

Fair Registration Practices Report

Foresters (2016)

The answers seen below were submitted to the OFC by the regulated professions.

This Fair Registration Practices Report was produced as required by:

- the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act (FARPACKTA) s. 20 and 23(1), for regulated professions named in Schedule 1 of FARPACKTA
- the Health Professions Procedural Code set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA) s. 22.7 (1) and 22.9(1), for health colleges.

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1. Qualitative Information

a) Requirements for registration, including acceptable alternatives

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

No change to membership requirements. OPFA formally recognized through a By-law change that applicants could satisfy the Local Knowledge Assessment (Ontario Forest Policy) membership requirement through completion of "OPFA approved training", in addition to the previously recognized method of an examination. "Approved training" includes completion of Bridge Training modules.

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

The Bridge Training modules for Forest Policy were not ready for implementation in 2016, however applicants were informed of their choice to write the Forest Policy exam, or to complete Bridge Training in 2017. Applicants benefitted from the added alternative means by which to satisfy the Local Knowledge Assessment requirement.

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

b) Assessment of qualifications

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

All registration forms were reviewed and revised (as required) in 2016 to improve consistency in information collected. Minor changes related to fields for birth date, gender (optional), salutaion (optional), and post-secondary education.

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

Improved consistency of information collected aided staff efficiency in recording data, and availability of certain data for reporting purposes.

c) Provision of timely decisions, responses, and reasons

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

d) Fees

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

The OPFA Fee Schedule was reviewed and revised in September 2016. The types of fees charged remained the same, however the amount of certain fees were adjusted. Provisional membership fees remained the same for a member's first year of membership (\$25), but increased for subsequent years (\$100). The increase in Provisional membership fees in the second and subsequent years are in keeping with, or lower than, the fees other provincial forestry regulators charge for comparable membership categories. The Late Payment Fee and Re-admission Fee (for past members) were reduced. OPFA Council continues to review fees regularly.

2016 OPFA Fee Schedule:
<https://secure.opfa.ca/sites/default/files/registration/2016%20OPFAFee%20Schedule%20approved%20Sept13%202016.pdf>

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

The fee reductions will monetarily benefit applicants and members, if applicable. The increase in Provisional membership fees in the second and subsequent years will negatively impact those members. The increased Provisional fee better reflected administrative costs and may result in Provisional members progressing towards meeting membership requirements (as required by the By-laws) more quickly.

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

e) Timelines

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

f) Policies, procedures and/or processes, including by-laws

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

OPFA By-laws were amended in 2016:

(a) to streamline the re-admission process for past members who resigned or had their certificates of registration cancelled while "not in good standing".

This revision will make it easier for some past members to apply and rejoin the OPFA. Past Non-Resident and Inactive members who were practising within the past five years will be able to apply for re-admission according to a streamlined re-admission process (previously only available to past Full or Associate members). This revision also allows for past members who resigned or were cancelled with outstanding obligations (unpaid fees or outstanding competency reporting) to make up the deficiency and re-apply within five years of being a practicing member.

(b) to allow OPFA approved training as an alternate means to satisfy the Local Knowledge Assessment membership requirement (Ontario Forest Policy).

Additional wording was added to include the option to meet the Local Knowledge Assessment through "OPFA approved training", such as the Bridge Training Program for Foresters: Ontario's Forest Policy and Legislative Framework training available starting in 2017.

Other By-law changes were made that did not affect registration practices.

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

Streamlining the re-admission process expedites the application and registration process for the applicants who were past OPFA members.

The alternate means by which the Local Knowledge Assessment (Forest Policy) can be met allows applicants to choose which format they prefer to meet the requirement (exam or Bridge Training).

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

Both registration-related By-law changes slightly reduce staff administration during the registration process, while still maintain required standards for registration.

g) Resources for applicants

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

Improved access to documents online and regular updates to website wording provided more registration-related information for applicants in 2016. Consistency of published website content continues to be reviewed.

Additional instruction on assembling a portfolio for the Credential Assessment Process (CAP) was developed and provided to CAP applicants starting in 2016.

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

Information is more readily available to applicants, with improved consistency in the wording (if included on multiple website pages).

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

Applicant inquiries to registration staff were slightly reduced.

h) Review or appeal processes

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

i) Access to applicant records

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

No changes this year

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

No changes this year

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

No changes this year

j) Training and resources for registration staff, Council, and committee members

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

Annual training for the Registration Committee members and registration staff was conducted in May 2016. The Registrar presented and discussed with OPFA Council several registration-related information items throughout the year, to improve Council understanding of the OPFA registration processes, and FARPACTA fair access principles of Transparency, Objectivity, Impartiality and Fairness. Many Council members and OPFA staff also reviewed the OFC Learning Modules to learn or confirm knowledge of fair access principles.

The Registrar attended several sessions throughout the year, including Ontario regulators for Access Consortium (ORAC) and OFC meetings, in which aspects of registration practices and legislative requirements were discussed. Information was shared with other OPFA staff.

