Northwest Territories Ombud

We speak up for fairness

November 17, 2022

Media Release

Hay River (November 17, 2022) Ombud Finds GNWT Needs to Do More to Issue Records of Employment Within Federal Regulatory Timelines

Northwest Territories Ombud Colette Langlois released a special report today: *Setting a Good Example: Fairness in Human Resources (Records of Employment).*

Records of Employment (ROEs) are documents employers must provide to workers after they leave employment, and in some other circumstances such as extended leaves. Without an ROE, a worker cannot apply for Employment Insurance. The federal *Employment Insurance Regulations* require that in most cases ROEs be provided within 5 calendar days of the interruption in the employee's earnings.

The GNWT has historically been unable to meet the federal regulatory requirements and deliver ROEs on time. Currently the Department of Finance is responsible for issuing ROEs for territorial public servants. In 2021-2022, the most recent period for which figures are available, Finance only issued 39% of ROEs within 5 business days despite considerable efforts by officials to improve turnaround times.

"While many employers likely find the 5-day turnaround difficult, of all employers governments should be expected to set an example," said Langlois. "Compliance with laws and legal requirements is one of the basic standards of administrative fairness. Public servants should be able to count on their employer to meet that standard."

The Ombud made three recommendations aimed at ensuring Finance has a plan and enough resources to shorten its turnaround time for ROEs, and eventually comply with federal regulations. The Minister's response on behalf of Finance indicates general agreement with the recommendations.

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