



Ontario's Teaching Regulator
L'organisme de réglementation
de l'enseignement en Ontario

Professional Advisories

1. Background

As Ontario's teaching regulator, it falls within the College's mandate for the Registrar to provide advice and guidance to members with respect to their professional practice. One of the ways this has been achieved by the College is through the issuance of professional advisories.

Professional advisories respond to:

- a professional's need to understand an aspect of professional practice
- a professional's need to know how the regulator views certain conduct
- the public's need to understand what professionals are (or are not) expected and/or obligated to do.

In a broader sense, professional advisories enable regulatory bodies such as the College to engage their membership and the public on current regulatory activities.

2. Proposed Advisory Framework

Advisory topics may be identified by the Registrar, a council member or a member of the Standards of Practice and Education Committee. Topics may also be suggested by employers, stakeholders, College members or the general public. Furthermore, there could be a critical change in legislation that is relevant to College members. In most cases, however, relevant topics will become self-evident based on a perceived need and in the absence of readily available guidance in the subject area.

To ensure consistency, the College develops a standard template document for each professional advisory. This template contributes to overall product consistency and facilitating understanding of the content by members of the profession and the public.

Phase 1: Research, development consultation and approval of the Professional Advisory

During Phase 1, the following activities take place:

1. Advisory Topic Confirmation

The Registrar will develop a list of current advisory topics with sufficient background to explain the purpose and relevancy of each topic for members of the profession.

The list will be presented to the Standards of Practice and Education Committee for the selection of a topic from the proposed list.

2. Research

A cross-departmental work group will be established to co-ordinate background research in support of the approved topic, identify relevant information and existing resources, and identify critical and expert readers. External experts in the relevant area will be asked to provide feedback on early drafts of the advisory.

3. Consultation processes and drafting

College members, committee members and the public will be invited to provide input during the research and drafting stage, through electronic means. Excerpts of the professional advisory or relevant policy questions may be placed on the College's website and social media platforms inviting comment using the College's software tool or our social media site wall. College members may also be notified of the opportunity to comment through the College's electronic newsletter *Your College and You/Des nouvelles de l'Ordre*, Facebook and Twitter. This feedback mechanism will ensure that members and the public have equitable access to the consultation process. Regulatory or education stakeholder organizations will also be able to utilize the same online tool to submit their comments.

Each advisory issued by the College would include extensive consultation with both expert and critical readers knowledgeable in the topic area.

4. Approvals Process

The Standards of Practice and Education Committee will be provided with regular updates on the advisory development process and an opportunity for interim reviews of the advisory document. The final draft of the advisory will be produced, incorporating feedback received during the public consultation phase and provided to the committee for final review and approval.

5. Regular review of professional advisories

A process will be developed for the regular review of existing professional advisories so that they remain current and relevant to College members and the public. As part of this review, a College work group will be formed and additional consultations with members and other stakeholders will be held where necessary.

Phase 2: Rollout of Professional Advisory

Once the professional advisory has received final approval, it will be publicly disseminated in the following manner:

1. Public release / media event / Canada Newswire

To mark the initial public release of the professional advisory, a media release will be issued and disseminated to media contacts via Canada Newswire (CNW) and by staff in Communications. A media event will also be organized, at which time members of the College's Senior Leadership Team (SLT), as appropriate, will have the opportunity to provide details to provincial stakeholders and the media on the professional advisory and answer any questions they may have. Social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter will also be used in the distribution matrix.

2. Advisory distribution

Copies of the professional advisory will be sent electronically to all College members. Additional content will be developed for the College's electronic newsletters to further assist members in thinking about what the advice in the professional advisory means for their practice.

3. Invite a Speaker

The College's *Invite a Speaker* program provides members of the public and stakeholder groups with easy access to a list of College spokespersons who are available to present the professional advisory to their group. The College will ensure that the advisory topic becomes the main focus for presentations at cyclical conferences at which the College traditionally presents including CLEAR (Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation) and CNAR (Canadian Network of Agencies for Regulation) as well as other teacher and parent conferences.

4. Other activities to facilitate rollout

The development of audio-visual materials and alternative means of reaching the public and College members, such as the posting of videos to the College website, social media announcements, online webinars, live online Q&A sessions and virtual town halls with members and stakeholder groups will also be considered on a case-by-case basis, based on the content of the professional advisory and budgetary concerns.