

# INFLUENCING BC

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## ABOUT THE ORL

The Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists (ORL) carries out the mandate of the Registrar of Lobbyists under the *Lobbyists Transparency Act* (LTA). The ORL maintains a Lobbyists Registry; educates lobbyists, public office holders and the public about lobbying rules; and enforces the LTA.

The LTA requires individuals and organizations who lobby public office holders and meet specific criteria to register their lobbying activities in an online public Registry. You can search the [Lobbyists Registry](#)<sup>1</sup>. The goal of the LTA is to promote transparency in lobbying and government decision-making by allowing citizens to know who is attempting to influence public office holders' decisions.

The ORL publishes [Influencing BC](#)<sup>2</sup> to provide news on lobbying in BC and the LTA to lobbyists and members of the public.

Michael Harvey is the Registrar of Lobbyists for BC.

## REGISTRAR'S MESSAGE

Change is in the air as we shift into spring: the *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2024*, comes into force on May 27, 2025, and contains a few amendments to the LTA.

Once these amendments are live, Designated Filers will no longer need to report government funding their organization or client has *requested* and the deadline to file information related to *received* government funding will be extended. Additionally, the amendments will clarify the filing obligations around working with other lobbyists, organizations, and clients for the purpose of lobbying and what must be submitted when lobbying ends.

New and updated guidance materials will be posted to the ORL website and changes to the Lobbyists Registry will be made when the amendments come into force. Please note that until these amendments are brought into force on May 27, 2025, the current filing obligations remain. Read on to learn what these amendments will mean for your lobbying registration.

In this edition of *Influencing BC*, we are also pleased to share news about, and invite you to attend, one of our upcoming [ORL and OIPC public strategic planning consultation](#) sessions. From May 13-30, I will be visiting seven cities throughout British Columbia to discuss what matters most to you when it comes to lobbying transparency, the challenges you face, and how our office can help. What we hear from you will help guide our office's strategic plan. If you are unable to join us in person, we welcome feedback from individuals and organizations. Please send to: [OIPCTraining@oipc.bc.ca](mailto:OIPCTraining@oipc.bc.ca) by June 30, 2025.

I trust you will find this content helpful in navigating your lobbying requirements. Please contact us at [info@bcorl.ca](mailto:info@bcorl.ca) if you have any questions about the amendments or other matters of interest.

Michael Harvey, Registrar of Lobbyists for BC

## UPDATED GUIDANCE MATERIALS

The ORL will be updating the following guidance materials to reflect the changes to the LTA's filing requirements brought in by the *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2024*. These changes will remove the requirement to file information related to *requested* government funding and extend the deadline to report *received* government funding. In addition, the amendments will clarify the filing requirements around working together with other lobbyists, organizations, or clients of the purpose of lobbying and what must be filed when lobbying ends. The updated and new guidance materials will be posted to our website when the changes come into force on May 27, 2025. The below guidance documents will be updated on May 27:

### [Working together for the purpose of lobbying](#)<sup>3</sup> (previously *Coalitions*)

- The updates to this guidance will explain the reporting requirements when you work with other lobbyists, clients of other lobbyists or other organizations for the purpose of lobbying. These requirements correspond to the previous filing obligations for members of 'coalitions'. The requirements remain the same, but the language of the LTA will be updated for clarity.

### [Government Funding](#)<sup>4</sup>

- This guidance will explain the filing requirements related to government funding your organization or client has received. Designated filers will no longer be required to file information related to *requested* government funding. A requirement to report *received* government funding will remain, but the deadline to file this information will be extended.

### Guidance for not-for-profit organizations<sup>5</sup>

- This guidance answers questions that commonly arise for not-for-profit organizations and will be updated to reflect the new amendments.

### Getting Started – Reference Guide<sup>6</sup>

- This guide answers common questions about lobbying in BC, including when and how lobbyists need to register with the BC Lobbyists Registry and will be updated to reflect the new amendments.

### **Infographics**

[Registration Timelines](#)<sup>7</sup>

[Monthly Returns](#)<sup>8</sup>

[What do the Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 amendments mean for my lobbying registration](#)<sup>9</sup>

One new user guide and one new infographic on the Funding Return Process will also be available.