The Registration Committee and Registrar completed a Review of OPFA Registration Practices in August 2016. This review not only provided a training opportunity for Registration Committee members, but also resulted in recommended actions for the committee and OPFA Council to improve certain elements of registration practices. OPFA Council discussed and accepted the report in September 2016 and action towards meeting recommendations started. To address certain report recommendations, the Registration Committee discussed options to streamline how applicants meet membership requirements such as the Local Knowledge Assessment, core competencies (for those that did not graduate from an accredited forestry program), and required experience. While procedural changes did not occur in 2016, final decisions and benefits to applicants are expected in early 2017.

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

Added training and discussion of membership requirements and registration processes resulted in continued improvement in consistency of registration-related decisions by the Registration Committee, and clear, consistent communication by staff to applicants in 2016.

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

OPFA Council understanding of membership requirements, rationale for these requirements, and the legislative context in which OPFA must operate as a provincial regulator was enhanced in 2016.

k) Mutual recognition agreements

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

The Canadian Federation of Professional Foresters Associations (CFPFA), of which OPFA is a regulatory member, approved evidence of successful completion of Ontario Bridge Training modules as a recognized means for demonstration of core competencies required for registration as a professional forester. This recognition allowed for proof of successful Bridge Training module completion to be used as evidence of competency in the Credential Assessment Process.

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

The recognition of acceptable evidence of competency (Item K i above) allowed a streamlining of required documentation (reduced workload) for applicants preparing portfolios for the Credential Assessment Process.

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

Provincial forestry regulators across Canada can inform applicants with certainty that the Bridge Training Program for Foresters is one means by which required competencies can be demonstrated. This results from the CFPFA recognition of successful Bridge Training module completion as evidence of competency.

l) Other (include as many items as applicable)

i. Describe any improvements / changes implemented in the last year.

In 2016, the OPFA continued leadership of two major projects that will have significant beneficial implications for applicants in future years:

1) Bridge Training Program for Foresters (BTPF):

In 2014, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade (MCIIIT) provided funds to the Ontario Professional Foresters Association to develop a bridge training program for foresters. The OPFA Bridge Training Program for Foresters (BTPF) is a multi-year project to improve access to, and support for, the development of competency-based training modules for applicants interested in being registered as professional foresters in Canada. Training modules will be developed for the 35 required demonstrable competencies (DCs) that make up the Canadian Federation of Professional Foresters Associations' (CFPFA) 2008 Certification Standards for the Profession of Forestry in Canada.

The OPFA has contracted the Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board (CFAB) to review and evaluate training modules for instructional content and methods of learning assessment. CFAB involvement will ensure that training resulting from this project meets the competencies required by the 2008 Certification Standards.

In October 2016, training modules were completed and registration available for 16 of the 35 competencies for foresters. Some OPFA applicants enrolled and completed in the first sessions in Dec. 2016. It is expected that training modules for the remaining competencies will be available by the spring of 2017. The BTPF project (training development stage) ends in July 2017. Implementation of training delivery by two third-party suppliers will continue. It is expected that aspiring R.P.F. applicants, from within Ontario, or elsewhere in Canada, or still living abroad, will benefit from the Bridge Training Program for Foresters training and assessment modules during their application process to become Registered Professional Foresters in Canada.

2) Competency Review Project (CR):

The Canadian Federation of Professional Foresters Associations is developing a revised set of competency standards for the Profession of Forestry in Canada. Revised Certification Standards will recognize varied academic training and experience without lowering the standard expected of foresters by the profession and the public. With additional flexibility in competencies required by area of practice, more qualified individuals will meet the Certification Standards. Also more university programs may qualify for accreditation which would streamline the registration process for accredited program graduates. Revised Standards are expected to align better with the skills and knowledge required by employers for entry-level professional foresters in Canada.

In accordance with provincial legislation, the OPFA Council and the councils of other provincial professional forester regulators, must review and approve any revised Certification Standards prior to implementation (target approval of revised Certification Standards in 2017).

ii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on applicants.

(1) Bridge Training for Foresters - Some OPFA applicants took and completed Bridge Training modules from Oct. to Dec. 2016 which provided opportunities for learning forestry competencies prior to a Credential Assessment, or for filling identified competency gaps after a Credential Assessment. Applicants and Provisional members were advised of existing and upcoming Bridge Training modules. Some applicants prioritized competency gap-filling efforts based on this knowledge.

(2) Competency Review Project - No direct change for applicants in 2016, however certain applicants, with non-traditional forestry-related training or experience, are being informed of the potential change in 2017 to the Certification Standards to include varied areas of forestry practice. Applicant are able to consider whether they may be more successful applying for registration according to the current Certification Standards, or under the potential 2017 Standards. It is expected that if revised Certification Standards are approved, that implementation will include a phase-in period during which both the 2008 and potential 2017 Standards would be approved.

iii. Describe the impact of the improvements / changes on your organization.

No direct change in 2016, however registration staff continued to discuss BTPF options, and other expected changes with the Competency Review Project, with potential applicants, Provisional members and OPFA Council.

Describe any registration-related improvements/changes to your enabling legislation and/or regulations in the last year

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2. Quantitative Information

a) Languages

Indicate the languages in which application information materials were available in the reporting year.

