0	6
- Child Care Licensing	1	0	0	1
- Child Care Qualifications	5	0	0	5
- Residential Care - Adult	0	0	0	0
- Residential Care - Child	0	0	0	0
- No Program	2	0	0	2

Reason for Dismissal (Some Appeals had more than one reason)

Appeal filed past legislated deadline – no extenuating circumstances	-	15
Appeal of value established by statute or regulation	-	10
Appeal already heard by Board	-	12
Previous unsuccessful appeal, same facts and circumstances	-	0
Program or decision not within jurisdiction of the Board	-	4
No appealable decision has been made	-	32
Issue resolved prior to hearing	-	13
Not made in good faith	-	3
All Other	-	98
Referred to full panel – extenuating circumstances for late appeal	-	2
Referred to full panel – facts disputed	-	3
Referred to full panel – reopen appeal -	-	1

Appeals Heard by Single Member Panel 2024/25:

TOTAL APPEALS REFERRED	Dismissed	Allowed/ Varied	Referred Back	Sent to Full Panel	Total
Employment and Income Assistance	5	0	0	0	5
Income Support	43	0	1	0	44
- Rent Assist	34	0	0	0	34
- 55 Plus	1	0	0	0	1
- Child Care Subsidy	8	0	1	0	9
Community Living disABILITY Services	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	0	0	0	1
- Child Care Licensing	0	0	0	0	0
- Child Care Qualifications	1	0	0	0	1
- Residential Care - Adult	0	0	0	0	0
- Residential Care - Child	0	0	0	0	0
- Program out of jurisdiction*	0	0	0	0	0

* Not within the jurisdiction of SSAB (e.g. Employment Insurance)

Appeals Closed, by Year Filed:

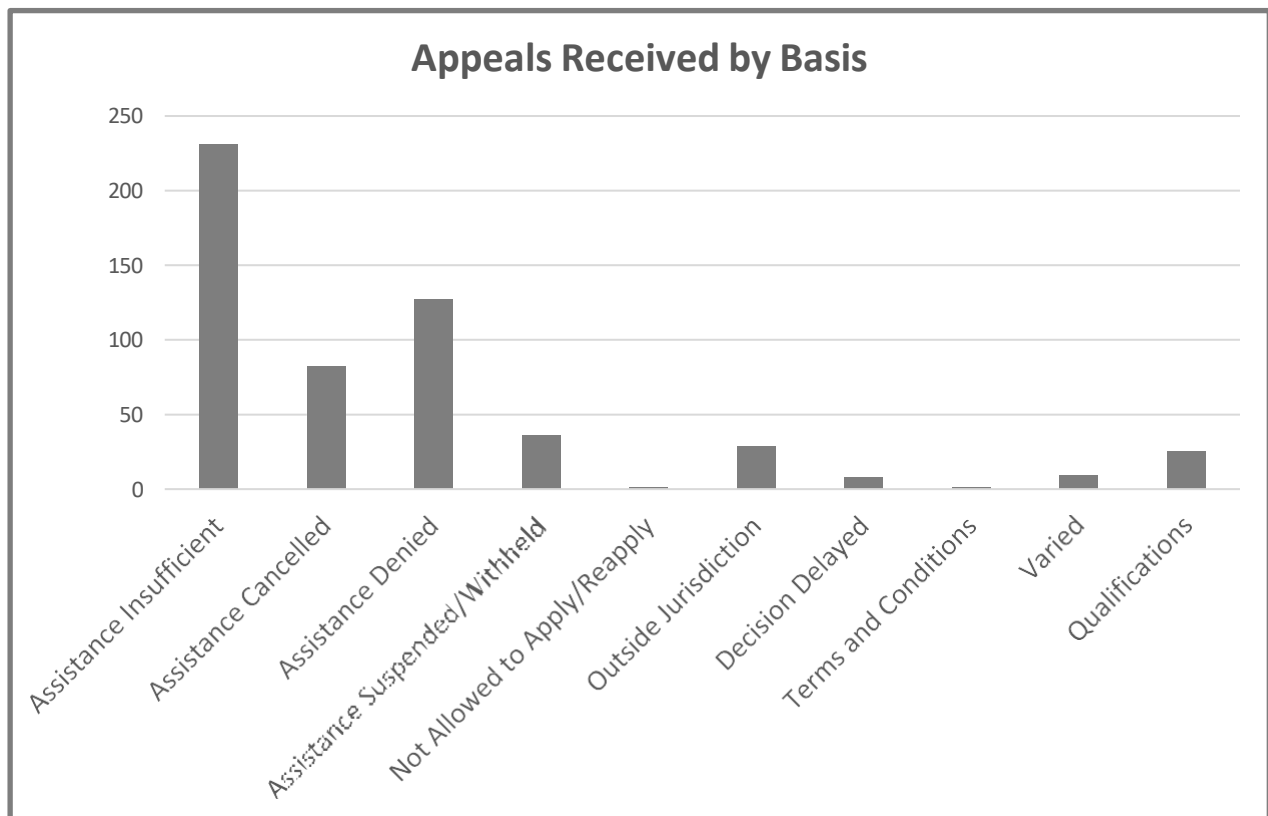
Year ending March 31	2025	2024	Total
Allowed	17	0	17
Varied	17	5	22
Withdrawn Resolved	120	7	127
Outcome Favourable to Appellant	154	12	166
Dismissed	239	17	256
Withdrawn Clarified	17	1	18
Outcome Unfavourable to Appellant	256	18	274
Outside Jurisdiction	8	0	8
Withdrawn Abandoned/Did Not Appear	63	9	72
Other	9	-2*	7
Referred Back	0	1	1
Process Closures	80	8	88
Appeals Closed	490	38	528
Carried to 2025/26	59	0	59

*Two appeals reopened and reclassified.

