



Event Planners Guidelines

Meeting planners (Event Planners) sometimes engage in activities that are similar to travel agents. In order to comply with the Ontario *Travel Industry Act, 2002* (Act) and Regulation 26/05, Event Planners should review the following guidelines

Definitions

Travel Agent is defined as a person who sells to consumers, travel services provided by another person.

Travel Services are defined as transportation or sleeping accommodation for the use of a traveler, tourist or sightseer or other services combined with that transportation or sleeping accommodation.

Sometimes Event Planners will arrange transportation and/or accommodation for their clients when arranging meetings or events for their clients.

Event Planners must register as a Travel Agency under the *Ontario Travel Industry Act 2002* (TIA) in any of the following circumstances:

- a) If the Event Planner signs any contracts or agreements for travel services on behalf of their client.
- b) If the Event Planner makes payments on behalf of any client to any supplier for travel services.
- c) If the Event Planner makes arrangements for transportation to and from the event, or arranges to make reservations for accommodations on behalf of the client.
- d) If the Event Planner includes accommodation or travel services in any advertising of its event planning services.

Event Planners in Ontario do not require registration as a “travel agent” under the Act, if the following guidelines are adhered to:

- a) The Event Planner cannot sign agreements for travel services on behalf of the client. The Event Planner may source & recommend the choice and location of the event but may not sign contracts, agreements or addenda; only the client may do so.
- b) The Event Planner may not disburse money for travel services on behalf of the client. Supplier invoices must be made out to the client and must be paid by the client directly to the supplier. The client cannot pay the Event Planner to disburse funds to suppliers on its behalf.
- c) It is the responsibility of the client to pass on full disclosure from the supplier to those attending the planned event.
- d) The Event Planner cannot make bookings for accommodation or travel services nor include accommodation and/or travel services in any advertising to prospective clients.

If an Event Planner is found to contravene the Act, the individual or entity will be informed by TICO of the contravention, and will be afforded reasonable time to take corrective measures to either make necessary changes in how business is conducted or to become compliant with the Act.

Depending upon the specific circumstances, an Event Planner may be able to comply with the Act by working through a registered travel agent. The Event Planner would have to have a contract with the registered travel agent and would have to pass the TICO Travel Counselor exam.

Below are different scenarios that should help clarify whether an Event Planner is required to be registered under the Act.

Scenario 1.

Event Planner organizes and takes money from the client and pays the suppliers for the travel services.

Under this scenario Registration under the Act is required. The Event Planner (individual or entity) would be required to meet all aspects of TICO’s registration criteria.

Scenario 2.

Event Planner arranges and books travel services on behalf of the client and the client pays the suppliers or travel agent.

Affiliation of the Event Planner with a registered travel agency is required. Under this scenario the Event Planner would be required to have an agreement with a registered travel agency, as a contractor and meet TICO's Education Standard for Travel Counselor.

Scenario 3.

Event Planner provides advice to the client which hotel or accommodation to utilize and which transportation to utilize. The client makes the reservations and pays the suppliers or pays the travel agent.

Under this scenario, provided the Event Planner does not make any reservations and only advises the client which travel services it should utilize, no action is required in respect of compliance with TICO.