

# REGULATION OF LOBBYING ACT 2015

## AN INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE

The Act is designed to provide information to the public about:

- Who is lobbying?
- On whose behalf is lobbying being carried out?
- What are the issues involved in the lobbying?
- What is the intended result of the lobbying?
- Who is being lobbied?

### APPLIES TO WHOM

In general, the Act applies to professional lobbyists; commercial organisations which have more than 10 full time employees; representative bodies with at least one full time employee; and advocacy groups, non-governmental organisations and charities which have at least one full time employee and which promote particular interests or causes. The Act also applies to any person communicating about the development of zoning of land. In certain circumstances, it may apply to individuals and groups who may not ordinarily regard themselves as carrying on lobbying activities.

### DESIGNATED PUBLIC OFFICIALS

- Ministers of the Government and Ministers of State
- Other members of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann
- Members of the European Parliament for the three constituencies in Ireland
- Members of local authorities
- Special advisers
- Secretaries-General and Assistant Secretaries-General of Government departments
- Chief Executive Officers and Directors of Services in local authorities
- Other public servants who may be prescribed by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform over time

Public bodies are obliged to publish the names of their employees who are designated public officials and a brief description of their roles and responsibilities for the purposes of the lobbying legislation. It is expected that this information will be made available on the websites of the public bodies.

### LOBBYING ISSUES MAY INCLUDE:

- The initiation, development or modification of any public policy or of any public programme.
- The preparation or amendment of any law.
- The award of any grant, loan or other financial support, contract or other agreement, or of any licence or other authorisation involving public funds.

## REPORTING

The reporting format is online and sets out the areas about which you lobbied, the type of relevant matter, specific details, and the intended result. Campaigns-based reporting does not require the inclusion of each individual activity, i.e. it is NOT a register of emails, telephone calls, meetings etc.

- The name of the person primarily responsible for lobbying is required and will be published in the return - could be the CEO, Director etc.
- The Act requires the provision of the name of any Designated Public Official or former Designated Public Official involved in the campaign to be included.
- The type of lobbying activity should be reported e.g. grassroots campaign; mass communications; targeted activities; activity type - email; informal; letter; phone call; submissions; social media; and the activity and extent in numbers - 1-10; 51-100 etc.
- Normally one submission is required to be reported, either by the client or the agency. The report must be recorded by those directly involved in the activity. Responsibility for reporting should be agreed in advance between the client and the agency.
- When communicating with public officials or representatives regarding the zoning or development of land, individuals and groups who may not ordinarily regard themselves as carrying on lobbying activities may find that the Act also applies to them.
- A communication with a Designated Public Official about a planning application which is outside of the formal planning process may be regarded as lobbying.

**It is important to note that no professional exemptions, confidentiality or issues of privilege apply, whether for lawyers, accountants, PR companies or others. Lobbying may not be undertaken unless registration is completed.**

## Bodies that are not considered public service bodies under the act:

1. Any body corporate established by Act of Parliament before 6 December 1922 that, upon its establishment, was of a commercial character.
2. Bord na gCon.
3. Bord na Móna Plc.
4. Córas Iompair Éireann.
5. Coillte Teoranta
6. Cork Airport Authority, public limited company.
7. daa, public limited company.
8. EirGrid Plc.
9. Electricity Supply Board.
10. Érvia.
11. A harbour authority within the meaning of the Harbours Acts 1946 to 2005.
12. Horse Racing Ireland.
13. Irish National Stud Company Limited.
14. Irish Aviation Authority.
15. An Post.
16. Raidió Teilifís Éireann.
17. Shannon Airport Authority, public limited company.
18. Teilifís na Gaeilge.
19. Railway Procurement Agency.
20. Voluntary Health Insurance Board.
21. A subsidiary of a body to which the Schedule of the Act relates, including a subsidiary of such a subsidiary.

**In addition to a full list of Public Service Bodies, the website [www.lobbying.ie](http://www.lobbying.ie) also provides a list of Departments and Agencies with Designated Public Officials.**