Appeals Received by Basis:

Of the 549 appeals filed during the 2024/25 fiscal year, the basis of appeal was as follows:

Assistance Insufficient	231
Assistance Cancelled	82
Application Denied	127
Assistance Suspended/Withheld	36
Not Allowed to Apply/Re-Apply	1
Outside Jurisdiction	29
Decision Delayed	8
Terms and Conditions	1
Varied	9
Qualifications	25



Reasons for Appeal:

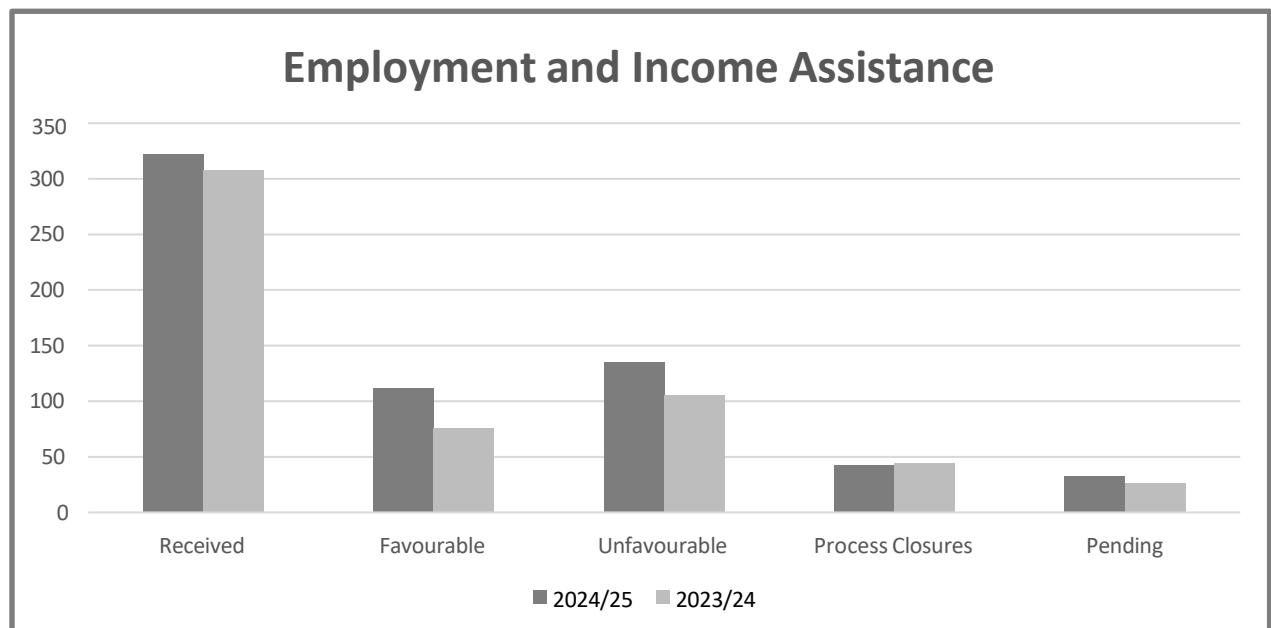
Of the 549 appeals received by the SSAB in 2024/25, the reasons for filing appeals were as follows:

Medical eligibility	74
Basic needs	29
Health needs	35
Overpayments	52
Financial resources	55
Shelter costs	26
Sanctions	17
Special needs	4
Common-law union/Marriage	11
All other where reason is defined	98
Reason undefined*	148

* Programs where SSAB reviews eligibility only, or where the appeal was closed because it was a duplicate appeal, had no appealable issue or was out of jurisdiction.

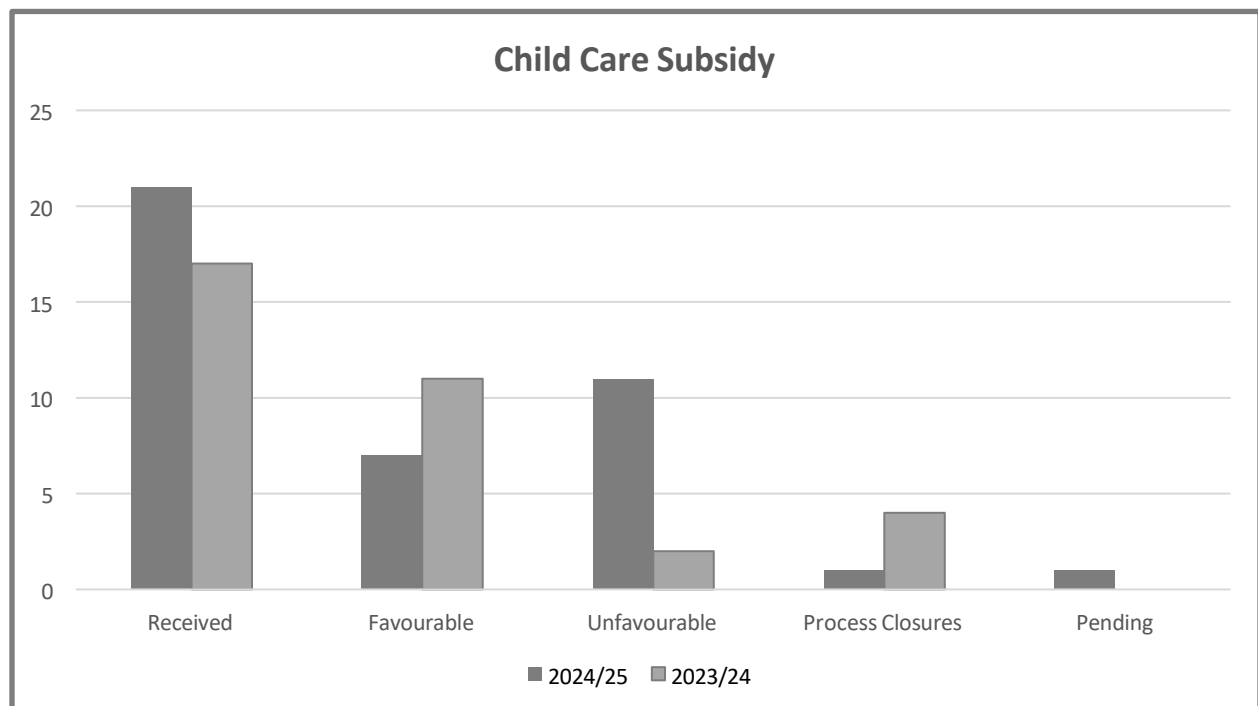
Employment and Income Assistance:

	DISPOSITION	2024/25	2023/24
	Received	322	308
	Allowed	13	14
	Varied	14	6
	Withdrawn/Resolved	85	56
	Favourable to Appellant	112	76
	Dismissed/Summary Dismissals	127	93
	Withdrawn/Clarified	8	12
	Unfavourable to Appellant	135	105
	Outside Jurisdiction	0	8
	Withdrawn Abandoned/Did Not Appear	37	29
	Other	0	2
	Referred Back	5	5
	Process Closures	42	44
	Pending	33	26



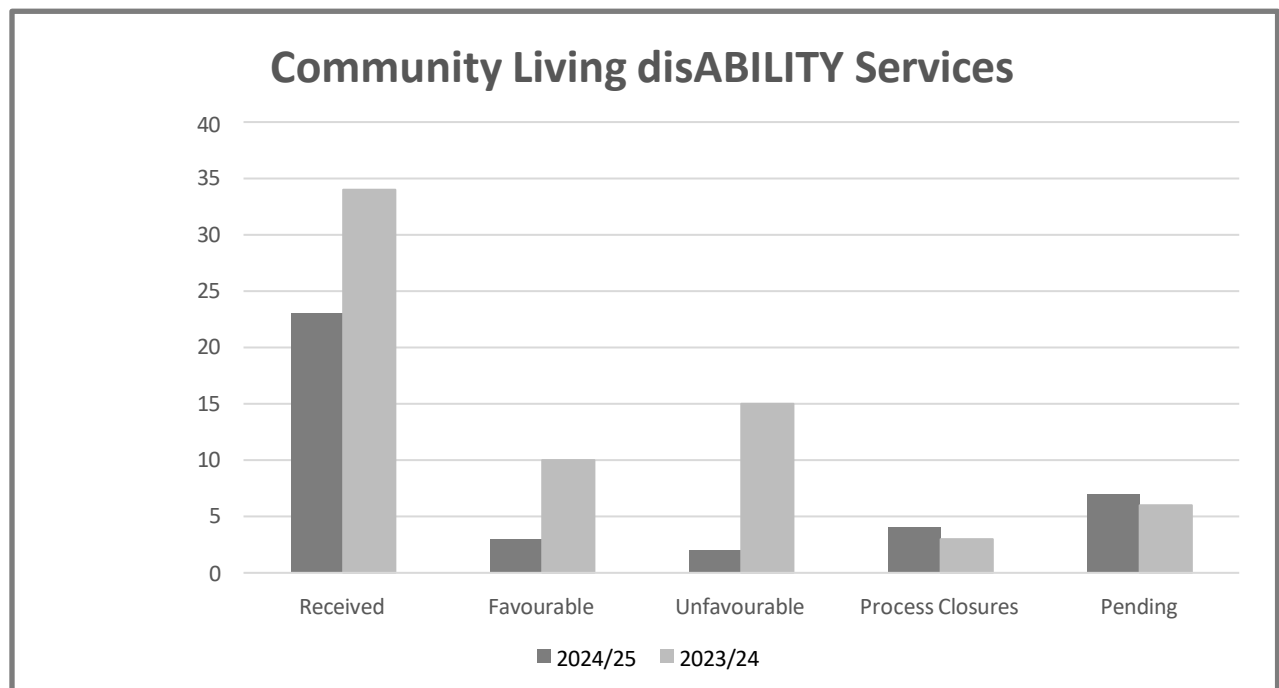
Child Care Subsidy:

	DISPOSITION	2024/25	2023/24
	Received	21	17
	Allowed	0	0
	Varied	0	0
	Withdrawn Resolved	7	11
	Favourable to Appellant	7	11
	Dismissed/Summary Dismissals	9	1
	Withdrawn - Clarified	2	1
	Unfavourable to Appellant	11	2
	Withdrawn Abandoned/Did Not Appear	1	4
	Out of Jurisdiction	0	0
	Referred Back	1	0
	Process Closures	2	4
	Pending	1	0



