



Travel Industry Council of Ontario **Regulatory Governance Principles**

PURPOSE

These Regulatory Governance Principles set out the principles-based framework that guides how TICO carries out its regulatory responsibilities in the public interest and supports consumer protection in Ontario's travel industry. They describe TICO's commitment to exercising its mandate in a manner that is risk-informed, fair, transparent and accountable, while remaining responsive to the evolving travel marketplace. Through these principles, TICO seeks to support compliance, maintain public confidence and promote effective oversight within the legislative and regulatory framework.

TICO'S REGULATORY ROLE

The Travel Industry Council of Ontario (TICO) is the administrative authority designated by the provincial government to administer and enforce the *Travel Industry Act, 2002* and Ontario Regulation 26/05.

The *Travel Industry Act, 2002* and Ontario Regulation 26/05 establish the legislative and regulatory framework governing travel retailers and travel wholesalers registered in Ontario, including requirements relating to registration, business practices, disclosure, financial standards, complaints, inspections, investigations, enforcement, and the Travel Industry Compensation Fund.

TICO is accountable for carrying out its delegated responsibilities in a manner that advances consumer protection, supports compliance with the law, and promotes confidence in Ontario's travel marketplace, consistent with the principles of:

- Maintaining a fair, safe and informed marketplace for consumers and registrants; and
- Promoting the protection of the public interest through effective, proportionate and accountable regulation.

REGULATORY GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Adhering to sound regulatory governance practices is fundamental to maintaining credibility, public confidence and the authority necessary to effectively administer Ontario's travel industry regulatory framework.

TICO's Board of Directors is committed to continuous improvement in regulatory governance, including:

- Overseeing the development and use of policies, procedures and guidance that promote consistency, accountability and alignment with TICO's statutory mandate, consumer protection objectives and regulatory responsibilities, including registration, compliance, inspection, enforcement, complaint handling, and Compensation Fund administration; and
- Supporting regulatory policy development, strategic planning, performance assessment, and informed advice to government on matters affecting Ontario's travel industry regulatory framework.

In fulfillment of this commitment, we aspire to the following principles:

Public Interest and Consumer Protection

Protect consumers and promote confidence in Ontario's travel marketplace while considering regulatory burden and marketplace realities.

We are committed to protecting consumers through the effective administration of Ontario's travel industry legislation and to supporting a marketplace in which registrants understand and meet their obligations. We recognize that strong consumer protection and a well-functioning marketplace are mutually reinforcing.

We will seek to deliver the greatest public benefit through regulation while avoiding unnecessary or unreasonable burden on compliant registrants. In doing so, we will balance consumer protection, marketplace integrity, and operational practicality within the legislative framework.

Risk-Informed and Outcomes Focused

Use data, evidence and risk-based approaches to guide regulatory oversight, allocate resources and measure impact.

We are committed to using data, evidence and risk indicators to inform how we administer our mandate, prioritize regulatory activities, and assess outcomes. This includes supporting sound decision-making in areas such as registration oversight, inspections, compliance monitoring, complaints, and Compensation Fund administration.

Where appropriate, we will use performance measures, trend analysis, and operational reporting to assess whether regulatory activities are achieving intended outcomes and informing future priorities.

We will strive to direct our efforts where the risk to consumers and the marketplace is greatest, while evaluating whether our regulatory activities are effective, proportionate and responsive to emerging issues in the travel industry.

Transparent and Accessible

Be transparent about regulatory expectations, processes and decisions, and provide accessible information and support to consumers and registrants.

We will communicate regulatory requirements, expectations and processes as clearly as possible to support understanding and compliance. We are committed to providing accessible, plain-language information and a range of tools and materials to assist consumers and registrants in navigating the regulatory framework.

We will strive to make TICO's information, services, and communications accessible and inclusive, recognizing the diverse needs of consumers, registrants, and stakeholders.

Engagement and Collaboration

Engage with consumers, registrants, government and other stakeholders to inform regulatory approaches and improve outcomes.

We are committed to engaging with stakeholders on an ongoing basis to better understand risks, operational realities and the effects of regulatory requirements. We will seek a range of perspectives to support balanced, informed and practical regulatory approaches.

We will also seek opportunities to collaborate with government, sector partners, and other regulators where mandates intersect, to reduce duplication, support coordination, and strengthen consumer protection and marketplace oversight.

Culture, Capability and Sustainability

Maintain the governance, people, systems, and resources needed to fulfill regulatory responsibilities effectively and sustainably.

