

Appendix A

A Guide to Searching Government Registries

This section is adapted from *Legal and Ethical Duties of Directors of Not-for-Profit Organizations: Organizing Your Corporate Documents* (2009). Lois Gander. The Muttart Foundation.

www.muttart.org/sites/default/files/downloads/publications/legal_and_ethical_1_organizing.pdf

Getting Professional Help Contact Information

The following four pages provide information on searching government registries online. If, however, you do not have access to the Internet or you require information or documents that are not available online you can contact:

- **Companies Office (Manitoba), you can:**
 - Visit the Companies Office in person at the Woodsworth Building, Room 1010, 405 Broadway, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Fees may apply.
 - Send a request via mail, along with the required fee, to the Companies Office, 1010-405 Broadway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3L6
 - For information on fees, see <http://companiesoffice.gov.mb.ca/fees.htm>

- **Corporate Registry (Federal), phone:**
Industry Canada (Corporations Canada)
Toll-free: 1-866-328-6189, or (613) 954-5031

- **Charities Directorate, phone:**
Canada Revenue Agency
Toll-free English: 1-800-267-2384, or
Toll-free bilingual: 1-888-892-5667



A Guide To Searching Government Registries

Corporate Registries

Both the federal and provincial governments can incorporate not-for-profit organizations and they both maintain registries of those organizations that they have incorporated. At several places we suggest that you might want to do a search of either or both government registries and/or contact them by phone:

- To find out if an organization is incorporated
- To find its corporate numbers
- To get a copy of its constitution
- To find out if its constitution has been amended
- To get a copy of any amendments to the constitution that have been filed
- To find its registered office

If you know where your organization was incorporated you only need to search the registry for that level of government. However, if you are not sure whether your organization was incorporated provincially or federally, you may need to search both registries.

Registry of Charitable Organizations

All charities must be registered with the Canada Revenue Agency to receive charitable tax benefits and to issue tax deduction receipts. To find out if your organization is a registered charity, search the Registry of Charitable Organizations.

Corporate Registry

Manitoba

Organizations incorporated under Manitoba statutes are registered in the Government of Manitoba Companies Office database. The Companies Office keeps track of the organization's status based on annual returns or other documents that it requires organizations to file from time to time. These include a change in the organization's directors or its registered office. These are considered to be "public" documents and may be looked at by anyone.

By accessing the province's Manitoba Online service, subscribers can gain access to the Companies Office database as well as other provincial government databases. Subscribers to the Companies Office database are able to access the most recent information available for businesses and corporations on record in Manitoba (but not to copies of actual documents on file).

The Manitoba Government Companies Office website at http://companiesoffice.gov.mb.ca/search_registry.html has some information about the province's Manitoba Online service, service levels and fees.

The Manitoba Online website is at https://direct.gov.mb.ca/mbohtml/html/internet/en/mb_online.html. You may find it helpful to browse the site for more information.

If you do not have access to the Internet you can visit the Companies Office in person, or mail in your request. See the first page of this guide for contact information.

Conducting a Search of Manitoba Online

Before potential users can gain access to Manitoba Online, they are required to submit registration information to become an authorized user. Download an information package at <https://direct.gov.mb.ca/esd/html/internet/en/security.html> and mail it in.

Organizations as well as individual users must submit a Security Application Form. Instructions and forms are available at <https://direct.gov.mb.ca/esd/html/internet/en/security.html>

For further information, contact the IBM Customer Service Centre by phone at (204) 944-2818 or 1-888-532-3476



Resources

You or anyone else can do a search of the registry

- To find out if an organization is incorporated
- To get a copy of its constitution
- To find your organization's corporate number
- To find out if its constitution has been amended
- To get a copy of any amendments to the constitution that have been filed
- To find its registered office

It will be more efficient for you if you do your searches of Manitoba Online all at once.

Federal

The registry of federally incorporated not-for-profit corporations is maintained by Industry Canada. The Federal Corporations Data On-Line system allows users to search the Federal Corporations Database free of cost.

Conducting a Search of the Corporations Data On-Line

You or anyone else can do a search of the registry

- To find out if an organization is incorporated
- To find your organization's corporate number
- To find out if it has been filing its annual reports and annual summaries
- To find its registered office

It will be more efficient for you if you do your searches all at once.

- Do a list of all searches you need.
- The database can be found on the Industry Canada website at Resources for Businesses, Company Directories. www.ic.gc.ca
- Searches can be performed by Corporate Number, name, creation date, city, province, corporation status or Act.
- If you do not have access to the Internet see Corporations Canada (Industry Canada) contact information on the first page of this guide.



Resources

Obtaining a copy of incorporation and related documents

To obtain a copy of a federally incorporated not-for-profit's constitution (Letters Patent and by-laws) and any amendments, fax your request to Corporations Canada (Industry Canada) at 1 (613) 941-5789. As of the time of writing, the cost for this is \$1/page. These charges may be paid by credit card. To do so, include the credit card number, expiry date, and name of cardholder in the fax.

Canada Revenue Agency – Charities Directorate

The Charities Directorate of the Canada Revenue Agency maintains a list of over 80,000 charities registered with the CRA. The list includes the name of the charity, Business Number (BN)/Registration Number, mailing address, designation type, category code, and – when available – the charity's annual information returns starting with the 2000 T3010A, Registered Charity Information Return.

Conducting a Search of Canadian registered charitable organizations

You or anyone else can do a search of the registry

- To find out if your organization is a registered charitable organization
- To find out if it is in good standing
- To find its contact information for the purposes of receiving notices from the CRA

To search the online directory go to www.cra-arc.gc.ca. Searches can be conducted using the charity name, Business Number(BN)/Registration Number or other fields. Instructions about searching the list are available on the site.

In addition to the list of all Canadian registered charities who are in good standing, the Charities Directorate now gives you online access to

- newly registered charities (within the last 12 months) and
- recently revoked charities (within the last 12 months).

If you do not have access to the Internet see the Charities Directorate contact information on the first page of this guide.