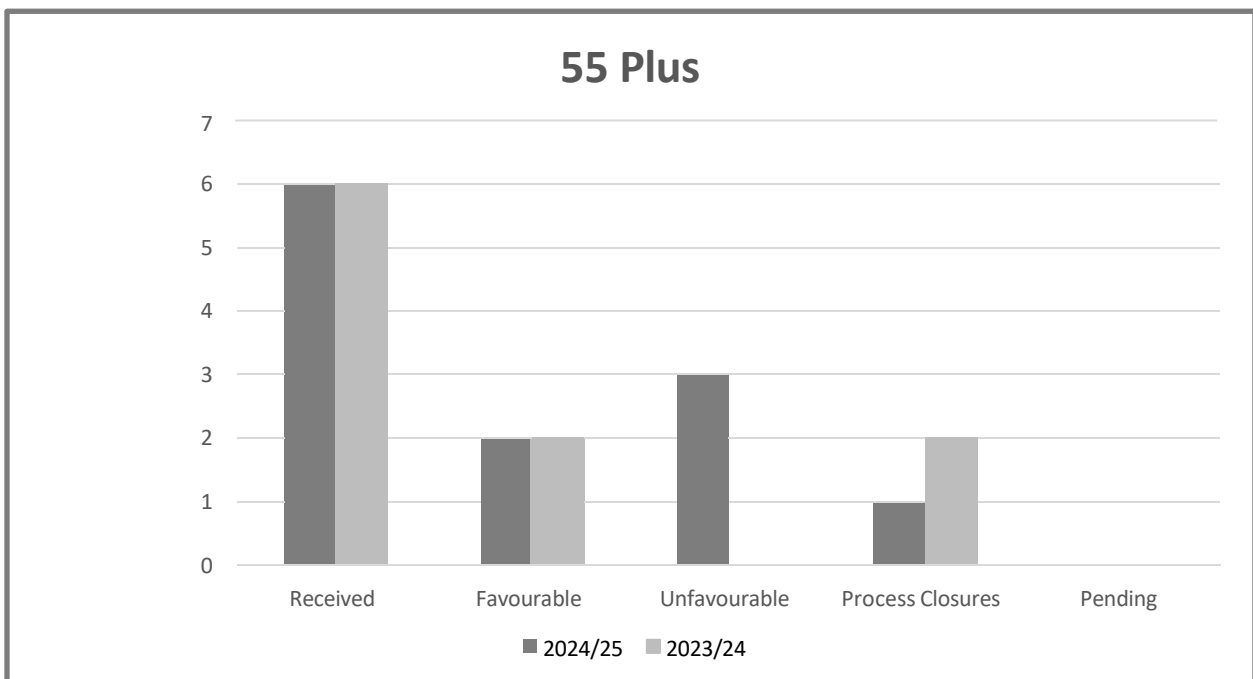
Community Living disABILITY Services:

DISPOSITION	2024/25	2023/24
Received	23	34
Allowed	1	9
Withdrawn Resolved	2	1
Favourable to Appellant	3	10
Dismissed/Summary Dismissals	9	13
Withdrawn Clarified	0	2
Unfavourable to Appellant	9	15
Withdrawn Abandoned/Did Not Appear	4	2
Outside Jurisdiction	0	1
Process Closures	4	3
Pending	7	6



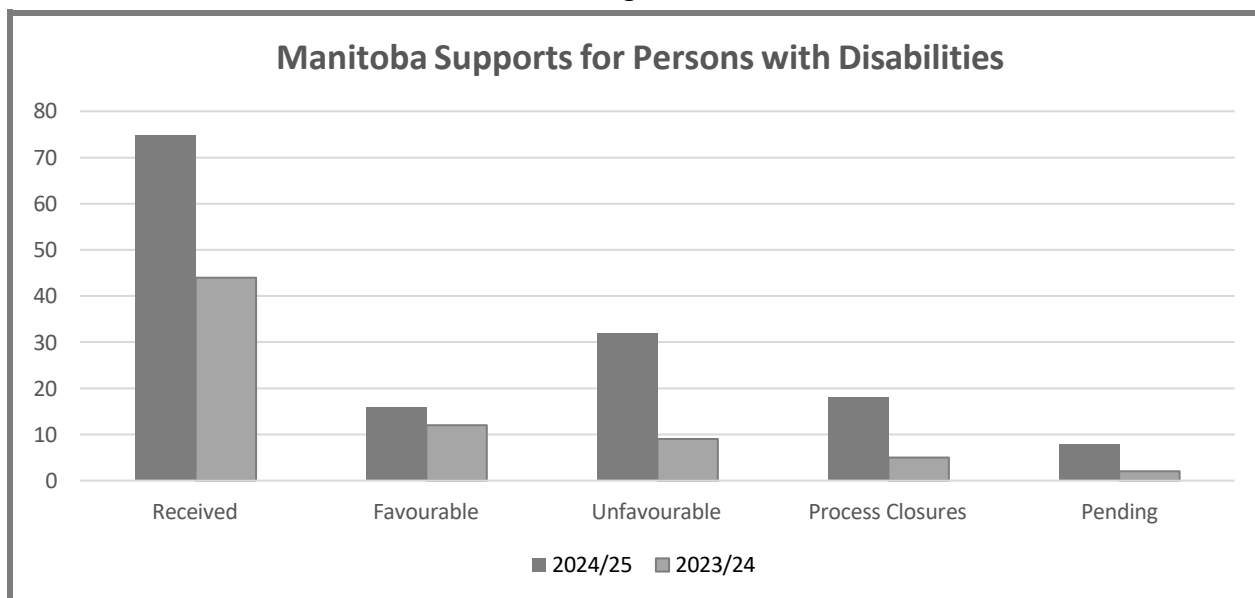
55 Plus:

DISPOSITION	2024/25	2023/24
Received	6	6
Allowed	0	0
Withdrawn Resolved	2	2
Favourable to Appellant	2	2
Dismissed/Summary Dismissals	3	2
Withdrawn Clarified	0	0
Unfavourable to Appellant	3	2
Withdrawn Abandoned/Did Not Appear	0	2
Outside Jurisdiction	1	0
Process Closures	1	2
Pending	0	0



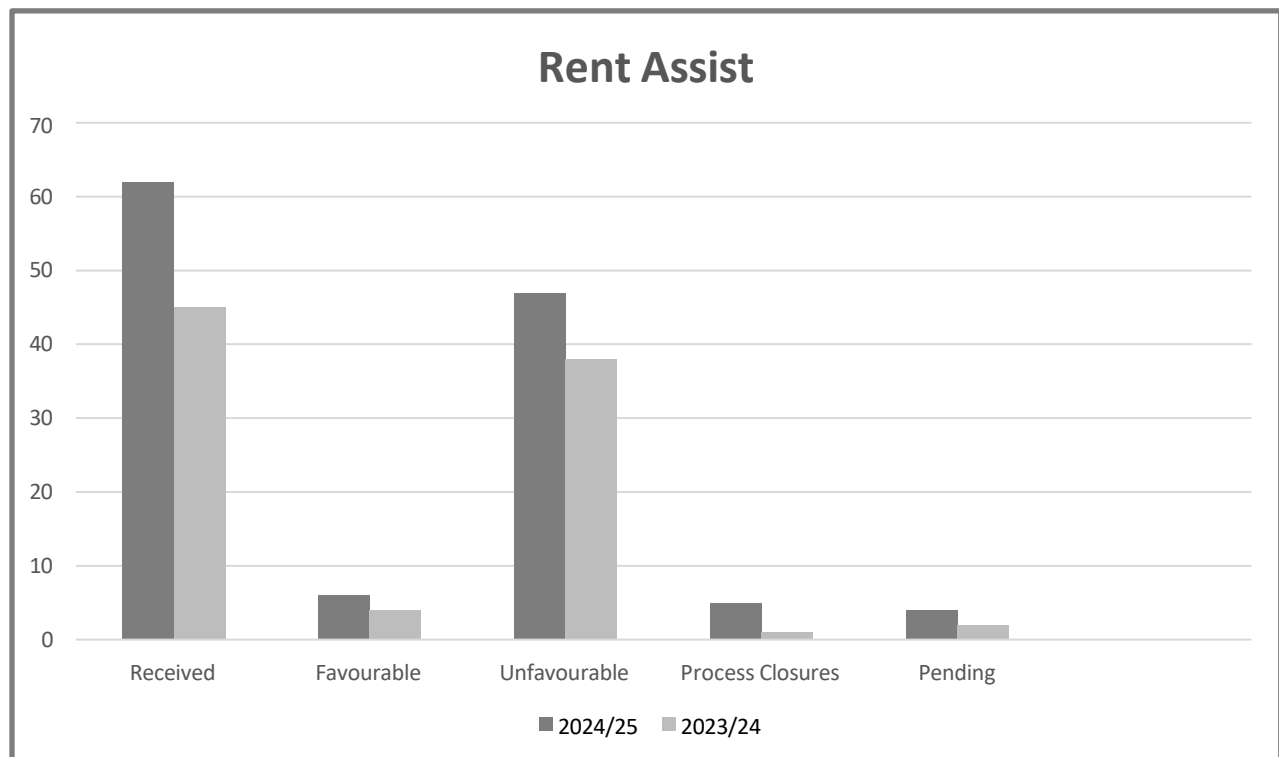
Manitoba Supports for Persons with Disabilities:

DISPOSITION	2024/25	2023/24
Received	75	44
Allowed	3	1
Varied	3	4
Withdrawn/Resolved	10	7
Favourable to Appellant	16	12
Dismissed/Summary Dismissals	28	20
Withdrawn/Clarified	4	2
Unfavourable to Appellant	32	22
Outside Jurisdiction	2	1
Withdrawn Abandoned/Did Not Appear	13	7
Other	0	0
Referred Back	3	0
Process Closures	18	8
Pending	9	2



Rent Assist:

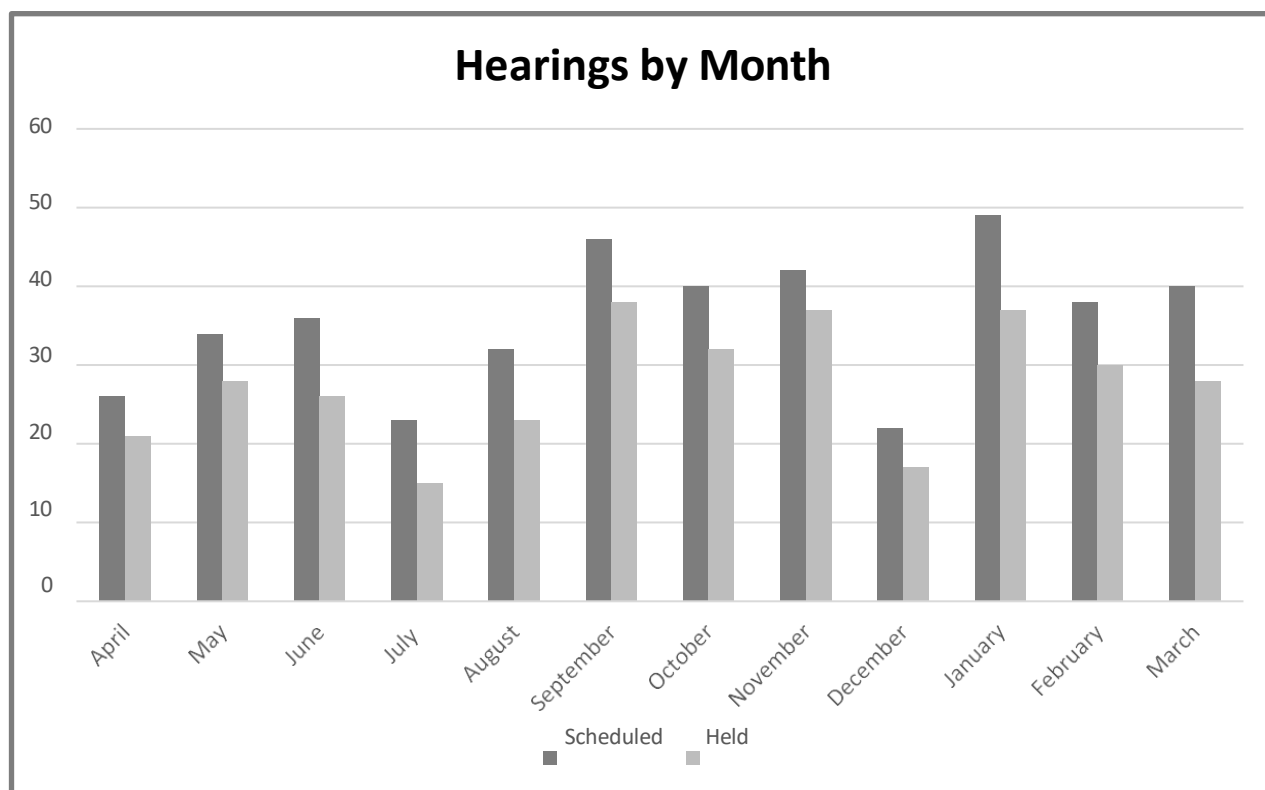
DISPOSITION	2024/25	2023/24
Received	62	45
Allowed	0	1
Withdrawn Resolved	6	3
Favourable to Appellant	6	4
Dismissed/Summary Dismissals	45	35
Withdrawn Clarified	2	3
Unfavourable to Appellant	47	38
Withdrawn Abandoned/Did Not Appear	2	0
Outside Jurisdiction	3	1
Referred Back	0	0
Process Closures	5	1
Pending	4	2



2024/25 Hearings By Month:

	Winnipeg	Rural	Teleconference	Single Member Panel	Cancelled
April	12	0	2	7	5
May	9	0	2	17	6
June	10	1	5	10	10
July	7	0	3	5	8
August	8	0	6	9	9
September	9	0	1	28	8
October	9	0	7	16	8
November	7	0	6	24	5
December	5	0	6	6	5
January	9	0	7	21	12
February	6	0	5	19	8
March	6	0	5	17	12
Totals*	97	1	55	179	96

* Includes appeals filed in prior years



REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION

According to *The Social Services Appeal Board Act*, either party to the appeal may request a Reconsideration of the board's decision.

A Reconsideration Request must be filed in writing within 30 days of the decision of the board and asks the board to consider the following issues:

- if the original panel or decision was, or was perceived to be biased
- if the panel process inhibited the presentation or consideration of relevant evidence
- if the decision was inconsistent with the legislation
- if an obvious administrative error in calculation or relevant dates occurred in the board's Order.

REQUESTS RECEIVED

	2024/25	2023/24
Total	10	10
From appellant	8	7
From respondent	0	3
From board	2	0

PROGRAM BREAKDOWN

Employment and Income Assistance	7	8
Community Living DisAbility Services	0	1
Rent Assist	1	0
Manitoba Supports	2	1

DISPOSITION

Requests granted	2	1
Requests denied	5	9
Withdrawn	1	0
Unspecified	2	0

OF THE REQUESTS GRANTED

Decision varied	0	0
Decision overturned	0	0
Decision upheld	2	1

SUMMARY OF ADVISORY ACTIVITIES

Under the Act, the Board also has an advisory role to the Minister. The Board may advise and make recommendations about matters related to social services that are referred to it by the Minister. It may also advise and make recommendations to the Minister on its own initiative.

The Board exercises this role in three ways – by meeting with the Minister at least annually, by writing advisory letters to the Minister when it determines that such letters are warranted, and by reporting on its advisory activities in its annual report.

The Board did not make any new recommendations to the Minister in 2024/25.

The Social Services Appeal Board Act

(Assented to July 6, 2001)

HER MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, enacts as follows:

DEFINITIONS AND PURPOSE

Definitions

1 In this Act,

"appeal board" means the Social Services Appeal Board referred to in section 3;

"designated Act" means

(a) *The Adoption Act*,

(a.1) *The Child and Family Services Act*,

(b) *The Community Child Care Standards Act*,

(b.1) *The Disability Support Act*,

(c) *The Manitoba Assistance Act*,

(d) *The Social Services Administration Act* or a regulation under that Act,

(e) *The Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability Act*,

(f) any other Act or regulation designated as a designated Act in the regulations;

"designated officer" means a person who has authority under a designated Act to make a decision or order for which there is a right of appeal under the designated Act to the appeal board, or the person to whom that authority is delegated;

"minister" means the minister appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to administer this Act;

"panel" means a panel of the appeal board.

S.M. 2004, c. 42, s. 50; S.M. 2014, c. 35, s. 28; S.M. 2017, c. 26, s. 27; S.M. 2021, c. 60, Sch. A, s. 29; S.M. 2023, c. 19, s. 110.

Purpose

2 The purpose of this Act is to give Manitobans a fair, impartial and informal appeal process from decisions relating to various social services and programs.

APPEAL BOARD

Social Services Appeal Board

3 The Social Services Advisory Committee, which was established under *The Social Services Administration Act*, is continued under this Act as the Social Services Appeal Board.

Members

4(1) The appeal board is to consist of 15 members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Who can be a member

4(2) The members of the appeal board must, in the opinion of the Lieutenant Governor in Council,

- (a) be representative of the regional, economic and cultural diversity of Manitoba;
- (b) be knowledgeable about social services and programs under designated Acts; and
- (c) not be employees under the control of a minister responsible for a designated Act.

Term of member

4(3) Each member is to be appointed for a term of up to two years and, subject to subsection (4), may be re-appointed.

Re-appointing a member

4(4) A member who has served for six years in consecutive terms may be re-appointed for a further term, but only if at least one year has passed since the end of his or her last term.

Member continues to hold office

4(5) A member continues to hold office until he or she is reappointed, a successor is appointed or the appointment is revoked.

S.M. 2015, c. 43, s. 58.

Remuneration and expenses

5 The members of the appeal board are to be paid remuneration and expenses at rates set by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Chair and vice-chair

6(1) The Lieutenant Governor in Council must designate one of the members of the appeal board as chair and one or more members as vice-chairs.

Duties of vice-chair

6(2) A vice-chair has the authority of the chair if the chair is absent or unable to act, or when authorized by the chair.

Staff

7 Any employees required to enable the appeal board to carry out its responsibilities may be appointed under Part 3 of *The Public Service Act*.

S.M. 2021, c. 11, s. 65

Responsibilities of the appeal board

8 The appeal board has these responsibilities:

- (a) to hear and decide appeals under designated Acts;

- (b) at the minister's request, to advise and make recommendations about matters that relate to social services and programs in Manitoba;
- (c) on its own initiative, to advise and make recommendations to the minister about social services provided under the designated Acts;
- (d) to perform any other duties assigned to it by an Act or regulation or by the minister.

8.1 [Repealed]

S.M. 2018, c. 31, s. 2; S.M. 2021, c. 28, s. 9.

Procedural rules

9 The appeal board may establish its own rules of practice and procedure and must make them available to the public.

Posting information about appeals

10 A designated officer must post information about the right to appeal to the appeal board, and about the appeal process, in a visible public location in any office in which decisions are made that can be appealed under a designated Act.

PANELS OF THE APPEAL BOARD

Appeal heard by single member or panel

11(1) An appeal must be heard by a single member or by a panel of three members.

Chair to determine size and composition

11(2) The chair must

- (a) determine whether an appeal is to be heard by a single member or a panel of three members; and
- (b) assign members to hear appeals.

Chair of panel

11(3) The chair or a vice-chair is to preside over a panel, or the chair may designate another member of the appeal board to preside.

Who is not eligible to be a member of a panel

11(4) A member of the appeal board is not eligible to hear an appeal if he or she

- (a) is a relative of a party; or
- (b) is not able to be impartial and independent about the outcome of the appeal.

Quorum

11(5) A quorum for a panel of three members is the three members.

Jurisdiction of panel

11(6) In considering and deciding an appeal,

- (a) a single member or a panel has all the jurisdiction of the appeal board and may exercise the board's powers and perform its duties; and
- (b) a decision of a majority of the members of a panel is the decision of the appeal board.

S.M. 2022, c. 38, s. 2.

APPEAL TO THE APPEAL BOARD

Filing an appeal

12(1) A person who has a right to appeal a decision or order to the appeal board under a designated Act may commence an appeal by filing a notice of appeal with the board.

Time limit for filing

12(2) A notice of appeal must be filed within 30 days after the date of the decision or order, unless the designated Act specifies a different time limit.

Extending the time limit

12(3) The appeal board may extend the time limit for commencing an appeal, and may do so either before or after the time limit expires.

Reasons

12(4) A notice of appeal must be in writing and must state the reasons for the appeal.

Parties

13(1) The parties to an appeal are the person who has a right to appeal to the appeal board and the designated officer under the designated Act.

Parties to be present at oral hearing

13(2) If a hearing is held orally, the appellant and the designated officer or a delegate of the designated officer

- (a) must be present at the hearing; or
- (b) if the hearing is conducted by telephone or through the use of other electronic means, must be able to communicate with each other and the appeal board simultaneously.

S.M. 2022, c. 38, s. 3.

Advocates

14 At the appellant's request, another person may communicate with the appeal board at any time on the appellant's behalf and may be present with the appellant at the hearing.

Notice to the designated officer

15(1) On receiving a notice of appeal, the appeal board must promptly give a copy of it to the designated officer.

Designated office must forward documents

15(2) On receiving the notice of appeal, the designated officer must promptly give the appeal board

- (a) all of the documentary evidence on which the designated officer made the decision or order being appealed;
- (b) any documents that the designated officer is specifically required to provide to the board under the designated Act; and
- (c) any other documents the designated officer thinks might be relevant to the appeal.

Dismissal of appeal

15.1(1) The appeal board may dismiss an appeal or part of an appeal if

- (a) it is not within the jurisdiction of the appeal board;
- (b) it was not filed within the applicable time limit;
- (c) in the opinion of the appeal board, its subject matter is trivial or the appeal is not made in good faith or is frivolous, vexatious or an abuse of process;
- (d) in the opinion of the appeal board, there is no reasonable prospect that it will succeed; or
- (e) its subject matter is being or has been dealt with appropriately according to a procedure provided for under another Act.

Opportunity to make submissions

15.1(2) The appeal board must not dismiss an appeal or part of an appeal unless the appellant is given an opportunity to make written submissions or otherwise be heard as to why subsection (1) does not apply to the appeal.

Reasons for dismissal

15.1(3) The appeal board must give written reasons to the parties if it dismisses an appeal or part of an appeal.

Timing of dismissal

15.1(4) The appeal board may dismiss an appeal or part of an appeal at any time before the start of the hearing.

Dismissal not subject to appeal or review

15.1(5) A dismissal under this section is final and binding and not subject to review by a court or appeal, including an appeal under section 23.

S.M. 2022, c. 38, s. 4.

Hearing date

16(1) For each appeal, the appeal board must arrange the earliest possible hearing date. The hearing must not be commenced more than 35 days after the board receives the notice of appeal, unless the board at the request of the appellant, grants an extension.