Our Board is committed to ensuring that TICO has the capacity and capability to carry out its responsibilities effectively, including appropriate governance, skilled personnel, sound systems, and prudent financial management. We will support continuous improvement so that the organization remains responsive to changes in the travel sector and regulatory environment.

We recognize that employee engagement is essential to organizational capability, sound decision-making, and sustainable regulatory performance. We will foster a positive, diverse, and values-based organizational culture that supports ethical conduct, collaboration, learning, and a shared commitment to TICO's public interest mandate.

We will support effective information governance, privacy protection, and cyber security practices to safeguard information, strengthen organizational resilience, and maintain confidence in TICO's regulatory systems.

Ethical and Accountable

Hold ourselves to high ethical standards and clear accountability in the exercise of our regulatory responsibilities.

We are committed to a regulatory culture grounded in integrity, good judgment, and accountability. We will maintain governance and conduct frameworks that support ethical decision-making by the Board, management, and staff in carrying out TICO's mandate. We will maintain clear roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships between the Board, management, and staff to support effective oversight, accountability, and operational execution.

We will maintain appropriate mechanisms, including a Whistleblower Program, to support the confidential reporting, review, and resolution of concerns relating to ethics, compliance, integrity or governance, without fear of reprisal.

We will strive to make decisions that are transparent, principled, and aligned with the public interest, while remaining mindful of the trust placed in TICO as a delegated regulator.

Independent Statutory Decision-Making

Support the independent exercise of statutory powers and duties in accordance with the law.

Where statutory powers are exercised by individuals appointed or authorized under the legislative framework, those decisions should be made independently and in accordance with the applicable law, evidence, policy, and principles of administrative fairness, free from inappropriate influence.

Procedural Fairness

Ensure that regulatory processes and decisions are fair, impartial, and respectful of legal rights and obligations.

We are committed to fairness in our regulatory processes, including transparency of process, impartiality in decision-making, and appropriate opportunities for affected

parties to be heard. We will treat consumers, applicants and registrants with fairness, dignity and respect.

Consistency and Proportionality

Apply regulatory requirements, processes, and responses consistently and proportionately to support compliance and protect consumers.

We are committed to applying regulatory requirements and administrative practices consistently so that expectations are clear and regulatory outcomes are predictable. We will seek to use compliance and enforcement tools in a manner proportionate to the nature, seriousness, and risk of the conduct at issue.

Where emerging practices, technologies, or business models raise new regulatory questions, we will strive to respond in a manner that is principled, consistent with the legislative framework, and proportionate to the risks presented.

Continuous Improvement in Policy and Practice

Support continuous improvement in regulatory policy, operations, and consumer protection mechanisms to remain responsive to change.

We are committed to learning from regulatory experience, stakeholder input, marketplace developments and emerging risks to strengthen our programs, processes, and regulatory approaches over time.

We recognize the importance of maintaining a constructive relationship with government and supporting informed consideration of legislative, regulatory, and policy change, where appropriate. As the travel marketplace evolves, we will aim to anticipate impacts on consumers and registrants and respond thoughtfully within our mandate.

We will consider relevant environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors where they intersect with TICO's mandate, operations, and long-term organizational sustainability, with a focus on responsible government, stakeholder trust, and public accountability.

To support this approach, we endeavour to:

- Provide government with practical information and advice on issues affecting the travel industry regulatory framework;
- Promote regulatory approaches that are evidence-based, responsive and informed by developments in the marketplace;
- Support ongoing improvement in consumer protection, compliance, and regulatory administration; and
- Adopt a continuous improvement approach to governance, oversight, and regulatory practice.

We will aim to ensure that the administration of our regulatory authority, our operational practices, and our advice on regulatory matters reflect the priorities established by these Regulatory Governance Principles.

SCOPE OF TICO'S MANDATE

TICO's mandate is established by the *Travel Industry Act, 2002* and Ontario Regulation 26/05. Its authority is limited to the responsibilities delegated to it under that legislative and regulatory framework.

TICO does not have authority to amend the *Travel Industry Act, 2002* or Ontario Regulation 26/05. That authority rests with the Ontario government, although TICO may provide operational insight and advice based on its regulatory experience.

TICO does not provide legal advice to consumers, applicants, or registrants. Its role is to provide information about the framework it administers and its regulatory requirements and processes. Where legal advice is needed, independent legal counsel should be obtained.

These principles will be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain current, practical, and aligned with TICO's mandate, strategic priorities, and evolving regulatory environment.

Last Revised - July 28, 2026