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Who Owns My .CA Domain Name? Quebec Company Checklist

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Executive Summary

The owner of a .CA domain is whoever is recorded as the registrant at the registry, and for a company that is the legal entity named in the Registrant Organization field, not the web agency, the founder's email account or the registrar billing contact (www.cira.ca). CIRA (the Canadian Internet Registration Authority, which runs the .CA registry) also states that a domain name is not property and that a registration creates no proprietary right, so the record, the registrar account and the Registrant Agreement together define what "ownership" means in practice (www.cira.ca). **As of November 2026**, the first step for a Quebec business is therefore a read-only check: look up the domain in the CIRA WHOIS and compare the registrant with the entity in the Quebec enterprise register.

The public display depends on the Canadian Presence Requirements (CPR) category. Individuals get free WHOIS privacy automatically, while for business categories CIRA's dated **April 20, 2026** FAQ says privacy "may be offered" by the registrar (www.cira.ca). CIRA's WHOIS page says a non-individual registrant's name and its administrative and technical contacts are displayed by default (www.cira.ca). Published registrar guidance is not uniform: one registrar says non-individual privacy is unavailable and calls that a CIRA policy (www.canspace.ca), another says it is off by default and only exceptionally activated (register.ca), and a third sells a privacy service whose availability varies by extension and registry policy (www.webnames.ca). The only safe approach is a written answer for the exact extension, category, owner and visible fields.

A corporation qualifies as a registrant if it is a corporation under the laws of Canada or any province or territory (www.cira.ca). That is a legal-status test. A mailing address, including one at a domiciliation or virtual-office provider, does not appear among the category definitions and cannot substitute for incorporation or another listed category. A separate address can still serve lawful business correspondence, but the Quebec register treats the domicile of a legal person as its head office address (quebec.ca), and the register itself is public (www.quebec.ca).

Contact accuracy matters because CIRA can start Registrant Information Validation (RIV), lock the domain and, after the notice stages described in Step 7, suspend it. While a domain is suspended its website and email do not function, and if CIRA receives no supporting documentation within the 30-day suspension period

the domain is cancelled and released to the public on a first-come, first-served basis, which is why contact accuracy is operational and not clerical. This report supplies an owner and field audit, a comparison of protection options with their limits, an administrative-update versus ownership-transfer map, a bilingual registrar request and a handoff sheet. It is research, not legal advice; ownership decisions, especially moving a domain from a corporation to a founder, should be reviewed by a lawyer.

Introduction and Background

A Montreal freelancer, a newly incorporated startup or a small agency acting for a client usually meets the same four questions at once. Who is the legal owner of the .CA name? Which category was selected when it was registered? Which address and contact details can anyone see? And who will actually receive a message if the registry asks for proof? These questions are separate, and conflating them produces the typical mistakes: a domain registered in an agency's account, a founder's home address visible next to a company name, or a validation email sent to a mailbox nobody reads.

This report is deliberately not a domain availability guide, a registrar ranking or a definition of WHOIS. It is a domain-owner and address-field audit for an actual Quebec business. CIRA's own FAQ explains why the audit is timely: whether contact information is published depends on the CPR category chosen at registration, and CIRA states that it cannot itself make a business registrant's WHOIS private, directing a mistaken category to the registrar (www.cira.ca).

Scale context helps frame the stakes. CIRA reported **3,426,339** .CA domains under management at the close of its 2025 fiscal year, with growth of 0.98% (www.cira.ca). Statistics from Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) show 1.10 million employer businesses in Canada in December 2024 (ised-isde.canada.ca), and Quebec held **228,622** small employer businesses (ised-isde.canada.ca). Those employer figures exclude many freelancers, because ISED defines a small business as one with 1 to 99 paid employees (ised-isde.canada.ca). The registration record behind a business website deserves the same care as the incorporation paperwork.

Disclosure. The publisher of this article, 2727coworking.com, is a Montreal coworking and virtual-office provider and sells business addresses. That is an interest in one part of the topic. For that reason the article relies on independent primary sources for its factual claims (links to related articles by the publisher are not evidence for those claims), states limits of an address service plainly, and does not treat any address service as a source of .CA eligibility.

