



Ontario  
Energy  
Board | Commission  
de l'énergie  
de l'Ontario

**BY EMAIL AND WEB POSTING**

July 13, 2023

**To: All Regulated Entities  
All Intervenors  
All Other Interested Parties**

**Re: Adoption of Amendments to Rule 32 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure  
Regarding the Format of Hearings**

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) has today posted amendments to Rule 32 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure (Rules) to provide greater clarity and transparency regarding the OEB's approach to determining the format of hearings.

The *Statutory Powers Procedure Act* (SPPA) contemplates that a hearing in a proceeding may be written, oral, electronic or any combination of those three formats, and defines the three formats. The Rules currently make provision for each of these hearing formats and do so using the defined terms set out in the SPPA. An oral hearing is understood to be an in-person hearing, an electronic hearing is understood to be a virtual hearing and a hearing that includes a combination of oral (in-person) and electronic (virtual) formats is understood to be a hybrid hearing.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the OEB has been holding hearings either virtually, in writing or a combination of the two. The OEB has now taken steps to enable the safe return to in-person hearings, and there is already one application before the OEB that will involve a combination of hearing formats including in-person components. The amendments to Rule 32 provide transparency as to the considerations that will guide decision-making on hearing format(s), and will provide greater clarity in relation to the hybrid option.

The OEB intends to make similar revisions to Rule 19 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure for Enforcement Proceedings.

The OEB has also posted a document on its website that sets out information related to safety and security, health, technology, and etiquette for anyone attending an in-person adjudicative event. Anyone attending an in-person hearing is encouraged to review this document in advance.

Any questions relating to this letter should be directed to [Registrar@oeb.ca](mailto:Registrar@oeb.ca). The OEB's toll-free number is 1-888-632-6273.

Yours truly,

Nancy Marconi  
Registrar