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Notice to the Legal Professions: Foreign Influence Transparency and Accountability Regime Comes into Force August 4, 2026

August 2026

Overview

On August 4, 2026, the *Foreign Influence Transparency and Accountability Act* ("FITAA") and its associated Regulations came into force. The FITAA establishes a public registry whereby any "person" who enters into an "arrangement" with a "foreign principal" must register and provide certain information to the Foreign Influence Transparency Commissioner for inclusion in the registry.

Application of the regime to licensed legal professionals

While legal professionals, legal advice, and legal representation is not explicitly carved-out from the reporting requirements under the FITAA or Regulations, an interpretation bulletin provides guidance on the application of the foreign influence registry regime to licensed legal professionals.

The interpretation bulletin states that "providing advice, which is subject to solicitor-client privilege, to a foreign principal is not considered an influence activity." The interpretation bulletin further outlines:

- What constitutes non-registerable and registerable activities;
- What constitutes influence activities, the provision of legal services, and political and governmental processes; and
- Obligations to register for licensed legal professionals.

For further details, see the interpretation bulletin.

The Commissioner has also issued interpretation bulletins for the terms "arrangement", "foreign principal", "public office holder", and "influence activities", discussed later in this notice.

Reporting requirements under the FITAA

The definitions under the FITAA are important in determining what is a "registrable activity" that triggers a registration obligation.

"Arrangement" is defined under s. 2 of the FITAA as:

An arrangement under which a person undertakes to carry out, under the direction of or in association with a foreign principal, any of the following activities in relation to a political or governmental process in Canada:

- communicating with a public office holder;
- communicating or disseminating or causing to be communicated or disseminated by any means, including social media, information that is related to the political of governmental process;
- distributing money or items of value, or providing a service or the use of a facility.

Note: political and governmental processes at all levels of government are captured under the FITAA.

"Person" is defined under [s. 2 of the FITAA](#) as:

- corporation;
- trust;
- joint venture;
- partnership;
- fund;
- unincorporated association or organization; or
- any other legal entity.

"Foreign principal" is defined under s. 2 of the FITAA as:

- *foreign economic entity*;
- *foreign entity*;
- *foreign power*; or
- *foreign state*

as these expressions are defined in subsection 2(1) of the *Security of Information Act*.

"Public office holder" is defined under s. 2 of the FITAA as:

An individual included in a class of individuals specified in the regulations and, unless they are excluded by the regulations, any of the following individuals:

- a *public office holder* as defined in subsection 2(1) of the *Lobbying Act*;
- an individual referred to in any of paragraphs 4(1)(a) to (c) of that Act;
- an individual referred to in paragraph 4(1)(d) or (d.1) of that Act;
- an officer or employee of an entity referred to in subparagraph 4(c)(ii) of this Act.

Note: The Regulations identify additional public office holders.

"Political or governmental process" is defined under s. 2 of the FITAA as:

- any proceeding of a legislative body;
- the development of a legislative proposal;
- the development or amendment of any policy or program;
- the making of a decision by a public office holder or government body, including the awarding of a contract;
- the holding of an election or referendum; and
- the nomination of a candidate or the development of an electoral platform by a political party.

Implementation of the regime under the Regulations

The Regulations set out the framework for the foreign influence registry regime, including:

- Defining "influence activities" as activities referred to in the definition of "arrangement" under the FITAA;
- Identifying additional public office holders;
- Outlining excluded arrangements;
- Setting out the information that must be provided about the person entering into the arrangement, the foreign principal with whom they are in an arrangement, and the arrangement itself; and
- Outlining administrative monetary penalties that may be imposed when violations occur, which range from $250 to $1,000,000.

Additional information

The federal government has launched a website of the newly created Office of the Foreign Influence Commissioner of Canada, with information on the interpretation and application of the regime.