Definitions and Taxonomy: Who Is Who on a .CA Record

Registrant, administrative contact, registrar and reseller

The **registrant** is the person the registry treats as the holder. Under the Registrant Agreement (Version 2.3, August 2025), for a non-individual the registrant is the person listed in the Registrant Organization field (www.cira.ca). The **registrar** is the CIRA-certified company that sells and manages the registration. A **reseller**

is a third party selling domains through a registrar; CIRA describes it as a company that sells domains through a registrar and is not the party certified with CIRA. CIRA's own lookup lists registration and expiration dates and the domain registrar.

The **administrative contact** is the person who can act for the registrant on the record. CIRA's lookup page lists administrative, technical and billing contacts among the fields. The practical weight of that role is real: CIRA's support page says an authorization code request must be made from the administrative contact (www.cira.ca), and the Registrant Agreement tells the registrant to make arrangements with its administrative contact so notices reach the registrant. Namecheap adds that for an organization registration the administrative contact details must be those of a natural person (www.namecheap.com). A web agency named as administrative contact therefore controls part of the lifecycle even when it is not the registrant.

Registrars also describe a **billing** contact, which is an account concept and not automatically the legal owner. Register.ca's contact tool, for instance, edits the registrant, administrative, technical and billing contacts as distinct records (register.ca). Webnames lets a customer define alternative administrative, billing or technical contacts (www.webnames.ca).

Ownership is a registry status, not property

CIRA's agreement states that a domain name is not property and that registration creates no proprietary right. The registrant also warrants that registration information is true, complete and accurate at all times and that it meets, and will continue to meet, the CPR. For a business owner the consequence is simple: the safest evidence of ownership is a record that matches the real legal entity, held in an account the entity controls.

CIRA's WHOIS page advises business owners to register the .CA domain themselves rather than leave the step to someone else. A registrar also cannot take the domain for non-payment: CIRA's rules say that under no circumstances may a registrar of record transfer a registration or change the registrant for that reason. Those rules protect the registrant, but only if the registrant is the right entity in the first place.

Individual versus non-individual

CIRA groups categories into individuals and non-individuals. The policy lists 18 categories (www.cira.ca). An individual who selects an individual category benefits automatically from free privacy in WHOIS (www.cira.ca), and registrars echo this: CanSpace says privacy is free and enabled by default for such registrants (www.canspace.ca) and WHC says domains registered by individuals include privacy free of charge (help.whc.ca). A person registering as a business category may be offered privacy by the registrar, included or for a fee (www.cira.ca). A freelancer in Quebec who is a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident can register as an individual, but a permanent resident must be "ordinarily resident", meaning resident in Canada for more than 183 days in the relevant 12-month periods. A company registers under the corporation category (www.cira.ca). Each choice has a different public result and a different owner.

Category, Proof and Owner: The Crosswalk

When the CPR category is wrong, everything downstream is wrong: the display, the proof CIRA expects and the legal owner. The policy requires the registrant to meet the CPR to apply for and to hold and maintain the registration, and a registrant selects a category at registration to show a connection to Canada. Proof is

checked through RIV, in which selection for validation is at CIRA's discretion; CIRA points corporations to federal and provincial business registries, listing Quebec's register.

Table 1 below sets out the owner, category and proof crosswalk for the cases that Quebec microbusinesses most often meet. The final column is a research prompt and not a statement of what any given registrar's screen will display. Entries marked "verify" depend on the registrar and on the exact record.

Situation	Likely legal registrant	CPR category to check	Proof to keep ready	Registrar contact to confirm	Public lookup to test
Quebec corporation (CBCA or Quebec incorporation)	The corporation, named in the organization field	Corporation, meaning a corporation under the laws of Canada or any province or territory	Corporate profile from the relevant federal or provincial register	An administrative contact who is a real, reachable person of the business (www.namecheap.com)	Registrant name and administrative and technical contacts are displayed by default
Freelancer operating as a sole proprietor	The individual	An individual category, for example Canadian citizen or permanent resident	Identity evidence if validated	The freelancer's own monitored email	Individual privacy is automatic; the Quebec register is a separate public record (quebec.ca)
Startup after incorporation, domain bought earlier by a founder	Decide first: founder or corporation (legal review)	Category follows the chosen registrant	Evidence matching the new registrant	Registrar-specific; a registrant change is requested through the registrar	Re-test after the change
Domain registered by a web agency in its own account	Possibly the agency, which is the wrong owner for the client's asset	Whatever the agency selected; verify	Not the client's evidence	Agency listed as administrative contact: verify	Compare registrant name with the client entity
Foreign company with a Montreal mailing address	Cannot be assumed eligible	Check whether any listed category applies; address alone is not a category	Category-specific; ask CIRA or the registrar in writing	Verify	Verify
Trade-mark based registration	The trade-mark owner, limited to a name consisting of or including the mark	Trade-mark registered in Canada	Registration evidence	Verify	Verify