In addition, the following user guides will be updated to align with changes to the Lobbyists Registry that the ORL has made in response to the coming into force of the *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2024*.

- Organization Registration Returns
- Consultant Lobbyist Registration Returns
- Monthly Returns – Registration Return Updates and Lobbying Activity Reports
- Quick Reference Guide for Representatives
- Sample Questionnaire for Consultant Lobbyists' clients
- Sample Questionnaire for Organizations that are lobbying

All guidance documents can be viewed [here](#)<sup>10</sup>.

## **REGISTRY RELEASES**

With the *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2024* coming into force on May 27, 2025, corresponding changes to the Lobbyists Registry will go live that day.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

The following [FAQ](#)<sup>11</sup> has been updated on our website:

### ***If we ask an MLA to write a letter of support for a grant, is this lobbying?***

Possibly. Communicating with a public office holder, including an MLA, in an attempt to influence the awarding of a grant administered by or on behalf of the government of British Columbia or a Provincial entity is lobbying. Seeking support from an MLA for a BC government grant application may be viewed as an attempt to influence the awarding of

a grant and thus may require registration in the Lobbyists Registry. The specific details of the situation must be considered.

For example, if a grant application requires that you provide letters of support specifically from an MLA, acquiring those letters may not be considered lobbying as you would simply be adhering to an established government grant application process. However, if the grant application does not prescribe that letters of support need to come from an MLA, seeking MLA support for the application likely falls within the scope of lobbying. Consequently, you would likely need to register the communication seeking the MLA's letter of support as a lobbying communication.

Note that the definition of "lobby" applies to communications attempting to influence the awarding, amendment, or termination of grants administered *by or on behalf of the government of British Columbia or a Provincial entity*. If you seek a letter of support from an MLA or other public office holder for a grant that is not administered by, or on behalf of, the government of British Columbia or a Provincial entity, this communication would likely not fall within the definition of lobby and would not require registration in the Lobbyists Registry.

If you are uncertain whether a communication with a public office holder is lobbying, please contact the ORL at [info@bcorl.ca](mailto:info@bcorl.ca) for assistance.

The [Frequently Asked Questions](#)<sup>12</sup> page on the ORL website also provides information on many topics, including the Registry, lobbying, compliance, arranging meetings, gifts, Registration Returns, among others.

## IMPORTANT DATES

### Add to your calendar

Monthly Returns are due by the 15th of each month. When the 15th falls on a Sunday or a statutory holiday, the deadline becomes the next day that is not a Sunday or statutory holiday. You can submit your Monthly Return earlier than the 15th of the month; we encourage lobbyists to submit their Monthly Return in the first week of the new month in case any issues are encountered, or any questions arise.

### Upcoming 2025 dates:

Due dates for Monthly Returns
Thursday, May 15
Monday, June 16
Tuesday, July 15
Friday, August 15
Monday, September 15
Wednesday, October 15
Saturday, November 15
Monday, December 15

**Table of due dates to report *received* government funding information.**

Month funding is received	Due date to report received funding in the Lobbyists Registry
January	May 15 <sup>th</sup>
February	June 15 <sup>th</sup>
March	July 15 <sup>th</sup>
April	August 15 <sup>th</sup>
May	September 15 <sup>th</sup>
June	October 15 <sup>th</sup>
July	November 15 <sup>th</sup>
August	December 15 <sup>th</sup>
September	January 15 <sup>th</sup>
October	February 15 <sup>th</sup>
November	March 15 <sup>th</sup>
December	April 15 <sup>th</sup>

## RECENT NEWS

### Who's Lobbying Who

Who's Lobbying Who is a monthly summary of lobbying activities that in-house lobbyists for organizations and consultant lobbyists for clients have carried out or expect to carry out in BC. Each edition contains all new Registration Returns submitted and activated during the previous month.

All monthly reports are available on the [Who's Lobbying Who](#)<sup>13</sup> (page on the ORL website).

