Publicity contests no longer regulated by the Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux

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On June 2, 2021, the Québec government reduced the administrative burden relating to international publicity contests by excluding them from the jurisdiction of the Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux (the “Régie”). It has now followed suit with all types of publicity contests launched on or after October 27, 2023[1].

In concrete terms, this means that businesses launching publicity contests aimed at Quebec participants after this date no longer have to meet reporting obligations or pay prescribed fees to the Régie.

Businesses in all sectors of activity use the well-known marketing strategy of publicity contests to attract new customers and build customer loyalty. Quebec has long been sidelined because of the Régie’s distinct requirements in this respect. For businesses wishing to increase their visibility through such contests, the province’s situation is now equivalent to that prevailing in the rest of Canada.

That said, contests launched before October 27, 2023, remain subject to previous requirements—namely the payment of prescribed fees, the posting of a security where required and the filing of a report with the Régie within 60 days of the date on which the winner(s) is (are) declared—if they offer prizes the total value of which exceeds $2,000.

We advise you to be careful, however. Despite the eased burden we have mentioned, publicity contests in Quebec must still comply with the requirements of the *Criminal Code*,[2] the *Competition Act*,[3] the *Consumer Protection Act*[4] and the *Charter of the French Language*,[5] as well as applicable privacy, labelling and advertising laws.

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1. Bill 17, An Act to amend various provisions for the main purpose of reducing regulatory and administrative burden, S.Q. 2023, chapter 24, sections 75 and following.
2. RSC 1985, c. C-46.
3. RSC 1985, c. C-34.

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4. CQLR, c. P-40.1.
5. CQLR, c. C-11.

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