Cells without a citation restate facts cited in the surrounding sections or are the report's own analysis. The table has three takeaways. First, for a corporation the owner and the category move together: the corporation is the registrant, and its proof is a register extract. Second, individuals and corporations are distinct potential owners, and one should not be swapped for the other to change what is displayed. Third, the foreign-company row is open: the Quebec register has a separate route for a legal person not constituted in Quebec that carries on activity there (www.quebec.ca), and that registration with the Quebec register is a different legal act from

incorporation. The CPR corporation wording refers to a corporation under the laws of Canada or a province or territory, so the question whether a registered foreign entity fits a listed category belongs in a written question to the registrar or CIRA, not in an assumption. An enterprise with no Quebec domicile, business address or establishment must also declare a mandatary in the register (www.quebec.ca), and the Act requires a person with no domicile or establishment in Quebec to designate an attorney residing there (www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca).

What the Public Lookup Shows and What Privacy Can Do

The default display

CIRA operates a lookup that returns registration data for .CA names. Its FAQ calls WHOIS the online directory that lets people look up domain information. For individuals the result is a notice that the registration is privacy protected. For non-individuals the display includes the registrant name and administrative and technical contact information by default (www.cira.ca). CIRA's Privacy Policy (Version 2.1, the version published on its site) describes the fields shown when privacy is off: mailing address, email address, phone number and fax number. The privacy policy version is dated 2020, so the display details on the live page should be treated as the more current statement and the live lookup as the test.

CIRA's message delivery form lets a visitor send a message to the holder of a domain name, so a privacy-protected registrant remains reachable without revealing an address. That is useful for a business that wants a contact route without publishing a street address, but it does not replace a monitored administrative email for registry notices.

Why ICANN rules do not settle the question

Articles about "WHOIS privacy" often import gTLD rules. ICANN states that it does not accredit registrars or set registration policies for country-code domains (www.icann.org). Its Registration Data Policy requires redaction of personal data where applicable law requires it (www.icann.org) and defines personal data as information relating to a natural person (www.icann.org); a registrar may redact the Registrant Organization value in some circumstances (www.icann.org). Those provisions concern generic top-level domains and RDAP (Registration Data Access Protocol, the successor protocol delivering WHOIS-like data) (www.icann.org). For .CA, CIRA's own policies govern, which is why registrar statements about .CA must be checked against CIRA's pages.

What registrars say, and where they differ

Table 2 reproduces what each registrar published, as dated in the sources, without evaluating any product. The point is the spread of statements, which supports the recommendation to obtain a written answer.

Source (own page)	Published statement on .CA privacy for non-individuals	What it does not settle
CIRA FAQ, April 20, 2026	Privacy "may be offered by your registrar" for non-individual categories	Which registrars actually offer it, and which fields are redacted

Source (own page)	Published statement on .CA privacy for non-individuals	What it does not settle
CIRA Privacy Policy, Version 2.1	A non-individual may request in writing that its information not be disclosed via WHOIS (www.cira.ca), certifying likely harm to individuals or to the registrant	Current handling of such requests
CanSpace help page	Privacy is free and on by default for individuals; describes non-individual privacy as unavailable under a CIRA policy (www.canspace.ca); a separate page says corporations and businesses must publicly display their information (www.canspace.ca)	Why the wording differs from the April 2026 FAQ
Register.ca support	Privacy is off by default for non-individuals and cannot be activated except in exceptional circumstances (register.ca); requests go to CIRA (register.ca)	What qualifies as exceptional
Webnames privacy page	Says CIRA provides privacy at the registry level for individual registrants (www.webnames.ca) and sells a service that replaces registrant information with its own details (www.webnames.ca); availability varies by extension and registry policy	.CA corporate behavior on that page; a help page says the registrant name remains listed for .CA (www.webnames.ca)
Namecheap support	Non-individuals must show full registrant information in public Whois (www.namecheap.com)	Whether this is current for every category
WHC domain terms	Says a non-individual .CA registrant's personal information is made available on the WHOIS database (whc.ca)	Whether a paid add-on exists for corporate registrants
GoDaddy help	Treats corporations as non-individual registrants who enter the entity's full official name (www.godaddy.com)	Privacy availability for that category
IONOS Canada help	Says CIRA does not allow private registrations for businesses or non-individuals (ionos.ca)	Relation to the CIRA FAQ

