

**May 1, 2020**

### **BC's Lobbyists Registration Act Comes into Force**

VICTORIA—British Columbia's Lobbyists Transparency Act (LTA) comes into force May 4, 2020, as the remaining sections of the Lobbyists Registration Amendment Act, 2018 take effect. The new legislation incorporates recommendations made by the Registrar of Lobbyists to increase transparency in lobbying.

The changes will be supported by a new Lobbyists Registry, which will go online May 4, 2020. The new registry will be easier for lobbyists to use and for the public to search lobbying activities in the province. By providing a public overview of lobbying activity by way of an online searchable registry, the Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists (ORL) supports trust in B.C.'s lobbying process.

For lobbyists, one of the significant changes in the legislation is the introduction of monthly returns. Lobbyists will need to submit these reports to the Lobbyists Registry. As a result, as of May 4 it will be possible to search the lobbyists registry for lobbying of senior public office holders including gifts given or promised to public office holders and information about political contributions made by lobbyists.

The registrar anticipates more organizations will have to register their activities as a result of the changes in the LTA. Many non-governmental organizations, societies, unions, and not-for-profit organizations that have not needed to register in the lobbyists registry in the past will be required to do so. Currently, organizations that have lobbied under 100 hours in the previous 12 months are not required to register in the Lobbyists Registry. However, on May 4 this 100-hour threshold will be eliminated.

The ORL is committed to making it as easy as possible for lobbyists to comply with the changes to the rules. New guidance documents, lobbyists registry user guides and a section with frequently asked questions are available on the ORL website to assist lobbyists with compliance to the new legislation.

A transition period from May 4 to June 15, 2020, has been provided for lobbyists to update their current registrations in the new lobbyists registry and to file their first monthly return for any lobbying activity. For lobbyists responding to the COVID-19 epidemic who may require more time, that transition period extends to September 15, 2020. Lobbyists who can set up their registration by June 15, 2020, are expected to do so.

## ***Announcement***

To protect the health of ORL employees and to do its part to slow community transmission of the COVID-19 virus, ORL staff are working remotely. The office continues to carry out the Registrar's mandate, including providing service to the public and lobbyists, and the lobbyists registry continues to be monitored.

**Learn More:**

Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists for British Columbia: <https://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca/>

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