

Introduction to the Lobbyists Registration Act (British Columbia)

By Clayton Whitman | 9 April 2009

Introduction

The *Lobbyists Registration Act* (British Columbia) (the “**Act**”) sets out requirements for registration of individuals and organizations engaged in lobbying activities in British Columbia. The following summary is intended only as an introductory guide for lobbyists and organizations that want a basic understanding of the rules and requirements that apply when lobbying B.C. public office holders. It is not to be relied upon as legal advice.

If you have an issue involving the Act, or are unsure if the Act applies to you, please [contact me](#).

Does the Lobbyists Registration Act apply to me or my organization?

The Act distinguishes between two types of lobbyist: consultant lobbyists and in-house lobbyists.

You are a consultant lobbyist if you are paid by a client to lobby.

You are an in-house lobbyist if you are employed by a person or organization and at least 20% of your duties as an employee is to lobby.

The Act defines lobbying as communicating with a public office holder in an attempt to influence a legislative proposal, bill, resolution, regulation, program, policy or contract. In addition, the arrangement of a meeting by a consultant lobbyist between a public office holder and any other person is defined as lobbying.

If you are a consultant lobbyist, or if you are an in-house lobbyist for a person other than an organization, the Act requires that you register with the Registrar, setting out certain particulars with respect to your lobbyist activities.

If you are the senior officer of an organization that employs an in-house lobbyist, you are responsible for registration under the Act for the lobbyist activities of the organization.

What are the registration requirements?

If you are a consultant lobbyist, you are required to register within 10 days of agreeing to lobby for a client.

If you are an in-house lobbyist for a person other than an organization, or the senior officer of an organization that employs an in-house lobbyist, you must register within 2 months of becoming a lobbyist or hiring an in-house lobbyist.

When registering, consultant lobbyists, in-house lobbyists and senior officers must include, among other things, the name and business address of the lobbyist and the client or organization, and particulars of who will be lobbied and the subject matter.

Once there are any changes to the information contained in a registration, or the lobbying activities ceases, the registration must be updated or terminated within 30 days.

What about contingency fees?

The Act does not prohibit the payment of contingency or success fees.

What are the penalties if I fail to comply with the Act?

If you fail to file a return or knowingly make a false or misleading statement in a return, you may be subject to a fine of up to \$25,000.

Clayton Whitman is a lawyer in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada and can be contacted [by email](#) or at 604-661-1728.