

# **Societies amendment act delivers greater flexibility, ensures transparency**

## **Information Bulletin**

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Legislation that will update and improve the legislative framework for the creation and governance of British Columbia societies has been introduced.

Societies are not-for-profit corporations, organized for a wide range of purposes from charitable to educational and environmental to recreational.

The societies amendment act, 2021 amends the Societies Act, which came into force in 2016. The new act provides societies with a responsive legislative framework, giving them greater adaptability in their internal governance, while ensuring transparency and accountability. The purpose of the proposed amendments is to address various issues that have come to light since the act came into force. These proposed amendments will refine the Societies Act by making it more accessible, addressing uncertainties and omissions, and creating consistency within the act and with other legislation.

Many of these issues were identified by members of the public, societies and the legal community. Feedback from public consultation was carefully analyzed and incorporated in these amendments. The proposed amendments were also developed in close consultation with the Corporate Registry which administers the act.

A summary of the changes can be found here:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/managing-a-business/permits-licences/news-updates>

There are more than 30,000 societies in British Columbia. They play a vital role in communities, from health and housing service to sports, cultural and other community-based activities. The pandemic has highlighted the important role these community-minded organizations play in keeping people connected, providing mental health supports and supporting those struggling with income or food insecurity.

To help maintain consistency, related amendments to the Business Corporations Act and the Cooperative Association Act are also being proposed.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/25477>

