

Advertising oversight mechanism

Reference documents

[Advertising review submission and evaluation forms](#) (accessible only on the Government of Canada network)
[Roles and responsibilities: Non-partisan review process for government advertising](#)
[Review results and decisions](#)
[Mandatory Procedures for Advertising](#)

Advertising campaigns with budgets over \$250,000 must undergo an external review. Departments may choose to submit campaigns with smaller budgets for review.

On this page

- [Non-partisan review process](#)
- [Public complaints about partisanship in advertising](#)

Non-partisan review process

Ads are reviewed against the [advertising review criteria](#) by Ad Standards, the not-for-profit organization that administers the [Canadian Code of Advertising Standards](#).

Departments are responsible for ensuring that ads are reviewed internally before submitting them to Ad Standards.

In this section

- [Two-stage review approach](#)
 - [Ads with significant production costs or time](#)
 - [Ads with low production costs and presented in their final form](#)
 - [Requesting a review](#)
- [Exclusions](#)

Two-stage review approach

Ads are reviewed twice – at an early stage of production and before being made public. Departments must plan accordingly to preserve the integrity of the two-stage approach. However, the process is different depending on the cost or time required for production.

Ads with significant production costs or time

Ads that include filming, hired talent, studio time, focus testing, etc., need to be submitted in English **or** French for an initial review before incurring:

- additional production costs to correct problems identified in the review
- unforeseen delays in planning, production, publishing or broadcasting
- avoidable costs, such as cancellation penalties from media outlets or paying for unused advertising space or time, etc.

Ads with low production costs and presented in their final form

English **and** French ads can be submitted for an expedited review if the head of communications has attested in the submission form that they will not be modified. This allows the ads to automatically advance to the final review stage.

Requesting a review

To initiate a review, departments must submit a completed [Advertising review submission and evaluation form](#) (accessible only on the Government of Canada network) along with the ads to Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC).

Exclusions

Announcements of a purely administrative or operational nature are excluded from the review process. Some examples include:

- public hearings, employment offers, notices of public consultation, requests for tenders or changes to office business hours
- messages to the public regarding urgent matters affecting public health and safety or the environment

Public complaints about partisanship in advertising

[Submit a complaint about partisanship in government ads](#) to the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

General questions or comments about government advertising that are not related to partisanship can be submitted to Public Services and Procurement Canada.