

Ideally, the name of a non-profit corporation should consist of a distinctive element and a descriptive element:

Example: “Winnipeg Friendship Centre Inc.”

Winnipeg = distinctive element

Friendship Centre = descriptive element

Distinctive Element

The distinctive element serves to differentiate names having identical or similar descriptive elements.

Names such as “THE COMMUNITY CLUB INC.” and “FOOD BANK INC.” lack an appropriate distinctive element, and for that reason, would be rejected.

They would, however, be acceptable, if they included a distinctive element such as “THE COMMUNITY CLUB OF **WINNIPEG** INC.” and “**WINNIPEG** FOOD BANK INC.”. Consider how original the distinctive part of your corporate name is (e.g., is the distinctive portion common, such as Winnipeg, Canadian or Western).

Descriptive Element

The descriptive element is useful in describing the undertaking of the corporation. It allows for the use of identical or similar distinctive elements, which might be desirable in developing a particular presence in the marketplace.

Example - “BRANDON FOOD BANK INC.” and “FRIENDSHIP CENTRE OF BRANDON INC.”

Legal Element

Non-profit corporations must have a legal element or abbreviation thereof, as the last word in the name.

- Incorporated or Inc.
- Corporation or Corp.

Note: A corporate name does not have to contain both a distinctive and a descriptive part. Sometimes a corporate name may contain only a distinctive element and a legal element. These names may be difficult to obtain, as the name will be rejected if that word is already contained in another company name.

Numbered Names

If you want to carry on the undertaking in Manitoba under a numbered name (i.e. 12345678 MANITOBA ASSOCIATION INC.), a Request for Name Reservation is not required.

Punctuation Marks

Only the following punctuation marks are permitted: ! “ \$ % & ‘ () * + , - . / : ; < = > ? [] \

Family Names (Surname)

A corporate name may contain a family name, but the name cannot be a surname alone (e.g., Reynolds). When a corporate name contains a surname of an individual, the individual must be a director, officer or incorporator or provide consent.

Initials in a Name

Where a corporate name is made up entirely of initials, at least three letters are required with a legal element (e.g., ABF Incorporated).

Manitoba

The word Manitoba can be used as the first word of a non-profit corporation.

Prohibited Names

The name of a non-profit corporation may not:

- Contain obscene terms, vulgar expressions, racial slurs, or and expressions that suggests a business that is obscene, scandalous or immoral.
- Imply a connection with the Crown, members of the Royal Family, Government of Canada or Government of Manitoba, unless a consent from the appropriate authority is received.

Other Factors to Consider

The Companies Office considers many factors when deciding whether a name is too similar to name already on record. This includes:

Sound - Do the names sound the same even though they are spelled differently (e.g., Knight, Night and Nite)?

Nature of Business - Are the organizations in similar lines of business?

Location - Are the organizations located in the same city, town or area of the province?

Bilingual Names

If the proposed name is a bilingual name that are:

- **Visually similar**, then only one Name Reservation is required.
Example – “COLE LIMITED / COLE LIMITEE” or “ABC ENTERPRISES LTD. / LES ENTREPRISES ABC LTEE.”
- **Visually dissimilar**, then two separate Name Reservations are required with a fee for each name Example – “SISTER CLEVEMONT HEALTH PLAN INC. / PLAN SANTE SOEUR CLEVEMONT INC.”