

Stakeholder Engagement Policy

Background

The Real Estate Council of Alberta (RECA) is an independent, non-government agency, responsible for governing residential real estate broker, commercial real estate broker, property manager, condominium manager, and mortgage broker licensees under the *Real Estate Act* of Alberta. As the governing body for licensees, RECA is committed to the public interest by promoting the integrity of the industry and protecting consumers.

RECA builds consumer trust and confidence in licensees by:

- setting and enforcing standards of conduct and education requirements for the industry to protect the consumer
- providing services that facilitate the business of licensees
- promoting the integrity of the industry
- protecting against, investigating, detecting, and suppressing mortgage fraud as it relates to the industry

Principles of stakeholder engagement

- **Timely:** RECA is committed to timely and ongoing stakeholder engagement activities.
- **Meaningful:** RECA will use stakeholder engagement activities that are meaningful and responsive to the needs of its stakeholders. RECA will endeavour to build consensus with affected stakeholders where possible.
- **Transparent:** RECA's stakeholder engagement will be transparent with all stakeholders.
- **Consistent and Equal:** RECA, its Board and Industry Councils, will treat stakeholders equally and engage in substantially similar ways with all. Meetings will be transparent, agenda driven, and focus on regulatory issues.
- **Effective:** RECA's stakeholder engagement activity is to maximize engagement and minimize costs using traditional and new media or in-person and virtual engagement activities

What is stakeholder engagement?

RECA defines stakeholder engagement as meaningful, transparent, comprehensive, consistent dialogue with individuals, firms, and organizations affected by RECA's actions as it carries out its regulatory mandate. The Stakeholder list is attached at Appendix A.

RECA Governance and Requirement for Impartiality with Stakeholders

RECA is governed by a Board of Directors and four Industry Councils. Each Industry Council is responsible for stakeholder engagement within their sector. The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring the effective operation of RECA and, as much as is possible, for ensuring consistency in regulation among the Industry Councils.

The *Real Estate Act* requires Board and Industry Council members to remain impartial. Section 9(1) states, in part: *No person while a member of the Board or an Industry Council shall do any of the following: (a)... act on behalf of an association in any manner other than as an ordinary member of the association; (c) act in a manner, whether or not prohibited by this Act, the regulations, the bylaws or the rules, that may result in, or create the appearance of, (ii) giving preferential treatment to any person or (iv) foregoing independence or impartiality.*

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All stakeholder engagement must be conducted through a transparent, managed process:

- Stakeholder meeting requests must be made officially through the Board, Industry Council, or Executive Director.
- Stakeholder engagement meetings must be facilitated by RECA Administration agenda-driven, summaries must be made, and the Executive Director, the Registrar, or their delegate must be present.
- Scheduled and completed stakeholder activities must be publicly posted on RECA's website.

Formal stakeholder engagement initiatives

RECA's formal stakeholder engagement initiatives will be defined by annual (fiscal) Communications Plans for each of the Board and Industry Councils. These Communications Plans will be drafted by RECA Administration, and approved by the Board and Industry Councils, as the case may be.

Acting as RECA Spokesperson

An official spokesperson communicates the messages of the organization to the public. Therefore, the Board Chair, the Executive Director, and the Registrar speak on behalf of RECA, depending on the context. The Industry Council chairs, the Executive Director, or the Registrar speak on behalf of specific Industry Councils. Collaboration between spokespersons is key to ensuring they convey a consistent message.

Broadly speaking, the Board Chair or Industry Council Chairs should be responsible for conveying certain messages (e.g. major policy decisions) while the Executive Director is more appropriate to convey operational matters and the Registrar is more appropriate to convey regulatory or disciplinary matters.

The responsibilities of RECA's spokespersons include:

- Correspondence
- Messages or articles posted by RECA Communications
- Media communications (e.g. news releases, interviews)
- Chairing or attending stakeholder meetings
- Making presentations at public, industry, or regulatory events
- Meeting with the Alberta Government including Ministers and senior officials
- Meeting with stakeholders including representatives of industry trade associations
- Attending industry member networking events

Limitations

Spokesperson messages should be restricted to established RECA policy and not the spokesperson's personal views, matters still under RECA's consideration or where a policy has not been developed.

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Discretion

All stakeholder engagement should be facilitated by RECA Administration. The Board Chair may delegate specific matters to another Board member, Industry Council Chair, to the Executive Director, the Registrar, or to a member of the RECA staff (after consultation with the Executive Director). The Executive Director may delegate their spokesperson responsibilities on an operational basis. The Communications and Connections Manager is available to provide assistance or advice in responding to correspondence or preparing for a meeting, presentation, or media interview (e.g. conducting research, talking points, prepare presentation slides etc.).

Adversarial Stakeholders or Other Entities

Should a stakeholder or other entity begin legal action against RECA, all stakeholder engagement activity and correspondence to or from that stakeholder or entity must be routed through RECA's General Counsel. Once legal action against RECA concludes, stakeholder engagement activity with that stakeholder or entity may resume as normal.

Appendix A – RECA Stakeholders

Primary Stakeholders

- **Alberta consumers**
- **Alberta consumer associations**
 - Condominium Owners Council of Alberta (COCOA)
 - Condo Owners Forum (COF)
 - Strathcona County Condominium Association
 - Consumers Council of Canada
- **Alberta licensees**
- **Alberta brokerages**
- **Industry associations**
 - Association of Condominium Managers of Alberta (ACMA)
 - Alberta Mortgage Brokers Association (AMBA)
 - Alberta Real Estate Association (AREA)
 - Alberta Real Estate Foundation (AREF)
 - Building Owners and Managers Association of Calgary (BOMA Calgary)
 - Building Owners and Managers Association of Edmonton (BOMA Edmonton)
 - Canadian Condominium Institute – North Alberta Chapter (CCI North)
 - Canadian Condominium Institute – South Albert Chapter (CCI South)
 - Canadian Mortgage Professionals (CMP)
 - Canadian Mortgage Brokers Association (CMBA-ACHC)
 - Canadian Residential Renters Association (CRRA)
 - Edmonton Residential Renters Association (ERRA)
 - Mortgage Professionals Canada
 - Real Estate Institute of Canada
 - Real Estate Insurance Exchange (REIX)
 - Real Property Association of Canada (RealPAC)
 - Residential Tenancy Dispute Resolution Service (RTDRS)
 - Institute of Real Estate Management
 - local real estate boards
 - Alberta West REALTORS® Association
 - Calgary Real Estate Board (CREB®)
 - Central Alberta REALTORS® Association
 - Fort McMurray REALTORS®
 - Grande Prairie and Area Association of REALTORS®
 - Lethbridge & District Association of REALTORS®
 - Medicine Hat Real Estate Board Co-op
 - REALTORS® Association of Edmonton
 - REALTORS® Association of Lloydminster & District
 - REALTORS® Association of South Central Alberta
- **pre-licensing learners**
- **accredited education providers**

- the Minister of Service Alberta
- Service Alberta

Secondary Stakeholders

- **related professional associations:**
 - Law Society of Alberta
 - Canadian Bar Association – Real Property Law North
 - Canadian Bar Association – Real Property Law South
 - Alberta Assessors Association
 - Canadian National Association of Real Estate Appraisers
 - Appraisers Institute of Canada
 - Canadian Bankers Association
 - Canadian Credit Union Association
- **other regulators**
 - Real Estate Regulators of Canada (RERC) and Mortgage Broker Regulators Council of Canada (MBRCC) members
- **home inspectors**
- **real estate measurement companies**