

Backgrounder

Conflict of Interest Act

Initial Compliance Process for Reporting Public Office Holders

The [*Conflict of Interest Act*](#) sets out the rules and reporting requirements that help reporting public office holders (RPOHs) avoid conflicts of interest.

Reporting Requirements. RPOHs are responsible for ensuring they are in compliance with the Act. The initial compliance process begins as soon as they are appointed to office.

RPOHs must submit to the Commissioner a confidential report outlining their assets, liabilities, income, current and past activities and any other information the Commissioner considers necessary, within 60 days of their appointment.

Advisors in the Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner review the confidential reports and discuss with the RPOHs any measures that may be needed to ensure they are complying with the Act. These may include:

- Divesting controlled assets through a blind trust or selling them through an arm's length transaction. While RPOHs are not permitted to hold controlled assets, the Commissioner does have discretion to allow them to retain a portfolio if it is of minimum value and no conflict exists with their duties and functions.
- Stepping down as a director or officer in a corporation or organization, unless the position is required as part of one's official duties or functions.
- Securing approval from the Commissioner to continue as or become a director or officer in a philanthropic, charitable or non-commercial organization.
- Determining appropriate compliance measures such as setting up conflict of interest screens or other undertakings. These require the Commissioner's approval.

The Office prepares a summary statement and, where applicable, a public declaration of assets, outside activities and other appropriate measures. These documents must be signed by the RPOH within 120 days of his or her appointment. They are placed in the public registry, which is accessible through the Office website.

The Office contacts RPOHs annually to review and, if necessary, update their confidential reports, summary statements and relevant public declarations.

** A backgrounder on the initial compliance process for ministers and parliamentary secretaries is available.*