

# Bill 23

## Professional Governance Act

### Overview

Alberta's government delegates self-governing responsibilities for certain professions and occupations to professional regulatory organizations. These organizations are responsible for the governance, registration, conduct and discipline of their registrants. They are also responsible for ensuring their registrants deliver services in a way that protects life, health, property, the environment and the economic interests of Albertans.

Currently, these organizations are governed by nine separate acts and 28 supporting regulations. This legislative patchwork has created inconsistencies and inefficiencies in how professional regulatory organizations are governed and operate. Some of the legislation is also outdated.

If passed, the *Professional Governance Act* will consolidate, streamline and update this current piecemeal legislation into a single umbrella act with a minimal number of supporting regulations. This will achieve consistency and efficiency for professional regulatory organizations and the Albertans they serve.

### Affected professional regulatory organizations

- Alberta Assessors' Association
- Alberta Association of Architects
- Alberta Association of Landscape Architects
- Alberta Human Ecology and Home Economics Association
- Alberta Institute of Agrologists
- Alberta Land Surveyors' Association
- Alberta Professional Planners Institute
- Alberta Shorthand Reporters' Association
- Alberta Society of Professional Biologists
- Alberta Veterinary Medical Association
- Association of Alberta Forest Management Professionals
- Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta
- Association of School Business Officials of Alberta
- Association of Science and Engineering Technology Professionals of Alberta
- Association of the Chemical Profession of Alberta
- Canadian Information Processing Society of Alberta
- Chartered Professional Accountants Alberta
- Consulting Engineers of Alberta
- Electrical Contractors Association of Alberta
- Institute of Certified Management Consultants of Alberta
- Society of Local Government Managers of Alberta
- Supply Chain Management Association Alberta

### Acts being repealed

Once the *Professional Governance Act* takes effect, the following acts will be repealed:

- *Professional and Occupational Associations Registration Act*
- *Chartered Professional Accountants Act*
- *Agrology Profession Act*
- *Architects Act*
- *Consulting Engineers of Alberta Act*
- *Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act*
- *Regulated Forest Management Profession Act*
- *Land Surveyors Act*

- *Veterinary Profession Act*

## **Effective date**

If passed, the *Professional Governance Act* takes effect upon proclamation, which is expected in 2023.

## **Standard operations**

The new act provides a consistent and standard way for professional regulatory organizations to carry out core operations such as governance, registration, conduct and discipline of their registrants. The standards were developed by adopting the best practices of existing professional legislation.

## **Profession-specific schedules**

Some professional regulatory organizations and their professions may have unique needs and requirements. These will be addressed through adding profession-specific regulatory schedules. The schedules will be developed in the coming months in consultation with the professional regulatory organizations.

## **Amalgamations, de-registration, creating new organizations**

The *Professional Governance Act* provides consistent processes for amalgamating or de-registering existing professional regulatory organizations and creating new ones. While there is a provision for the Minister to lead an amalgamation in certain circumstances, the intent is for amalgamation to be voluntary and driven by the professional regulatory organizations themselves.

## **Public administrator**

A public administrator may be appointed when a professional regulatory organization is not fulfilling its obligations, acting in good faith or serving the public interest and public safety. This provision will be used only in exceptional circumstances when there is a clear threat to the public interest or the interest of public safety.

## **Public member appointments**

The Government of Alberta appoints public members to professional regulatory organizations to ensure the public's interest is represented. Under the new act, all public member appointments will be made through Ministerial Order. This brings consistency and efficiency to the public member appointment process.

## **Out-of-province professionals**

The *Professional Governance Act* will align with both the *Labour Mobility Act* (yet to be proclaimed) and *Fair Registration Practices Act* to reduce barriers for regulated professionals from outside Alberta. Their credentials can be recognized in Alberta more quickly and efficiently. Credentials can also be recognized on a temporary basis to allow out-of-province professionals to work in Alberta on short-term projects or during emergencies.

## **Government oversight**

While retaining government oversight, the *Professional Governance Act* will enable professional regulatory organizations to make bylaws needed to carry out their responsibilities in a more streamlined fashion that will further reduce red tape.