





## LOBBYING AND THE REGISTRY OF LOBBYISTS

In Québec, lobbying is recognized as a legitimate activity. Lobbying is defined as any oral or written communication with a **public office holder** in an attempt to influence a decision (for example, concerning an amendment to a law, the awarding of a grant or the issue of a permit). Lobbying can take place in any sector: healthcare, education, the environment, economic development, etc.

Under the Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Act, a **public office holder** is any person responsible for making decisions at the parliamentary, governmental or municipal level in Québec: a government minister, member of the National Assembly, employee of the Government or a municipality, mayor, municipal or borough councillor, etc.

Lobbying plays an important role in the work of decision-makers. The information provided by a **lobbyist** to a public office holder may be taken into account by the office holder in making a decision.

Lobbyists must disclose their lobbying activities and update the information concerning their activities recorded in a registry, known as the "registry of lobbyists". This government registry is accessible at all times via the Internet, and ensures the transparency of all lobbying of public office holders.

There are three types of **lobbyists**:

- **CONSULTANT LOBBYISTS**, whose work involves lobbying on behalf of a client in return for compensation (such as a fee). A consultant lobbyist may work for a specialized public relations agency or professional firm (such as a law firm, engineering firm, architectural firm, accounting firm, etc.), or may be self-employed;
- **ENTERPRISE LOBBYISTS** employed by an enterprise, when a significant part of their job or function involves lobbying on behalf of the enterprise;
- **ORGANIZATION LOBBYISTS** employed by an organization, when a significant part of their job or function, like enterprise lobbyists, involves lobbying on behalf of the organization (such as a professional order or an association of contractors).

## CONSULTING THE REGISTRY

Any person can consult the registry of lobbyists in order to

- find out who is attempting to influence public office holders, in what sector, for what purpose and for whose benefit;
- find information on topics of public interest;
- understand how decisions are made by public office holders.

After consulting the registry a person may, for example, decide to take action to ensure that his or her point of view is considered by the authorities concerned.

The registry can be searched using keywords or various search criteria (name of lobbyist or name of enterprise, government department or body, etc.).



To allow the lobbying activities listed in the registry to be monitored on a regular basis, it is possible to view recently-entered information (information entered over the last 1 to 30 days).

The search results generally include a lobbyist's name and contact information, the object of his or her **lobbying activities**, the name of the institution being lobbied (government department or body, municipality, etc.) and the means he or she used to communicate with the public office holders concerned.

Here are two examples of a **lobbying activity** that may be disclosed in the registry:

- A company director contacts the representatives of a municipality and of several government departments because he wants to obtain an amendment to a land planning by-law, after demonstrating the importance of constructing a new building for cultural activities.
- An association hires a lobbyist to prepare and present an application for a grant. The lobbyist's task is to identify the governmental decision-makers concerned and to contact them in order to obtain money to promote the advantages of the project.