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PUBLIC CONSULTATION IN MAY

As part of our office's mandate to promote transparency and accountability across BC's public and private sectors, the ORL will be conducting an in-person engagement "listening tour" in May.

Michael Harvey, Information and Privacy Commissioner for BC, designated as the Registrar of Lobbyists, invites you to share what you think the ORL's priorities should be over the next three years. This feedback will shape the OIPC/ORL's strategic plan, which will be released in the fall of 2025.

There are two ways you can provide feedback:

- 1. In-person:** Meet the Registrar and Commissioner and share your thoughts

Registrar Harvey will be delivering presentations and receiving feedback in cities across British Columbia. These sessions will offer lobbyists a unique opportunity to learn more about the mandates of the ORL and OIPC, to ask questions, and to provide direct feedback on the offices' strategic priorities.

- Prince George: May 13
- Smithers: May 15
- Victoria: May 21
- Kamloops: May 26
- Kelowna: May 27
- Abbotsford: May 28
- Vancouver: May 29
- Vancouver: May 30 (\*full)

[Register here](#)<sup>14</sup>

For more information and venue details, visit the [ORL website](#)<sup>15</sup>.

## 2. Written submissions

We also welcome in-depth feedback from individuals and organizations. Please send your feedback to: [OIPCTraining@oipc.bc.ca](mailto:OIPCTraining@oipc.bc.ca) by June 30, 2025.

*For more information or to inquire about accessibility at the in-person presentations, please also contact [OIPCTraining@oipc.bc.ca](mailto:OIPCTraining@oipc.bc.ca)*

## REPORTS OF NON-COMPLIANCE, RECONSIDERATION REPORTS, AND OTHER DECISIONS

The ORL has the authority to investigate alleged lobbyist contraventions, such as failing to register or report required information, or reporting the required information late. ORL investigators review the circumstances of each case, examine the evidence and, if the contravention is substantiated, levy an administrative penalty. The LTA contains a provision for reconsideration of Decisions by the Registrar.

Previous reports of non-compliance, reconsideration, and exemption decision reports can be viewed on our website under [Decisions](#)<sup>16</sup>.

[Determination Decision 24-04](#)<sup>17</sup>

BC Chamber of Commerce contravened section 2.4 of the *Lobbyists Transparency Act* (LTA) when it promised and/or gave gifts that exceeded the \$100 limit set out in section 6 of the LTA Regulations within the 12-month period identified in section 2.4(2)(b) of the LTA. BC Chamber of Commerce was issued a penalty of \$4,000.

[Determination Decision 25-01](#)<sup>18</sup>

Atira Women's Resource Society (Atira), failed to submit their Registration Return within 10 days of the date the organization first engaging in lobbying, contrary to section 3(3) of the *Lobbyists Transparency Act* (LTA). The designated filer was issued an administrative penalty of \$4,000 for that contravention. Atira also contravened section. 4.1 of the LTA when they failed to submit a Monthly Return by September 15, 2023. For this contravention they were issued an administrative penalty of \$1,000.

[Determination Decision 25-02](#)<sup>19</sup>

The designated filer for the Arts Club of Vancouver Theatre Society (the Arts Club) was found to have contravened sections 3(3) and 2.4 of the *Lobbyists Transparency Act* (LTA). The designated filer received an administrative penalty totalling \$600 for the contraventions.

[Determination Decision 25-03](#)<sup>20</sup>

The designated filer failed to submit the Vancouver Humane Society's Registration Return within 10 days of having its first in-house lobbyist, contravening section 3(3) of the *Lobbyists Transparency Act*. The designated filer was issued a penalty of \$2,000.



*Resources referenced in this edition:*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/app/secure/orl/lrs/do/guest>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/resources/influencing-bc/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=349>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=348>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=397>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=417>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=438>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=473>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=497>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/resources/guidance-documents/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/resources/frequently-asked-questions/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/resources/frequently-asked-questions/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/the-registry/whos-lobbying-who/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://mailstorm.caorda.solutions/surveys/xv251k47olc8a>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/news/events/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/decisions/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=518>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=522>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=523>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/handlers/DocumentHandler.ashx?DocumentID=524>