

Franchising



AIRD BERLIS

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Franchising in Canada is fast-paced, competitive and full of opportunity. The Aird & Berlis Franchising Group provides the legal expertise and strategic guidance businesses need to enter the market, expand across jurisdictions and lead with confidence.

We provide full-service legal support to franchisors, franchisees, multi-unit operators, licensors, distributors and private equity firms investing in the franchising sector. Our lawyers have represented some of the world's most recognized franchise brands and regularly assist both domestic and international clients on all aspects of Canadian franchise law.

Our Franchising Group helps franchisors unlock the full potential of their franchise systems and position themselves as leaders in a competitive and evolving marketplace. We understand that franchising success requires strategic legal foresight, operational agility and a clear strategy for managing the franchisor-franchisee relationship. We work closely with franchisors at every stage of the franchise lifecycle, offering proactive guidance on system development, restructuring, dispute resolution and compliance with Canada's complex and shifting disclosure regimes.

Whether entering the Canadian market, scaling across jurisdictions or maintaining compliance, we offer tailored, business-oriented advice that aligns with your growth objectives. Our team supports franchisors by seamlessly coordinating experts in tax, real estate and leasing, corporate/commercial, employment, litigation and dispute resolution and intellectual property law.

The Aird & Berlis Franchising team includes prominent members of the franchise bar and brings decades of combined experience on structuring franchise arrangements for growth. We provide practical, strategic advice informed by years of client-side experience, which provides a perspective that many law firms simply cannot offer. Whether you're launching, growing or transforming your franchise system, we're here to help you lead with confidence.

Our core services include:

- > **Franchise System Development:** We advise clients on the optimal structure and business model for their franchise operations. This includes drafting comprehensive legal documentation such as franchise, area development and master franchise agreements to support long-term growth and scalability.
- > **Disclosure & Compliance:** Our team prepares and updates disclosure documents in accordance with provincial franchise legislation. We ensure that all materials meet legal standards and reflect current regulatory requirements, helping clients avoid costly compliance issues.
- > **Franchise Agreements:** We draft and revise franchise agreements and ancillary documents to reflect evolving business needs and legal obligations. These agreements are tailored to protect the interests of both franchisors and franchisees while fostering strong operational relationships.
- > **Cross-Border Expansion:** We assist international brands in entering the Canadian market by localizing legal documents and providing regulatory guidance. Our support helps clients navigate jurisdictional differences and establish a compliant presence in Canada.
- > **Transactional Support:** We advise on the purchase, sale, financing, restructuring and private equity investment of franchise systems and individual units. Our transactional expertise ensures that deals are structured efficiently and aligned with strategic business goals.

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- > **Dispute Resolution & Litigation:** We represent clients in disputes involving termination, non-compete clauses, misrepresentation, rescission and breaches of good faith. Our team also negotiates settlements to avoid litigation and protect the reputation and integrity of the franchise brand.
- > **IP Strategy:** We help clients safeguard their brand assets through trademark registration, trade secret protection and copyright support. Our intellectual property services are designed to preserve the distinctiveness and value of franchise systems.
- > **Regulatory & Sectoral Advice:** We provide guidance on a wide range of regulatory matters including privacy, consumer protection, advertising, food safety, bilingual packaging and Quebec-specific rules. Our advice ensures that clients remain compliant across all relevant sectors and jurisdictions.
- > **Commercial Leasing:** We assist with site selection, lease negotiations and real estate development to support franchise expansion. Our leasing services are tailored to secure favourable terms and mitigate risks associated with property agreements.
- > **Employment & HR:** We advise on structuring franchise relationships to mitigate joint employer risks and ensure compliance with employment standards. Our team helps clients navigate complex HR issues while maintaining operational efficiency.
- > **Marketing & Promotions:** We offer legal guidance on advertising compliance, gift card programs, contests and customer loyalty initiatives. Our support helps clients execute promotional strategies that are both effective and legally sound.

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Aird & Berlis LLP operates as a multi-disciplinary practice.