

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

Date: May 03, 2023

Report Number: CA2023-0021

Report Name: Canada Consults on Restricting Food Advertising to Children

Country: Canada

Post: Ottawa

Report Category: Policy and Program Announcements

Prepared By: Mihai Lupescu

Approved By: Tyler Babcock

Report Highlights:

Health Canada opened a public consultation period on the federal department's intent to restrict advertising to children of foods with high content of sodium, sugars or saturated fats. The proposed policy could target advertising through various media platforms and settings. Interested stakeholders may provide comments until June 12, 2023.

On April 25, 2023, Health Canada (HC) [announced](#) the intent to [amend](#) the Food and Drug Regulations in order to restrict advertising of foods that contribute to excess intakes of sodium, sugars, and saturated fat. The restriction will be focused on advertising to children. Interested stakeholders may provide comments by **June 12, 2023**, at: bpiaa-bpaii@hc-sc.gc.ca

In the policy update announcement, HC makes the distinction between “marketing” and “**advertising**” and indicates HC will use the term “advertising” in the policy proposal for Advertising to Children because the word “advertising” is broadly defined in the Food and Drugs Act (FDA) as including “any representation by any means whatever for the purpose of promoting directly or indirectly the sale or disposal of any food, drug, cosmetic or device”. Additionally, HC clarifies the definition of the term “**food**” which, per FDA, “includes any article manufactured, sold or represented for use as food or drink for human beings, chewing gum, and any ingredient that may be mixed with food for any purpose whatever”.

According to HC’s research, and their [monitoring initiative](#), the food categories frequently advertised to children in Canada include: candy, desserts, chocolate, snack foods, baked goods, restaurant foods, sweetened dairy products, sugar-sweetened beverages, and sweetened breakfast cereals. HC states that “when eaten regularly, these types of foods contribute to excess intakes of sodium, sugars, and saturated fat”. Additionally, HC’s research shows that “children see and hear food advertising throughout their day, across a range of media platforms (such as television, social media and gaming) and settings (such as retail food stores, theaters, and recreation centers)”.

On **May 11, 2023**, HC will host a [webinar](#), to assist stakeholders in understanding the scope of this regulatory initiative, which will also include the opportunity to ask clarification questions. Following the consultation period, HC would proceed to drafting a regulatory proposal, which would be subject to another round of public consultations in late 2023 or early 2024.

Background

Between June and August 2017, HC held public consultations on “restricting marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to children” (the way the initiative was described at the time). A summary of the comments received by the department can be found in this [Consultation Report](#).

In 2021, the Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA), the Canadian Beverage Association (CBA), Food, Health & Consumer Products of Canada (FHCP), and Restaurants Canada, launched the [Code and Guide for the Responsible Advertising of Food and Beverage Products to Children](#) with an implementation date of July 1, 2023.

Attachments:

No Attachments.