

NEW gTLD PROGRAM: 2026 ROUND

gTLD

# Objections and Appeals

19 May 2026 | 14:00-15:00 UTC

26 May 2026 | 06:00-07:00 UTC



# Readiness Content Disclaimer

The authoritative source for all information about New gTLD Program: 2026 Round rules, evaluations, restrictions, processes, and systems is the English version of the [New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook](#). All New gTLD Program: 2026 Round readiness and training content is supplementary to the Applicant Guidebook, and has been developed to provide a high-level summary of key topic areas of interest to prospective applicants and the broader ICANN community. In case of discrepancy, the Applicant Guidebook prevails.

**NEW gTLD PROGRAM: 2026 ROUND**

**01**

# **Welcome and Introduction**

# Agenda

1. [Welcome and Introduction](#)
2. [Context](#)
3. [Overview](#)
4. [Objection Grounds](#)
5. [Processes and Timelines](#)
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**NEW gTLD PROGRAM: 2026 ROUND**

**02**

**Context**

# New gTLD Program: 2026 Round

## What is the 2026 Round?

An ICANN community-driven initiative that enables the continued **expansion of the Domain Name System** by allowing eligible parties to **apply for generic top-level domains (gTLDs)**.

## Who is eligible to apply?

**Legal entities** including businesses, organizations, and institutions as well as governmental, nongovernmental, and intergovernmental entities.

## When are applications submitted?

Applications can be submitted between 30 April and 12 August 2026.

## How much does it cost to apply?

The gTLD evaluation fee is **USD 227,000** + conditional fees, where applicable.

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# April 2026 - June 2027 Projected Application Timeline

*\*Projected timeline based on 2,000 applications received. Estimations will be updated once the number of applications is publicly shared. A number of factors may have an impact on the timeline.*



**2026 Round Opens:**  
TAMS is open for application submissions. **30 APR 2026**



**Reveal Day:** ICANN publishes the list of all applications that have passed the administrative check.



**String Confirmation Day:** ICANN publishes the list of applications and initial contention sets.

**String Evaluation begins:** String evaluations on safeguard, string similarity, geographic names identification, singular/plural, and name collision begin.



**Prioritization Draw:** A priority number is assigned to each application.



**String Evaluation Reports:** ICANN Publishes reports inclusive of the five string evaluation components.



**30 APR - 12 AUG 2026 (104 days)**  
**Application Submission Period:** Applicants submit applications via TAMS.

**OCT - NOV 2026\* (14 days)**  
**String Replacement Period:** Applicants may replace their original string with their replacement string.

**NOV - DEC 2026\* (30 days)**  
**Singular/Plural Notifications:** The general public may submit singular/plural notifications.

**NOV 2026 - FEB 2027\* (104 days)**  
**Application Comment Period:** The general public may submit comments via the Application Comment Forum (ACF), which may be taken into account by evaluators.  
**GAC Member Early Warnings:** GAC Members and Observers may submit Early Warnings.  
**Objections Filing Period:** Parties with standing may file objections.

**JUN 2027\* (30 days)**  
**String Confusion Objections**

**GAC Consensus Advice** can be issued at any time throughout the application process.

# Community Input, Objections, and Appeals

The ICANN community and interested members of the public have an opportunity to provide input on new gTLD applications after String Confirmation Day.

Application Comments	GAC Member Early Warning	GAC Consensus Advice	Singular / Plural Notifications	Objections
<p><b>Purpose</b> Bring issues to the attention of ICANN, applicants and evaluators</p> <p><b>Who?</b> Anyone</p> <p><b>Duration</b> Opens on String Confirmation Day for duration of program; comments within 104 days or 30 days of specific change requests available to evaluators</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> No direct impact on applications but may be considered by evaluators</p>	<p><b>Purpose</b> Early indication that an application is potentially problematic for one or more governments</p> <p><b>Who?</b> GAC Members and Observers</p> <p><b>Duration</b> 104 days</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> No direct impact on application but signal that it could become subject of GAC Consensus Advice</p>	<p><b>Purpose</b> Provide advice to ICANN Board, including related to applications which are sensitive or violate national law</p> <p><b>Who?</b> GAC</p> <p><b>Duration</b> Any time</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> The Board makes a decision as to whether the application can proceed, cannot proceed, or can only proceed with modifications</p>	<p><b>Purpose</b> Identifies if an applied-for string is the singular or plural form of another applied-for string, a delegated TLD, a string being processed from a previous new gTLD round, or a Blocked Name</p> <p><b>Who?</b> Anyone</p> <p><b>Duration</b> 30 days</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> Triggers Singular/plural Evaluation, may prevent application from proceeding</p>	<p><b>Purpose</b> Object to application on grounds of 1) String Confusion 2) Legal Rights 3) Limited Public Interest or 4) Community</p> <p><b>Who?</b> Parties with standing</p> <p><b>Duration</b> 104 days</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> The Panel <b>will determine</b> whether the application can proceed, cannot proceed, or can only proceed with modifications</p>

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**03**

# **Overview**

**DRSP** = Dispute Resolution Service Provider  
**WIPO** = World Intellectual Property Organization  
**ICC** = International Chamber of Commerce

