

Chamber Accreditation Council of Canada Application for Chamber Accreditation



Chamber Name: _____

Population Represented: _____

Number of Members: _____

Application Instructions:

Submit this application form and the required documentation to ExecutiveDirector@CCEC.biz

Your email system may limit your ability to email large documents. If so, please provide a link to an online file sharing program where the application and documentation can be accessed.

2025 Deadlines:

Round 1 deadline: Wednesday, April 30th, 2025 (for decision by the Accreditation Council on June 12th)

Round 2 deadline: Wednesday, August 6th, 2025 (for decision by the Accreditation Council on September 11th)

You will receive a letter of congratulations and an invoice for your application fee shortly after your application has been approved by the Chamber Accreditation Council.

Application Fee		
Small Chambers	Less than 500 members	\$200
Medium Chambers	Between 500 and 999 members	\$300
Large Chambers	+1000 members	\$400

Certificates will be presented to Accredited Chambers at an award ceremony during the national conferences in Mississauga, Ontario in October 2025. All Chambers who have achieved Accreditation throughout the year will receive a press release and access to the Accreditation logos shortly afterwards.

Duration of Accreditation:

Accreditation is valid for 5 years. Applications submitted throughout 2025 will be Accredited for 2026-2031.

Consent to Share Documents with the Chamber Network:

In the Chamber Network, we love to R&D “rip off and deploy”. Documents from Chambers that have achieved Accreditation can be used as templates or frameworks for other Chambers working towards Accreditation.

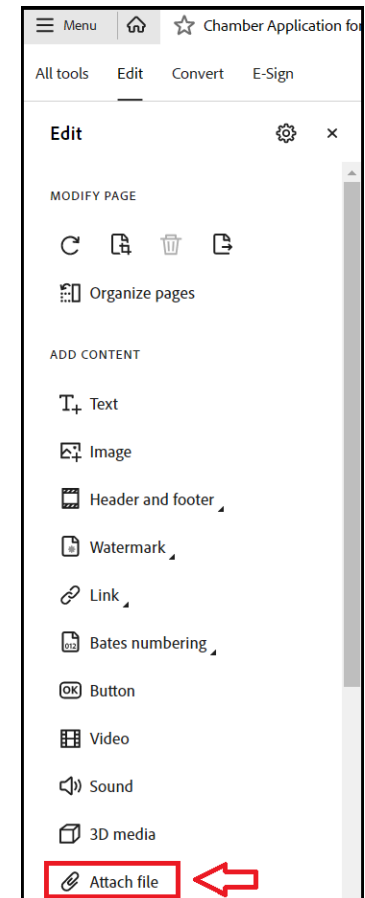
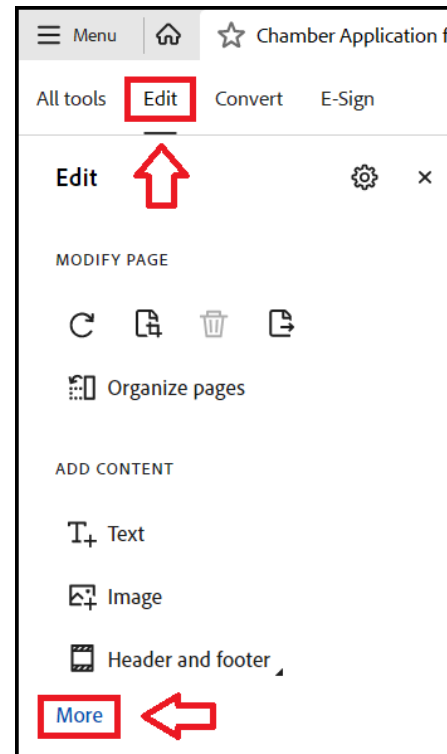
I give permission for CCEC to share our Chamber’s documents in their Member Resource Center so that other Chambers can reference them as examples of best practices in the Chamber Network

Attaching Documents:

You can attach documents to this PDF form by selecting **Edit > More > Attach File**.

Start a Master Accreditation Document:

In some cases, instead of attaching a document to support your application you’ll need to provide a written explanation. Please include all required explanations in a master accreditation document. Include the reference number from the application checklist below, input the relevant information, and attach the completed Master Accreditation document to this application.



