



Ten Things Members of Parliament Need to Know About Federal Lobbying in Canada

1. Lobbying is Legitimate

Lobbying is legitimate but it must be done in an open and transparent manner.

2. What is Lobbying?

Lobbying is defined in the *Lobbying Act* as being paid or expecting to be paid to communicate with federal public office holders directly or indirectly, such as grassroots campaigns, on registrable topics (changing legislation, regulations, policy and programs or about financial benefits, such as grants and contributions).

3. There Are Two Types of Lobbyists

There are two types of lobbyists: consultant lobbyists (individuals who represent clients) and in-house lobbyists (employees of corporations or not-for-profit organizations who communicate on their behalf). For consultants, communicating with a public office holder about the awarding of a federal government contract and arranging a meeting between a third party and a federal public office holder are also registrable lobbying activities.

4. The Registry of Lobbyists Ensures Transparency

The online Registry of Lobbyists is the primary tool to ensure that lobbying activities conducted at the federal level are transparent. Its robust search features allow public office holders to verify that lobbyists are disclosing their activities as required. It is available at: <http://www.ocl-cal.gc.ca/registry>.

5. The *Lobbyists' Code of Conduct* Outlines Expected Behaviour

The *Lobbyists' Code of Conduct* establishes the behaviour expected of lobbyists when they interact with federal public office holders. Members of Parliament are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Code. It is available at: <http://www.ocl-cal.gc.ca/code>.

6. MPs and Their Staff are Public Office Holders — MPs are Designated Public Office Holders

Members of Parliament and their staff are “public office holders” under the *Lobbying Act*, which means that those who lobby you or your staff are subject to the Act and the Code. As MPs are “designated public office holders,” lobbyists who communicate with you on registrable topics may be required to report communications in the public Registry of Lobbyists.

7. Public Office Holders Have a Role in Compliance

You are encouraged to check the Registry of Lobbyists and to ask lobbyists if they are aware of the requirements of the *Lobbying Act* and the *Lobbyists' Code of Conduct*. If they are not, tell them to contact the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying. If they are aware, ask them if they are in compliance, knowing that compliance may not require registration. The Commissioner takes all alleged breaches of the *Lobbying Act* and the *Lobbyists' Code of Conduct* seriously. Please inform the Office of any suspected contraventions of the Act or Code.

8. Five-Year Post-Employment Prohibition on Lobbying

As designated public officer holders, members of Parliament and ministers are subject to a five-year post-employment prohibition on lobbying upon leaving office. The Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying offers confidential advice. Please contact the Office if you have any questions.

9. The Importance of Keeping Records of Your Conversations with Lobbyists

As part of its compliance efforts, the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying contacts a sample of designated public office holders to verify the accuracy of the information disclosed by lobbyists in monthly communication reports. You are obliged to respond to these requests, so you are encouraged to keep records of your meetings with lobbyists.

10. The Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying is Here to Help

If you have any questions about lobbying at the federal level, please contact the Office at (613) 957-2760 or QuestionsLobbying@ocl-cal.gc.ca.