



Minister of Finance | Ministre des Finances
PETER BETHLENFALVY

February 10, 2026

Mr. Gary Crawford
Chair
Ontario Cannabis Retail Corporation
4100 Yonge Street, Suite 200
Toronto, Ontario M2P 2B5

Dear Mr. Crawford:

I am pleased to share our government's 2026-27 priorities for the Ontario Cannabis Retail Corporation (OCRC).

Agencies are a part of government and are expected to act in the best interests of the people of Ontario. In a time of economic uncertainty, agencies play a critical role in supporting our commitment to Protect Ontario by improving service delivery, driving innovation, and ensuring responsible stewardship of public resources – all while adhering to government policies and directives.

In accordance with the Agencies and Appointments Directive, agencies are required to align their goals, objectives and strategic direction with our government's priorities. As Chair, you are responsible for ensuring that OCRC's business plan clearly demonstrates how the agency will fulfill these expectations. Progress and achievements must be reported through your annual report, and compliance with these requirements will be monitored and reported to Treasury Board/Management Board of Cabinet annually.

This letter sets out my expectations for 2026-27, with a focus on how OCRC will contribute to protecting Ontario by delivering better services and driving innovation and value for money.

Protect Ontario

1. Expand domestic partnerships within Canada, to promote the development of supply chains and economic opportunities across Canada and support economic resilience, particularly in light of ongoing U.S. tariff threats and economic uncertainty.
2. Procure from Ontario and Canadian businesses whenever feasible.

3. Provide economic relief for Ontario families, consumers and businesses by freezing government and agency fees, unless approved by me.

Deliver Better Services

4. Focus on a user-centered client/customer experience by simplifying interactions, improving satisfaction, and expanding and optimizing digital service offerings.
5. Identify opportunities to enhance efficiency, improve services, drive innovation, and achieve cost savings for the people of Ontario, including through the use of AI and other advanced technologies.
6. Eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape by applying lean methodologies or other modalities to achieve operational efficiency.

Drive Innovation & Value for Money

7. Find innovative solutions to use public resources efficiently and to effectively deliver on the agency's mandate while operating within agency's approved budget, supported by accurate and timely financial reporting, effective internal controls, and proactive fraud management practices.
8. Manage agency workforce with careful responsibility to stabilize expenditures and preserve long-term financial viability by:
 - strictly adhering to the hiring control parameters, including ceasing hiring for non-business critical and non-public-facing positions, including the use of consultants;
 - operating within a defined maximum workforce size (including consultants); and
 - ensuring compliance with the Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act (BPSECA).
9. Create a span of control policy that recognizes different streams of work within the organization and sets minimum span of control benchmarks, and provide it to the Minister for approval by March 31st, 2026.
10. Having provided the amended human resource policy, guideline or directive that adheres to the OPS in-office standard of four (4) days per week effective October 20, 2025, and five (5) days per week effective January 5, 2026, continue to work with the ministry to address any office space constraints.

These are the government-wide commitments for board-governed provincial agencies. Please see the attached guide for further details of each priority and the accompanying outcomes and performance measures that can be utilized if measurements are not currently in place.

In addition to the foregoing, I would ask the OCRC to focus on the following priorities:

1. Continue to protect Ontario's wholesale cannabis marketplace and support local Ontario businesses. This includes:

- a. Reviewing and improving wholesale and distribution processes that can adapt to shifting market demands, providing more in-depth data tools and insights to support licensed producers and retailers, and building partnerships with industry.
- b. Monitoring newly established KPIs that support local Ontario cannabis producers and the progress of the Ontario Grown cannabis badge and providing updates to the ministry on results and opportunities to improve supports to local businesses by June 30, 2026.

2. Support growth in legal cannabis sales through convenience and ease of access for consumers and improved experience for retailers. This includes:

- a. Working in partnership with the ministry to consult with stakeholders to identify regulatory or administrative barriers that cannabis LPs and retailers face, and develop and recommend policy changes that would support increasing the proportion of legal cannabis sales in the province.
- b. Developing a long-term strategy for the OCS's technology platforms.
- c. Continue to leverage OCS.ca and partner with licensed cannabis retailers to support the sale of legal cannabis products alongside responsible consumption education.

3. Supporting a whole-of-government approach to enforcement and continuing public education efforts. This includes:

- a. Collaborating with the enforcement working group members including OPP, AGCO, MAG, SolGen, and MOF to support the implementation of a whole-of-government illicit cannabis enforcement strategy.
- b. Continuing to meet its social responsibility mandate, including strengthening partnerships with First Nations, and educating the public on responsible cannabis use and the benefits of buying legal.
- c. Monitor and evaluate the impacts of the OCRC's pricing model and pricing-focused campaigns on the cannabis industry and consumer behaviour. Continue to provide transparency into the OCS's pricing decisions including analysis on competitiveness with the illegal market and insights to inform future pricing strategies.

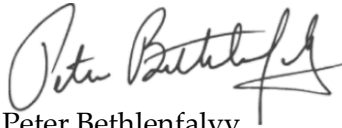
4. Continue to develop and review enhanced governance processes to ensure that agency procedures are efficient, effective, aligned with government policies and support Ontario's broader public sector objectives.

At our next meeting, I would be pleased to discuss these priorities, and I look forward to hearing how they will be reflected in the agency's business plan and in ongoing agency operations.

Thank you and your fellow board members for your continued commitment to the OCRC. Your work and ongoing support is invaluable to our government and the people of Ontario.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Blair Hains, Chief of Staff, Ministry of Finance (647) 534-4860 or Blair.Hains@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Bethlenfalvy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a stylized "B".

Peter Bethlenfalvy
Minister of Finance

Attachment:

- Government Priorities for Agency Sector Chart

cc: David Lobo, President and CEO, OCRC
Blair Hains, Chief of Staff, Minister's Office
Jason Fitzsimmons, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Finance
Nicole Stewart, Assistant Deputy Minister, Financial Services Policy Division, Ministry of Finance
Patrick Rundans, A/Director, Legal Services Branch, Ministry of Finance