Notice

16(2) Unless the parties agree to a shorter period of notice, at least seven days before the hearing the appeal board must give the parties written notice of the date, time and place of the hearing.

S.M. 2022, c. 38, s. 5.

Parties may examine evidence

17 The appeal board must give each party a reasonable opportunity to examine and copy any information that has been submitted to the board for the purpose of the hearing.

Powers and duties of the board

- 18 The appeal board must inform itself fully of the facts concerning each appeal. For that purpose, the board
- (a) may require the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents in addition to the witnesses called by the parties and the documents produced by the parties; and
 - (b) has the powers of a commissioner under Part V of *The Manitoba Evidence Act*.

Hearing process: rules of evidence do not apply

19(1) The appeal board is not bound by the rules of evidence that apply to judicial proceedings.

Hearing conducted orally or in writing

19(2) The appeal board may conduct a hearing orally or in writing. An oral hearing may be held in person or by telephone or through the use of other electronic means.

Closed hearing if appellant requests

19(3) The hearing is to be closed to the public if the appellant asks for it to be closed; otherwise it is to be open to the public.

Adjournment

19(4) The appeal board may adjourn a hearing when it considers it appropriate to do so.

S.M. 2022, c. 38, s. 6.

ORDER OF THE APPEAL BOARD

Order of the board

- 20(1) Unless the designated Act states otherwise, after a hearing the appeal board may, by written order,
- (a) confirm, vary or rescind the order or decision of the designated officer;
 - (b) make any order or decision that the designated officer could have made; or
 - (c) refer the matter back to the designated officer for further consideration by the designated officer in accordance with any direction of the appeal board.

Reasons

20(2) The appeal board must give written reasons for its order.

Time limit for making an order

20(3) The appeal board must make its order within 15 days after the hearing ends.

Order given to the parties

20(4) The appeal board must give the parties a copy of the order and inform them of their right to appeal a question of law or jurisdiction to The Court of Appeal.

Method of giving the order

20(5) The order must be given to the parties personally or by regular lettermail or by another method acceptable to the appeal board and the parties.

Order must be given effect

21 A designated officer must give effect to the order of the appeal board.

Reconsideration of the order

22(1) At the request of a party to the appeal or on its own initiative, the appeal board may reconsider all or part of its order and may confirm, vary, suspend or rescind its order.

Time limit for making request

22(2) A written request for a reconsideration, stating the reasons for the request, must be filed with the appeal board within 30 days after the date of the board's order.

Time limit for deciding request

22(3) The appeal board must, by order, make a decision as to whether an order will be reconsidered, within 30 days after the date the request for a reconsideration is filed.

Reasons

22(4) The board must give written reasons if it decides not to reconsider an order.

S.M. 2022, c. 38, s. 7.

APPEAL TO COURT OF APPEAL

Appeal to Court of Appeal

23(1) Any party to the appeal before the appeal board may appeal the board's order to The Court of Appeal on any question involving the board's jurisdiction or on a point of law, but only after obtaining leave to appeal from a judge of The Court of Appeal.

Time limit

23(2) An application for leave to appeal must be made

- (a) within 30 days after the date of the appeal board's order under section 20;
- (b) if the applicant seeks reconsideration of an order under section 22, within 30 days after
 - (i) the date the appeal board declines to reconsider the order under subsection 22(3), or
 - (ii) the date the appeal board confirms, varies, suspends or rescinds the order; or
- (c) within any further time that a judge allows.

Parties

23(3) The parties to the appeal before the appeal board, and the appeal board, are entitled to be heard on the application for leave to appeal and on the appeal itself.

S.M. 2022, c. 38, s. 8.

Order of Court of Appeal

24 The Court of Appeal may

- (a) quash, vary or confirm the order of the appeal board; or
- (b) refer the matter back to the appeal board for further consideration in accordance with any direction of the Court.

REGULATIONS

Regulations

25 The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations

- (a) designating Acts or regulations for the purpose of the definition "designated Act" in section 1;
- (b) respecting any other matter the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers necessary or advisable to carry out the intent of this Act.

ANNUAL REPORT

Annual report

26 Within six months after the end of the government's fiscal year, the appeal board must provide the minister with a report about the board's activities during that fiscal year. The minister shall lay a copy of the report before the Legislative Assembly within 15 days after receiving it if the Assembly is sitting or, if it is not, within 15 days after the next sitting begins.

PROTECTION FROM LEGAL ACTION

Protection from legal action

27 No action or proceeding for damages may be brought against the appeal board or any member of the board because of anything done or omitted in good faith

- (a) in the performance or intended performance of a duty under this Act; or
- (b) in the exercise or intended exercise of a power under this Act.

TRANSITIONAL

Transitional: definitions

28(1) In this section,

"former Act" means *The Social Services Administration Act, R.S.M. 1987, c. S165*;

"former designated Act" means a designated Act as it read immediately before the coming into force of this Act.

Appeals already commenced

28(2) *Where on the day this Act comes into force an appeal under a former designated Act to the Social Services Advisory Committee under the former Act has been commenced but not finally disposed of, the appeal shall be continued and completed in accordance with that former designated Act as if this Act had not come into force.*

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS

29 to 34 NOTE: These sections contained consequential amendments to other Acts that are now included in those Acts.

C.C.S.M. REFERENCE AND COMING INTO FORCE

C.C.S.M. reference

35 This Act may be cited as *The Social Services Appeal Board Act* and referred to as chapter S167 of the *Continuing Consolidation of the Statutes of Manitoba*.

Coming into force

36(1) This Act, except section 33, comes into force on a day fixed by proclamation.

Coming into force: section 33

36(2) Section 33 comes into force on the day *The Social Services Administration Amendment Act*, S.M. 2000, c. 31, comes into force.