

The College - Looking out for Professionals and their Place in the Workplace



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***Disclaimer: the opinions expressed in College Matters do not necessarily represent those of the College, its Council or other members.**

The College protects the public interest by ensuring that our members are qualified and accountable. Although the most visible aspect of our activity is around our credentialing, audit, and discipline processes, we also protect the titles which our members have earned, and identify areas where the College feels applied biology professionals should be engaged.

The titles RPBio, RBTech, ABT, and In-Training, as well as the term "professional biologist", are associated with the College. All of these titles/terms are protected in BC and only current members of the College have the right to use them. Under the *College of Applied Biology Act* the College has the power to protect the titles, which can include issuing cease-and-desist notices, and fining individuals up to \$5,000/day for unauthorized use of the title(s) or for calling her/himself a "professional biologist". An increase in recognition of the value of holding a professional designation appears to be positively correlated with the number of instances of the College actively protecting our titles.

We reported earlier about the issue of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, & Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) implementing a 'hiring toolkit' that limited the instances where a professional was required for jobs, particularly for members of the College and the BC Institute of Agrologists (BCIA). FLNRO and the Ministry of Environment (MoE) recently posted numerous positions for biologists and I am pleased to report that all of the relevant MoE jobs required College membership. All but two of the relevant FLNRO positions required College membership; the remaining two positions preferred College membership. In the opinion of the College, these two jobs should have required membership based on the advertised job description and list of responsibilities. The College Executive is following up with FLNRO on the reasons why membership was listed as preferred, and not required.

The College is also following up with government to ensure that biology professionals are required during a secondment, where appropriate. Occasionally, jobs which require College membership are temporarily back-filled without the requirement for College membership. This results in the job being filled (temporarily or sometimes permanently) by a non-professional. Where the College becomes aware of a potential vacancy, we are following up with the appropriate ministry to ensure that the professional designation requirement stands.

Finally, an active area for the College is in ensuring that applied biology professionals are appropriately designated in regulations. Some government environmental regulations recognize the need for professional expertise in certain areas. Examples where College members are specified include the Riparian Areas Regulation, Contaminated Sites Regulation, and Forest Planning and Practices Regulation. The College is currently reviewing other regulations to determine whether College members should be identified as one of the relevant professional organizations. 

 We want to hear from you! Have you noticed an area of regulation or policy in the province where you think College members should be specified? Have you seen a job posting (provincial, federal, or municipal government, or industry) which you feel should require an applied biology professional? Has a government position that requires a College member been back-filled through secondment or temporary hire without the replacement being required to have College membership? Have you seen a non-member using the titles or calling themselves a "professional biologist"? Please [contact the College office](#) to let us know. The College is more effective at protecting the place of applied biology professionals in the workplace with your assistance.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Vanessa Craig, RPBio