The table shows three readings of the same registry: no privacy for non-individuals, privacy only by exception through CIRA, and a registrar product whose scope depends on extension. Hover similarly notes that WHOIS privacy is available for most but not all extensions (support.hover.com). These are published statements of different providers and dates, and none is proof that another provider's product works or does not work today. Webnames notes that organizational registrants often publish significantly more registration information through RDAP (www.webnames.ca). Even where a registrar product exists, one registrar's help page says a .CA registrant name continues to be listed (www.webnames.ca), which illustrates why a checkout badge alone is not evidence. Ownership also survives either way: registrars that sell privacy state that the customer remains the registrant (www.webnames.ca) (register.ca).

Address Fields, Domiciliation and Other Public Registers

Separate the address fields

A single business address often appears in five different places with five different rules. The audit therefore treats each record separately.

- **Registrar billing address.** An account record for invoices and taxes. It is not necessarily the registry record. Register.ca, for example, states that its listed prices include registry and ICANN fees with GST and HST added on top (register.ca), which is billing information and not a WHOIS field.
- **Registrant and contacts at the registry.** The record the CIRA lookup draws on. Registrars may require specific formats: Namecheap says a corporation must enter a valid organization name (www.namecheap.com) and GoDaddy asks for the full official name of the entity (www.godaddy.com).
- **Quebec enterprise register (REQ).** The Registraire des entreprises du Québec register is public (www.quebec.ca), free to consult (www.quebec.ca), and the Act says anyone may consult it (www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca). For a legal person the domicile is the head office address (quebec.ca). For a sole proprietor it is the home address (quebec.ca), though a natural person may declare a professional address (www.quebec.ca), and certain personal data of natural persons cannot be consulted (www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca). Enterprises declare shareholders' and officers' home addresses (quebec.ca). A separate elected domicile can name the address to which documents must be sent (quebec.ca), and changes must be declared within 30 days (www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca).
- **Federal register (Corporations Canada).** For a federal corporation, the registered office address, even if residential, is public (ised-isde.canada.ca), and directors' names and addresses are public (ised-isde.canada.ca). A federal corporation must keep a registered office in a Canadian province (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca) and notify changes within fifteen days (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca), and a director's address cannot be a post office box (ised-isde.canada.ca). The federal search covers only corporations created under a federal law (ised-isde.canada.ca).
- **Intellectual property.** An application advertised by the Canadian Intellectual Property Office is published on its website (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca) and includes the postal address of the applicant and agent (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca), though an applicant does not have to hire an agent (ised-isde.canada.ca).

The conclusion of this inventory is that changing the address in one place changes nothing in the others, and that registrar privacy, even where it exists, does not reach any of the registers above. It also does not remove third-party copies of earlier records.

Where a domiciliation or virtual-office address fits

A privacy option and a monitored business address solve different problems. Privacy affects what a lookup displays. A business address affects where lawful correspondence and notices physically arrive. The cited sources support four limits.

- **Not eligibility.** The CPR categories are defined by legal status, residence or trade-mark ownership; an address is not a category. A domiciliation service therefore never creates .CA eligibility or proves residence.
- **Not a universal hiding tool.** The address given in the Quebec register is public (www.quebec.ca), and a federal registered office is public (ised-isde.canada.ca).
- **Address type rules.** Quebec rejects a post-office box as a business address in its professional-address context (quebec.ca), and Corporations Canada's Form 3 says the registered office must be a street address and a post-office box is not acceptable (ised-isde.canada.ca). Canada Post describes a Postal Box as a way to keep a home address private (www.canadapost-postescanada.ca), but its terms limit

the box to receiving mail items (www.canadapost-postescanada.ca). Whether a particular domiciliation address qualifies as a legal domicile is a question for the register and a legal adviser; the sources cited here define the domicile of a legal person as its head office and do not describe virtual-office arrangements.

- **Mail must be received.** Corporations Canada sends reminder or default notices by post to the registered office or an additional address (ised-isde.canada.ca), so the address needs a working reception and forwarding process.

Table 3 compares the four main tools for what each does and does not do. The business-address row is included because the publisher of this article provides such services; it is described by function only, and an actual provider's terms must be obtained from that provider.

Option	What it addresses	What it cannot do	Who is accountable
Individual registry privacy (automatic for individual categories)	Hides the registrant's contact information in the CIRA lookup	Does not reach the REQ, federal register or trademark data (quebec.ca); does not apply to a corporation	The individual registrant
Supported registrar privacy for a business (where offered)	May replace displayed details with the registrar's own	Not assured for .CA non-individuals (www.canspace.ca); name may remain listed (www.webnames.ca); not a transfer of ownership	The registrant, with the registrar as provider
Business address or domiciliation service from a Montreal provider such as 2727 Coworking (publisher of this article; direct provider)	A lawful, staffed correspondence address distinct from a home address; mail reception and forwarding on agreed terms	Does not create CPR eligibility, prove residence, replace incorporation, or hide any public record; terms, identity checks and use limits are set by the provider	The business and the provider, per the written service terms
Other public registers (REQ, Corporations Canada, trademarks)	Show the entity, address and officers as filed (www.quebec.ca) (ised-isde.canada.ca)	Not affected by a domain privacy setting	The entity, through updates to each register

The comparison clarifies that these are complements, not substitutes. A business-address service answers a correspondence need; a registrar privacy product, if available, answers a display need; and neither amends a register. For Quebec businesses wanting to avoid publishing a home address, the register-level mechanism is the professional address option (www.quebec.ca), which lets the home address of a natural person declared to the register (for example a director, shareholder or partner, not only a sole proprietor) go unpublished when a professional address is declared instead. That address must be the person's main place of work or business, not a P.O. box, and if it becomes invalid and the enterprise does not update it within 30 days of the registrar's request, the home address is published. The register also lets a person request that information not be published when publication poses a serious threat to security (www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca).

Implementation Guidance: The Audit Workflow

Step 1 to 3: identify, confirm, inventory

1. **Identify the owner.** Use the CIRA lookup, with the owner's permission, and compare the registrant name to the legal name on the enterprise register. A company should appear in the organization field.
2. **Confirm category and proof.** Ask which CPR category was selected and keep the matching register extract. For a corporation this is the profile from the relevant register.
3. **Inventory contacts and fields.** For each record record the underlying value, whether it is visible, redacted or not tested, who receives mail, and who is accountable. Use the field list below.

- **Registrant (legal name):** underlying value; visible or redacted; accountable: the entity's officer.
- **Administrative contact:** named person and email; reachable mailbox; accountable: the business, not the agency by default.
- **Registrar billing contact:** invoicing identity; renewal reminders; accountable: finance owner.
- **Public lookup output:** screenshot with date, redacted copy kept.
- **Quebec register, federal register, trademark records:** separately reviewed.

Step 4 to 5: choose protections and verify the live result

Compare the options in Table 3, then verify the live public result with the owner's permission. Do not rely on a checkout badge: re-run the lookup after any change and keep a redacted record. CIRA states that changes made at the registrar update CIRA's records, but a lookup is the only direct test. Where a registrar claims privacy for a corporation, the written question should name the extension (.CA), the category (Corporation), the owner (the legal name) and the visible fields.

Step 6: incorporation or relocation, update or ownership change

Decide first whether the event is an administrative update or a legal owner change. If the corporation was always the registrant, an address or email change goes through the registrar, because CIRA does not edit domain information itself (www.cira.ca). If the owner changes, the current registrant requests the registrar to submit a domain update request to CIRA (www.cira.ca), the incoming registrant must be an existing CIRA registrant (www.cira.ca), and CIRA directs name or ownership changes to the registrar (www.cira.ca).

- **Administrative update:** same legal owner, new address or email; registrar edits the record (register.ca).
- **Registrar transfer:** same owner, new registrar; authorization code required, requested by the administrative contact.
- **Ownership transfer:** new legal owner; the registrar's registrant-transfer procedure applies. Webnames, for example, says such transfers are initiated from the account that will gain the domain (helpdesk.webnames.ca) and asks the user to ensure that the administrative contact listed is current (helpdesk.webnames.ca).

Do not move a domain from the corporation to a founder to obtain privacy. An individual category brings automatic privacy, but the change moves the legal registrant, and whether an individual holds a business asset has tax, liability and exit consequences that need legal and accounting review. CIRA's FAQ addresses the opposite situation, a business-category registration made by mistake, and still sends the registrant to the registrar for the change.

Step 7: keep validation notices monitored

A RIV notice requires action. The standard sequence is a first notice, a reminder ten business days later (www.cira.ca), and, if no supporting documents arrive, suspension for up to 30 days (www.cira.ca). Notices go to the administrative contact and the registrant, so both mailboxes matter. While the domain is suspended its website and email stop working, and if CIRA receives no supporting documentation within the 30-day suspension period it cancels the domain and makes it available to the public on a first-come, first-served basis. Once the process begins CIRA locks the domain, blocking transfers and contact updates (www.cira.ca). CIRA also describes an accelerated path for malicious sites, with suspension after one day instead of 15 business days (www.cira.ca); that path should not be assumed for an ordinary administrative update. Read the actual notice for its pathway and dates.

Illustrative RIV response log (placeholder values, not real records):

- **Notice received:** [date from the notice] | **Pathway stated:** [standard or other]
- **Recipient mailbox:** [admin contact] | **Person assigned:** [name]
- **Evidence sent:** [register extract] | **Date sent:** [date]
- **CIRA confirmation:** [date] | **Locks removed:** [yes or no]

Step 8: handoff sheet for founder and agency

- **Owner of record:** legal name, NEQ, category. Never an agency or mail provider.
- **Accounts:** registrar login in the business's name, with account protection enabled, and CIRA's lock advice noted.
- **Contacts:** a monitored shared mailbox plus a named backup.
- **Unresolved fields:** list with owner and due date.
- **Escalation:** registrar first, then CIRA support, which directs most requests to the registrar.

Quote worksheet (placeholders)

Record separately, with taxes and renewal changes shown on their own lines: domain registration price, renewal price, privacy add-on price, mail or address service price, and any identity-verification fee. Registrars set their own prices, and one registrar's help page lists a privacy add-on at $10.00 per domain per year without stating currency or taxes (www.webnames.ca), so no benchmark is assumed here.

French field glossary and bilingual request

These French terms are working translations for use with a Quebec registrar, not official CIRA wording. The Quebec register terms below come from provincial sources.

- **Registrant:** titulaire (du nom de domaine).
- **Administrative contact:** personne-ressource administrative.
- **Registrar / reseller:** bureau d'enregistrement / revendeur.
- **Canadian Presence Requirements category:** catégorie d'exigences de présence au Canada.
- **Authorization code:** code d'autorisation (code de transfert).
- **Elected domicile:** domicile élu, the address to which documents must be sent (quebec.ca).
- **Enterprise register:** registre des entreprises; anyone may consult it (www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca).

> **EN:** Please confirm in writing, for the .CA domain [domain], registered to [legal name] under the CPR category [category]: (1) who is the registrant of record; (2) whether privacy is available for this category and which fields it hides; (3) who the administrative contact is; (4) how to update contacts without changing the owner.
>
> **FR :** Veuillez confirmer par écrit, pour le domaine .CA [domaine], enregistré au nom de [dénomination sociale] dans la catégorie [catégorie] : (1) qui est le titulaire inscrit; (2) si la confidentialité est offerte pour cette catégorie et quels champs elle masque; (3) qui est la personne-ressource administrative; (4) comment mettre à jour les coordonnées sans changer de titulaire.

Data Analysis and Evidence

The quantitative evidence is mostly context, because no primary source cited here measures how many Quebec business registrants use registrar privacy. The figures that are firm come from the registry and the government.

- **Registry scale:** the 3,426,339 domains and 0.98% growth cited in the Introduction, from CIRA's FY2025 annual report.
- **Employer businesses (ISED):** 1.10 million in Canada in December 2024 (ised-isde.canada.ca), with 410,154 small employer businesses in Ontario and 228,622 in Quebec (ised-isde.canada.ca), where a small business means 1 to 99 paid employees (ised-isde.canada.ca).
- **Wholesale and retail pricing:** Retail prices are set by registrars, so no fee benchmark is assumed. One registrar's help page lists a privacy add-on at $10.00 per domain per year, without stating currency or taxes (www.webnames.ca), and another says individuals' privacy is free (help.whc.ca).
- **Timelines:** the RIV sequence is set out in Step 7; the Quebec register's general update deadline is 30 days from a change (www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca), while a federal registered office change must be notified within 15 days (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca).

The takeaway is that deadlines differ by record (15 days federally, 30 days in Quebec, business days and a suspension period at CIRA), so one address change can leave several registers out of step. Counts of sole proprietors with a domain, or of registrants using registrar privacy, are not published in the primary sources cited here and are not estimated here.

Implications and Future Directions

Three implications follow. First, ownership clarity is cheaper before a dispute than after one. A registrar cannot be asked to move a domain to a different owner without the process described by CIRA, and a registrant change needs a prospective registrant who qualifies. Second, Quebec's privacy-law context is shifting responsibility to the business itself: the Commission d'accès à l'information says the contact details of the person in charge of personal information must be published, including on the business website (www.cai.gouv.qc.ca), so a business website will carry at least one named contact regardless of WHOIS privacy. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner notes that Quebec has its own private-sector law deemed substantially similar to PIPEDA (www.priv.gc.ca), and PIPEDA itself excludes business contact information used only to communicate with the individual (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). Third, because registrar guidance diverges, a date-stamped worksheet is more robust than a rule of thumb. If CIRA or a registrar updates its wording, the worksheet should be re-run and its date refreshed.

Future changes are unknown. Registry display rules have changed before and the Privacy Policy version published on CIRA's site is the 2020 one, so owners should re-check the live lookup on each renewal and each address change rather than rely on this report's snapshot.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Who owns my .ca domain name for a Quebec company? The registrant of record, which for a company is the organization named on the record, subject to the agreement that a name is not property. Registrars that sell privacy state that the customer remains the registrant (register.ca).

How do I check the .CA registrant? Search the CIRA lookup. Non-individual registrants display their name and administrative and technical contacts by default; individuals show a privacy notice. Namecheap likewise says non-individuals must show full registrant information (www.namecheap.com).

What are CIRA's Canadian presence requirements for a company? It must be a corporation under the laws of Canada or a province or territory, and it must keep meeting the requirement.

Is WHOIS privacy available for a .CA corporation? CIRA's FAQ says registrars may offer it; some registrars state it is unavailable (ionos.ca). Ask for a written answer; one registrar says it is off by default and only exceptionally activated.

Can I change the registrant of a .CA domain? Yes, through the registrar, with an eligible incoming registrant, and registrars run their own procedures (helpdesk.webnames.ca).

Can I use a business address on a .CA registration? A correspondence address is a contact detail, not a category; it does not create eligibility, and Quebec and federal registers publish their own addresses (www.quebec.ca) (ised-isde.canada.ca).

Can a virtual office address be used for a .CA domain? It can serve as a lawful correspondence address where its terms allow, subject to the limits in Table 3. Quebec does not accept a post-office box as a business address in the professional-address context (quebec.ca), and Corporations Canada's Form 3 requires a street address for a registered office (ised-isde.canada.ca). It cannot replace incorporation or hide public records.

How do I transfer a .CA domain to my company? Tell the registrar you want to transfer ownership; procedures vary by registrar (helpdesk.webnames.ca); take legal advice first.

Which CIRA lookup field should I trust? The live lookup plus the registrar account; a WHOIS entry is not evidence of ownership by itself.

Conclusion

The question "who owns my .CA domain" reduces to four checkable facts: the registrant of record, the CPR category and its proof, the contacts that will receive notices, and the fields the public lookup displays. A corporation qualifies as a corporation under Canadian or provincial law, displays its registrant name and administrative and technical contacts by default, and may or may not be offered a registrar privacy product, depending on the provider. A monitored business address, such as one from a Montreal provider, solves a correspondence problem and not an eligibility or public-record problem. Keep the owner as the legal entity, document the evidence, test the live result, and re-check each renewal.

Source links

Links cited in this article, in order of first appearance. Full addresses are provided for readers using extracted text.

1. https://www.cira.ca/en/resources/documents/domains/registrant-agreement
2. https://www.cira.ca/en/resources/news/domains/domain-registration-tips-cira-whois-privacy
3. https://www.cira.ca/en/ca-domains/whois
4. https://www.canspace.ca/clients/knowledgebase/5/How-do-I-change-WHOIS-privacy-options.html
5. https://register.ca/en/support/manage/privacy.html
6. https://www.webnames.ca/privacy
7. https://www.cira.ca/en/resources/documents/domains/canadian-presence-requirements-registrants
8. https://quebec.ca/en/businesses-and-self-employed-workers/find-information-about-enterprise/search-enterprise-register/description-information-file
9. https://www.quebec.ca/en/businesses-and-self-employed-workers/find-information-about-enterprise/search-enterprise-register/about
10. https://www.cira.ca/uploads/2025/08/cira-annual-report_en_250815.pdf
11. https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/sme-research-statistics/en/node/439
12. https://www.cira.ca/en/support
13. https://www.namecheap.com/support/knowledgebase/article.aspx/243/36/ca-domain-registration-requirements
14. https://register.ca/en/support/manage/changecontact.html
15. https://www.webnames.ca/help/faq/content/resources/articles/domains/domain_ownership/registrant_contact_info_update.htm
16. https://www.cira.ca/en/legal-policy-and-compliance/canadian-presence-requirements
17. https://help.whc.ca/en/articles/618608-how-to-add-privacy-protection-to-a-domain-name
18. https://www.quebec.ca/en/businesses-and-self-employed-workers/start-entreprise/register-constitute-enterprise/register-constitute-enterprise-legal-form/foreign-enterprise/register-foreign-legal-person

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22. https://www.icann.org/en/contracted-parties/registry-operators/resources/registration-data-access-protocol
23. https://www.cira.ca/en/privacy-policy
24. https://www.canspace.ca/domains.html
25. https://www.webnames.ca/help/domains/content/resources/articles/webnames_account/security_products_overview.htm
26. https://whc.ca/legal/domains
27. https://www.godaddy.com/en-ca/help/registering-a-ca-domain-19994
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29. https://support.hover.com/support/solutions/articles/201000064738-domain-whois-privacy
30. https://register.ca/local/html/domain_pricing.htm
31. https://www.namecheap.com/support/knowledgebase/article.aspx/1014/36/how-do-i-change-the-registrant-whois-information-for-ca-domains
32. https://www.quebec.ca/entreprises-et-travailleurs-autonomes/demarrer-entreprise/immatriculer-constituer-entreprise/nouvelles-obligations-transparence/adresse-professionnelle
33. https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/corporations-canada/en/business-corporations/next-steps-following-incorporation-your-business
34. https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/corporations-canada/en/business-corporations/public-disclosure-corporate-information
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38. https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/canadian-intellectual-property-office/en/trademarks/trademarks-guide
39. https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/corporations-canada/sites/default/files/attachments/2023/FRM-3-e.pdf
40. https://www.canadapost-postescanada.ca/cpc/en/small-business/rent-post-office-box.page
41. https://www.canadapost-postescanada.ca/cpc/en/support/kb/company-policies/terms-conditions/commercial-po-box-terms-and-conditions.page
42. https://www.cira.ca/en/resources/documents/domains/general-registration-rules
43. https://helpdesk.webnames.ca/help/domains/content/resources/articles/domains/domain_transfers/change_ownership__registrant_transfer_/change_ownership__registrant_transfer_.htm
44. https://www.cira.ca/en/legal-policy-and-compliance/registrant-information-validation
45. https://www.cai.gouv.qc.ca/protection-renseignements-personnels/information-entreprises-privees/responsable-protection-renseignements-personnels-entreprise
46. https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/privacy-laws-in-canada/the-personal-information-protection-and-electronic-documents-act-pipeda/pipeda_brief
47. https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/p-8.6/FullText.html

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A workspace that fits the day

Our workspace options include private offices, day passes and desks, and a conference room. These formats help individuals and teams compare a dedicated office with more flexible ways to work or hold a meeting. Prospective members can explore the virtual tour, review current pricing and book a visit before choosing a workspace.

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2727 Coworking provides business-address and virtual-mailbox services. Our resources explain the documents and practical questions involved, including guidance for people outside Canada. Service eligibility, included features, availability and access arrangements should be confirmed on the applicable service page or with our team.

Resources for Canadian small businesses

We publish guides, research and planning tools about workspace decisions, business addresses and starting a business in Canada. Our incorporation research includes information for people inside Canada and abroad, with jurisdiction-specific material to help readers identify the next questions to investigate. These educational resources complement our workspace and address services; they are not individualized legal, tax or immigration advice.

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A business address alone does not establish tax residence, immigration status, banking approval or eligibility for a government program.

Website: https://2727coworking.com

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