PILLAR 1: ORGANIZATION & GOVERNANCE

Reference #	Category	Requirement	Verification
1	Core Definition of a Chamber		
<p>Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade operate independently from one another, but uphold a common set of values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition in a free market; • Non-partisan and non-sectarian; • Broad economic and social community prosperity; • Individual integrity and responsibility; • Excellence in customer service and satisfaction; • Law and order; • Reasonable profit; • Private ownership; • Efficient and effective government; and • A public policy framework that supports economic progress and fosters business success. 			
1.1	Mission & Vision Statements	Must have mission and vision statements that align with the values of the Chamber Network	Add your mission and vision statement to the Master Accreditation doc
1.2	Incorporation	Must be incorporated provincially, territorially, or federally, and must be in good standing with corporate registries	Attach your most recent annual return
1.3	Annual Report	Must publish an Annual Report or issue a written Year-in-Review to members describing the Chamber's activities over the past year. Activities must align with the values of the Chamber Network	Attach your Annual Report or Year-in-Review
1.4	Annual General Meeting	Must hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) open to all members	Attach your most recent Notice of AGM
1.5	Financial Statements	Must undergo an annual external financial review. This can be either a compilation engagement (also known as a notice to reader), review engagement, or audit engagement	Attach financial statements for the last fiscal year

1.6	Insurance	Must have Directors and Officers insurance	Add the company and policy # to the Master Accreditation doc
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2 Bylaws

You must have bylaws that comply with your provincial, territorial or federal legislation, and follow best practices in the Chamber Network.

Highlight the following sections within your bylaws and attach your bylaws to the application for verification.

2.1	Purpose	Must have a purpose that aligns with the values of the Chamber Network
2.2	Non-Partisan	Must state that the Chamber is non-partisan and non-sectarian
2.3	Membership Qualifications	Must have clearly defined membership criteria that focuses on businesses and organizations interested in trade, commerce, and the economic and social welfare of the community
2.4	Elected Board of Directors	Must have a provision for an elected Board of Directors. The procedures for electing Directors and Officers must be clearly defined
2.5	Term Limits	Must have a provision for term limits and term renewals for Board Members
2.6	Board Member Attendance	Must have a provision for Board Member attendance, including consequences for Board Member absences
2.7	Officers Duties	Must have clearly defined duties for Officers of the Chamber (such as President / Chair, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer)
2.8	Signing Authorities	Must identify signing authorities and responsibilities regarding Chamber funds
2.9	Vacancies	Must have a procedure for filling Board vacancies
2.10	Quorum	Must identify quorum for Board Meetings and membership meetings, including the Annual General Meeting
2.11	Indemnification	Must have an indemnification clause
2.12	Fiscal year	Must state the Chamber's fiscal year end
2.13	Financial Review	Must state the Chamber's auditing and financial review procedures

2.14	Dissolution	Must have a provision for dissolution
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3 Operations			
3.1	Organization Chart	Must have an organization chart that clearly shows how authority, accountability and responsibility are allocated across the organization. Your organization chart must show that only the CEO reports to the Board.	Add your organization chart to the Master Accreditation doc
3.2	Spokesperson	Must have a clearly identified spokesperson	Attach the policy or document identifying your Chamber's spokesperson
3.3	Strategic Plan	Must have a strategic plan that covers a period of at least 3-years, and identifies strategic priorities related to the Chamber's mission	Attach your Strategic Plan
3.4	Strategic Plan Transparency	Must have at least a summary of your strategic plan, or list of strategic priorities on your website	Add the weblink to your strategic plan in the Master Accreditation doc
3.5	Annual Business Plan	Must have an annual business plan that provides high-level guidance for staff to achieve the strategic plan, and succeed in fulfilling the organization's mission	Attach your current Annual Business Plan
3.6	Budget	Must have an annual budget	Attach your current annual budget
3.7	Financial Reporting	Must approve year-to-date financial statements at every board meeting	Attach minutes from two recent board meetings showing approval of YTD financials
3.8	Technology and Cyber Security Policy	<p>Must have a technology and cyber security policy that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a process to ensure data is regularly backed up (external hard drive or cloud based) • the anti-virus software you use • technology replacement for computers • network administration and key technology contacts (vendors used for network administration, internet provider, website host, email host) 	Attach your Technology and Cyber Security Policy

3.9	Privacy Policy	Must have a privacy policy that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of a privacy officer responsible for ensuring the organization complies with privacy legislation • Commitment to not sell or distribute your membership list 	Attach your privacy policy
3.10	Confidentiality Policy	Must have a confidentiality policy for staff and Board Members	Attach your confidentiality policy
3.11	Marketing & Communications Plan	Must have a marketing and communications plan that outlines communication goals, target audiences, and communication channels used by the Chamber	Attach your marketing and communications plan
3.12	Social Media Policy	Must have a social media policy for staff and Board Members	Attach your social media policy
3.13	Media List	Must maintain a list of media contacts updated at least annually	Attach the document that lists key media contacts
3.14	Canadian Chamber of Commerce	Must be an active member of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce	Attach proof of your membership (receipt, membership certificate)
3.15	Provincial / Territorial Chamber of Commerce	Must be an active member of your provincial or territorial Chamber of Commerce	Attach proof of your membership (receipt, membership certificate)

4 Board Governance

You must have a Board Governance Manual, or similar document, that outlines your Chamber's Board policies.

Highlight the following sections within your Board Governance Manual and attach the Board Governance Manual to the application for verification.

4.1	Roles & Responsibilities	Must have defined roles and responsibilities for all positions on the board (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Past President, Directors, etc.)
4.2	Code of Conduct	Must have a Code of Conduct for Board Members
4.3	Conflict of Interest	Must have a Conflict of Interest Policy
4.4	Parliamentary Procedure	Must specify the parliamentary procedure (such as Robert's Rules of Order) used

4.5	Essential Committees	Must have board committees to oversee governance, nominations and finance/audit, or a policy stating how the board will provide oversight of these functions, and periodic reviews of committee effectiveness	
4.6	Committees	Must have Terms of Reference for each committee, and review them annually	List your committees in the Master Accreditation doc, and attach the Terms of Reference for each committee
4.7	Regular Board Meetings	The Board of Directors must meet on a regular basis, and record Minutes from these meetings	Add your current board meeting schedule to the Master Accreditation doc, and attach minutes from the last 3 board meetings
4.8	Board Orientation	Must have a Board Orientation manual or similar document to onboard new Directors	Attach your Board Orientation Manual
4.9	Nominations Procedure & Succession Plan	Must have a succession plan and nominations process to assist with identifying and recruiting new volunteers for the board and Executive	Attach your nominations procedure

5 Human Resource Management: only required for Chambers that have employees

You must have an HR Manual, Employee Handbook, or Personnel Manual that outlines your Chamber's staff policies.

Highlight the following sections within your HR Manual and attach the HR Manual to the application for verification.

5.1	Code of Conduct	Must have an employee Code of Conduct
5.2	Vacation	Must include a vacation policy
5.3	Employee Benefits	Must list the employee benefits provided (health and dental, RRSP contributions, etc.)
5.4	Employee Leave	Must address paid and unpaid leave for staff (such as sick leave, disability leave, bereavement leave, compassionate care leave, parental leave, and jury duty leave)
5.5	Travel Policy	Must include a travel policy that addresses mileage and expense reimbursement, and eligible expenses
5.6	Discipline and Termination	Must include procedures to be followed in the event of disciplinary action or termination of an employee or the Chamber CEO

5.7	Safety Policy	Must include a safety policy addressing working alone, harassment and violence, drugs and alcohol, and compliance with safety standards	
5.8	Job Descriptions	Must have job descriptions for every employee	Include a list of staff positions in the Master Accreditation doc, and attach job descriptions
5.9	Performance & Salary Reviews	The Board must conduct an annual performance and salary review of the CEO The CEO must conduct an annual performance and salary review for staff	Attach an empty CEO performance evaluation form Attach an empty staff performance evaluation form
5.10	Professional Development for Staff	Must plan for CEO and staff professional development	Explain provisions for CEO and staff professional development, including any budget allocations, in the Master Accreditation doc

PILLAR 2: MEMBERSHIP

Reference #	Category	Requirement	Verification
6	Membership		
6.1	Membership Database	Must maintain an accurate membership database	Describe how you manage your membership database (excel, CRM system, etc.) in the Master Accreditation doc
6.2	Membership Directory	Must maintain an online and/or print membership directory	Attach your print membership directory, or add the link to your online membership directory in the Master Accreditation doc

6.3	Membership Benefits Package	Must have a membership benefits package outlining the benefits your Chamber offers to its membership	Attach your membership benefits package
6.4	Evaluating Membership Benefits	Must have a process of evaluating the programs and services offered to members	Describe how you evaluate your Chamber's programming on an annual basis (post-event surveys, financial metrics for success, etc) in the Master Accreditation doc.
6.5	Networking	Must host networking events that build and strengthen connections between members	Attach proof of recent networking event (event advertisement, event planning guide, e-blast, etc.)
6.6	Member Professional Development and Training	Must provide training and/or professional development opportunities for members. This can include conferences, workshops, seminars, luncheons and other educational events	Attach proof of recent educational event (event advertisement, event planning guide, e-blast, etc.)
6.7	Member Survey	Must conduct an annual membership survey to collect feedback from the membership	Attach the results of your most recent membership survey

PILLAR 3: POLICY & ADVOCACY

Reference #	Category	Requirement	Verification
7	Policy Development		
7.1	Policy Procedure	Must have a procedure for developing policy positions and resolutions. All positions must be approved by the Board of Directors	Attach your procedure for developing a policy position
7.2	Rapid Response Protocol	Must have a rapid response protocol to handle fast breaking policy issues that require an immediate response	Attach your rapid response protocol
7.3	Local Issues	Must monitor local government and media to ensure awareness of emerging local issues	Describe how your Chamber monitors local government and media in the Master Accreditation doc

7.4	Membership Engagement	Must demonstrate membership engagement on policy issues (member surveys, roundtables, committees, or other means)	Provide proof of membership engagement on policy issues (survey results, committee meeting minutes, reports, etc.)
7.5	Public Policy Forum	Must convene at least one public policy forum annually. This could be an all-candidates forum, post-budget, economic overview, or any other type of business forum	Attach proof of public policy forum (promotional materials, planning documents, forum reports, etc.)
7.6	Policy Submission	Must prepare at least one written submission, or make one presentation to the municipal or provincial/territorial government	Attach written submission or presentation
7.7	Provincial/Territorial & National Policy Debates	Must participate in the provincial / territorial, or national policy resolution process (this may include developing policies, co-sponsoring policies, providing feedback on policy development, or attending the policy resolution debates)	Provide evidence of participating in the provincial and/or national policy resolution process (policy resolutions, board resolutions, registration confirmation for policy debates)
7.8	Policy Position Database	Must maintain an online database or manual that includes all of the Chamber's policy positions, ongoing work on the issue, media coverage, responses, letters of support, etc.	Attach the policy position manual, or add a link to your online database in the Master Accreditation doc

8 Advocacy			
8.1	Elected Officials Database	Must maintain a list or have access to contact information for elected officials in your jurisdiction, which could include: mayors and council, MPPs/ MLAs /MNAs /MHAs /MPs	Attach a list of contact information, or add links to where the information can be accessed in the Master Accreditation doc
8.2	Annual Meetings with Local Officials	Must maintain a respectful working relationship with local elected officials. Chambers must meet with local elected officials at least once per year	List your meetings with local elected officials over the past year (who you met with, date and location) in the Master Accreditation doc
8.3	Advocacy Communications	Approved policy resolutions must be communicated to the appropriate elected officials, the membership and media	Attach two examples of advocacy communications

8.4	Media Coverage	Must monitor media for mentions of the Chamber's advocacy efforts, and other Chamber initiatives	Add links to recent media mentions in the Master Accreditation doc
8.5	Elections	Must be engaged in local/regional, provincial/territorial or federal election campaigns. Examples include hosting election forums, developing election platforms, distributing candidates' questionnaires, or by other means. All election activity must be non-partisan	Provide proof of engagement in elections (questionnaires, election platforms, promotional materials)
8.6	Network Action Calls	Chambers must respond to "action calls" and "action alerts" from provincial/territorial and/or national Chamber advocacy initiatives	Attach an example of a response (communication supporting the call, or response explaining why support cannot be given)
8.7	Provincial & National Conventions	Must have attended the provincial and/or national Chamber convention in 3 of the past 5 years	Include a list of the provincial and/or national Chamber conventions attended by your Chamber over the past 5 years
8.8	Community Leadership	Must demonstrate that your Chamber is actively involved in the local business community. This can include initiatives related to workforce development, education and training, economic development, community partnerships, community consultations, etc.	Include a list of community leadership initiatives to the Master Accreditation doc