Language	Yes/No
English	Yes
French	No

Other (please specify)

Additional comments:

b) Gender of applicants

Indicate the number of applicants in each category as applicable.

Gender	Number of Applicants
Male	29
Female	17
None of the above	0

Additional comments:

c) Gender of members

Indicate the number of members in each category as applicable. Select the option that best corresponds to the terminology used by your organization.

Gender	Number of Members
Male	592
Female	116
None of the above	0

Additional comments:

Includes Full, Associate, Inactive, Life and Non-Resident members.

d) Jurisdiction where applicants obtained their initial education

Indicate the number of applicants by the jurisdiction where they obtained their initial education¹ in the profession or trade.

Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
36	6	0	Ethiopia 1 Ghana 2 Nigeria 1 Total 4	0	46

¹ Recognizing that applicants may receive their education in multiple jurisdictions, for the purpose of this question, include only the jurisdiction in which an entry-level degree, diploma or other certification required to practice the profession or trade was obtained.

Additional comments:

e) Jurisdiction where applicants who became registered members obtained their initial education

Indicate the number of applicants who became registered members in the reporting year by the jurisdiction where they obtained their initial education¹ in the profession or trade.

Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
21	9	0	Ethiopia 1 Slovakia 1 Nepal 1 Total 3	0	33

¹ Recognizing that applicants may receive their education in multiple jurisdictions, for the purpose of this question, include only the jurisdiction in which an entry-level degree, diploma or other certification required to practice the profession or trade was obtained.

Additional comments:

f) Jurisdiction where members were initially trained

Indicate the total number of registered members by jurisdiction where they obtained their initial education¹ in the profession or trade.

Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
550	137	2	Croatia 1 Germany 2 Romania 1 Poland 1 Nepal 2 Serbia 1 Taiwan, Province Of China 2 U.K. 3 Iran 1 Slovakia 1 China 1 Ethiopia 1 Total 17	2	708

¹ Recognizing that applicants may receive their education in multiple jurisdictions, for the purpose of this question, include only the jurisdiction in which an entry-level degree, diploma or other certification required to practice the profession or trade was obtained.

Additional comments:

g) Applications processed

Indicate the number of applications your organization processed in the reporting year:

Jurisdiction where applicants were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)

from January 1 st to December 31 st of the reporting year	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
New applications received	36	6	0	4	0	46
Applicants actively pursuing licensing (applicants who had some contact with your organization in the reporting year)	77	12	0	9	0	98
Inactive applicants (applicants who had no contact with your organization in the reporting year)	29	2	0	8	0	39
Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members	0	0	0	0	0	0
Applicants who became FULLY registered members	21	9	0	3	0	33
Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence ³ but were not issued a licence	0	0	0	0	0	0

from January 1 st to December 31 st of the reporting year	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence ³	0	0	0	0	0	0

¹ An alternative class of licence enables its holder to practice with limitations, but additional requirements must be met in order for the member to be fully licensed.

Additional comments:

The alternative membership category is our Associate membership, which enables the member to practise within a limited scope of practice in a specific geographic area.

h) Classes of certificate/license

Indicate and provide a description of the classes of certificate/license offered by your organization.

You must specify and describe at least one class of certificate/license (on line a) in order for this step to be complete.

#	Certification	Description
a)	Full (R.P.F.)	Description (a)
		Able to practise any aspect of professional forestry in which they are competent.
b)	Associate	Description (b)
		Able to practise forestry within a specific individual scope of practice.
c)	Non-Resident	Description (c)
		Practicing, but not in Ontario without holding a Temporary Permit.
d)	Other	Description (d)
		There are other categories of membership, however, they are not entitled to practise.

Additional comments:

i) Reviews and appeals processed

State the number of reviews and appeals your organization processed in the reporting year (use only whole numbers; do not enter commas or decimals).

Jurisdiction where applicants were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)

from January 1 st to December 31 st of the reporting year	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
Applications that were subject to an internal review or that were referred to a statutory committee of your governing council, such as a Registration Committee	0	0	0	0	0	0
Applicants who initiated an appeal of a registration decision	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appeals heard	0	0	0	0	0	0
Registration decisions changed following an appeal	0	0	0	0	0	0

Additional comments:

No reviews or appeals in 2016.

j) Paid staff

In the table below, enter the number of paid staff employed by your organization in the categories shown, on December 31 of the reporting year.

When providing information for each of the categories in this section, you may want to use decimals if you count your staff using half units. For example, one full-time employee and one part-time employee might be equivalent to 1.5 employees.

You can enter decimals to the tenths position only. For example, you can enter 1.5 or 7.5 but not 1.55 or 7.52.

Category	Staff
Total staff employed by the regulatory body	2.5
Staff involved in appeals process	2
Staff involved in registration process	2

Additional comments:

One staff person is an employee (1.0). Two other staff persons are not directly employed by the OPFA, but are independent consultants (1.0 and 0.5)

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3. Submission

I hereby certify that:

Name of individual with authority to sign on behalf of the organization:

Susan Jarvis, R.P.F.

Title:

Registrar

Date:

