

ONN POLICY PRIORITIES 2020-2021

PUBLIC BENEFIT LENS

Promote the recognition of public benefit nonprofits as a sector that should always be taken into account in policy and legislation

THE ISSUE

Government cannot distinguish between public benefit nonprofits and member-serving nonprofits- so they treat them the same, to the detriment of communities.

Too many times our network has had to advocate for changes to legislation, regulations, and policies that have been introduced without due consideration for how they affect our sector. ONN has proposed a [public benefit distinction in law](#) to enable government to distinguish between public benefit nonprofits (including nonprofit social enterprises, cooperatives, charities, and other nonprofits) and member-serving nonprofits such as trade associations.

POLICY STATEMENT

ONN advocates for public benefit nonprofits (as distinct from member-serving nonprofits) to be recognized in law and policy so that their unique contributions to communities and relationship with government is respected. Governments should apply a “public benefit nonprofit” lens in the development of legislation, regulations, and policy frameworks so as to anticipate their impact on the nonprofit sector.

NEXT STEPS

Advocate for the Ontario Government to:

- Examine the impact of policies, legislation, and regulation on the nonprofit sector in advance of tabling these documents.

Advocate for the Government of Canada to:

- [Create a distinction in the Income Tax Act between public benefit nonprofits and member-serving nonprofits](#) to enable relevant distinctions between the two groups in areas such as access to public funding streams, earning non-taxable revenues, elections advocacy, and lobbyist registration.
- Broaden the scope of its [Permanent Advisory Committee on the Charitable Sector](#) to include public benefit nonprofits so as to address critical policy issues affecting our entire sector, including the “related business” rules for nonprofits seeking to earn income to advance their missions.
- Create an exemption to Canada’s Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) for public benefit nonprofits.

Work with the Ontario nonprofit sector to:

- Continue to identify and draw the attention of all orders of government to legislative, regulatory, and policy frameworks that should apply a public benefit lens – and that otherwise hinder the nonprofit sector in achieving its mission.