

Fact Sheet

Creation of the Taxpayers' Ombudsman

The Minister of National Revenue announced the establishment of a Taxpayers' Ombudsman on May 28, 2007. The Taxpayers' Ombudsman will be appointed following a public selection process. A notice of vacancy has been posted on the Governor in Council Appointments Web site (www.appointments-nominations.gc.ca) and will be published in the Canada Gazette on June 2, 2007. The Taxpayers' Ombudsman's office will be operational in the fall of 2007.

The Taxpayers' Ombudsman will be an independent and impartial officer who will operate at arm's length from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the Agency's Board of Management. The Ombudsman will be charged with upholding the Taxpayer Bill of Rights with respect to service-related matters.

The Taxpayers' Ombudsman will report directly to the Minister of National Revenue and may make recommendations to the Minister directly on any matter that falls within the Taxpayers' Ombudsman's mandate. Additionally, the Taxpayers' Ombudsman will submit an annual report to the Minister, which will be tabled in Parliament, and may issue other reports and/or recommendations concerning any issue within her or his mandate.

The Taxpayers' Ombudsman will complement existing service-related complaint resolution mechanisms internal to the CRA, such as the CRA - Service Complaints initiative.

The position of the Taxpayers' Ombudsman is being created to support the Government of Canada's priorities of stronger democratic institutions, increased transparency and accountability, and fair treatment to all Canadians. The Taxpayers' Ombudsman will enhance the CRA's accountability and service to the public.

The Taxpayers' Ombudsman will operate at arm's length from and independently of the CRA.

Role and responsibilities

The Taxpayers' Ombudsman will conduct impartial and confidential reviews of service-related complaints about the CRA. The Taxpayers' Ombudsman's mandate will be to:

- provide advice to the Minister about service-related matters in the CRA;
- address requests for reviews made by taxpayers with respect to service-related matters, including the service rights outlined in the Taxpayers' Bill of Rights;
- identify and review systemic and emerging service-related issues that have a negative impact on taxpayers;
- facilitate taxpayers' access to assistance within the CRA; and
- provide information to taxpayers about the complaint resolution mechanisms within the CRA.



Limitations

The Taxpayers' Ombudsman will not review a complaint until all of CRA's other complaint resolution mechanisms have been exhausted. In addition, the Taxpayers' Ombudsman:

- will not have the authority to review complaints relating to tax policy or program legislation;
- will not have the authority to review any decision of, proceeding in or matter before, a court;
- will not be provided with any directive powers, but will have the traditional authority to conduct reviews and make recommendations; and
- will not have the authority to discipline any person for their actions.

More information

Visit the CRA Web site for more information about the:

- Taxpayer Bill of Rights: cra.gc.ca/rights
- Taxpayers' Ombudsman: cra.gc.ca/ombudsman