

## **Do I Really Need a Representative?**

You can represent yourself in any WSIB or CPP related proceedings, however by doing so you place yourself at a great disadvantage.

Most often in WSIB related appeals, the employer will retain a legal representative (either a lawyer or paralegal) who is experienced in the area of WSIB law, and whose goal it will be to minimize the benefits paid to you, or have your claim denied outright. In this scenario, it is best to have your own representative to protect your rights and interests. The WSIB law is complex, and new cases are constantly issued by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal which impact the interpretation and application of the various WSIB policies.

Similarly, at CPP Disability Appeals before the Office of the Commissioner of Review Tribunals (OCRT) and the Pension Appeals Board (PAB), the government sends their own representative to ensure that their decision to deny you entitlement to benefits is well articulated. The government does not provide you with an advocacy service, and therefore you are on your own in trying to understand the CPP Disability law, and how new cases issued by the Pension Appeals Board, or the Federal Court of Appeal, impact this law and its interpretation.

Different representatives charge different fees for their services, so it is in your interest to contact more than one for a consultation and quote regarding the costs for their services. A lawyer or paralegal can represent you, but make sure that he or she is qualified to do so and licensed by the Law Society of Upper Canada (LSUC). Recent changes now require all paralegals to be licensed by the LSUC in order to practice in permitted areas. This regulation of the paralegal profession means that the public has access to paralegals who meet high standards of education, competence and professional conduct. (For more information on the regulation of paralegals, visit the LSUC website at [www.lsuc.on.ca](http://www.lsuc.on.ca)).

Our office offers a free, no obligation consultation regarding your case. Contact us today to arrange an appointment and see how we can help you.