# Objections

## What's an objection?

An objection filed with a DRSP in accordance with its procedures

## Who administers objections?

- DRSPs** appointed by ICANN:
- String Confusion: [WIPO](#)
  - Legal Rights: [WIPO](#)
  - Limited Public Interest: [ICC](#)
  - Community: [ICC](#)

## When can objections be filed?

- For 104 days, for all Objection grounds, starting on String Confirmation Day
- For 30 days, for String Confusion only, following the publication of updated contention sets once String Evaluation has been completed
- For 30 days, for all objections grounds, in case of .Brand String Change, starting on the day the String Evaluation Reports are published, and only if the string evaluation is successful

## Are there costs associated with objections?

**Yes** - Payments are to be made directly to the DRSPs

**Filing fees**, to be paid by:

- The objector at the time of submitting its objection
- The respondent/applicant at the time of submitting its response to the objection

**Advance payment**, to be paid by both parties if the relevant objection passes the Quick Look Review

**Additional costs**, to be paid by both parties in extraordinary circumstances

## On which grounds can objections be filed?

- String Confusion
- Legal Rights
- Limited Public Interest
- Community

## Who can file an objection?

Members of the general public, including other applicants, provided they have standing

# Appeals

## What's an appeal?

A mechanism that allows for relevant parties to appeal an Objection Panel Determination

## Who administers appeals?

The same DRSPs that administered objections, but a different panel

## On which claims can appeals be filed?

The relevant Objection Panel:

1. Failed to follow the established Procedure;
2. Failed to consider or solicit necessary material evidence or information submitted by the Parties;
3. Both 1 and 2

...and as a result, the appellant should have prevailed in the relevant objection proceeding

## Are there costs associated with appeals?

**Yes** - Payments are to be made directly to the DRSPs

**Filing fee**, to be paid by:

- The appellant at the time of submitting its appeal
- The respondent at the time of submitting its response to the objection

**Advance payment**, to be paid by both parties if the relevant appeal passes the Quick Look Review

**Additional costs**, to be paid by both parties in extraordinary circumstances

## When can appeals be filed?

Notice of Appeal to be filed within 15 days of the Panel Determination

Appeal to be filed within 15 days of the Notice of Appeal

## Who can file an appeal?

The **non-prevailing party** to an objection

# Funding Opportunities

ICANN offers funding possibilities to cover the costs for objections and appeals payable to the DRSP subject to specific requirements to:

- **National governments**, to fund one objection and one appeal.
- To the **At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC)**, contingent on the publication by ALAC of its approved process

*More information will be published on the New gTLD Program website*

## Independent Objectors

- Standing panel of 3 individuals or entities selected by ICANN not acting on behalf of any particular persons or entities, but solely **in the best interests of the public** who use the global Internet
- May only file **Limited Public Interest** and **Community** objections
- Must consider **application comments** and shall not object to an application unless at least **one comment opposing the application** has been made
- Will not have their objection considered if another objection on the same ground has passed the Quick Look Review, absent extraordinary circumstances
- Will only file objections in the **111 days** following String Confirmation Day
- **May appeal** the relevant Panel Determinations

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# 04 Objection Grounds

WIPO

ICC

String Confusion

Legal Rights

Limited Public Interest

Community

The applied-for primary string, its allocatable variant label, or its blocked variant label is **confusingly similar visually, aurally, or in meaning** to an existing TLD and/or another applied-for primary gTLD string and/or any of its allocatable or blocked variant strings

An applied-for string and/or one or more applied-for allocatable variant string(s) **infringes on its existing legal rights**

The applied-for string and/or one or more applied-for allocatable variant string(s) are **contrary to generally accepted legal norms of morality and public order** recognized under principles of international law

There is **well-substantiated opposition** to an applied-for string and/or one or more applied-for allocatable variant string(s) from a **significant portion of the community** which the string may be **explicitly or implicitly targeting**

- An existing gTLD operator
- An existing ccTLD operator or a Significantly Interested Party in the respective country or territory
- An applicant in this application round

- A rights holder
- An IGO meeting criteria for registration of .INT domain name

- Anyone

- Established institutions associated with clearly delineated communities

## What are the potential **Objection** outcomes?

<b>Applicant prevails</b>	The application can proceed.
<b>Objector prevails</b>	The application cannot proceed, it enters a contention set, or certain variant strings have to be removed from the application.
<b>Application can only proceed with modifications</b>	The application cannot proceed unless agreement is reached on a new or modified RVC that is approved by ICANN.
<b>Other scenarios</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The application is withdrawn or terminated</li><li>- The objection is withdrawn or dismissed on procedural grounds</li></ul>

## What are the potential **Objection** outcomes by grounds?

### String Confusion

#### **If the objector prevails:**

- Where the objector is another applicant, both the applicant's and objector's applied-for strings and their variant strings (if applicable) must be placed in the contention set
- Where the objector is an existing gTLD operator, an existing ccTLD operator, or a Significantly Interested Party in the respective country or territory, the application is ineligible to proceed to the next stage of the application process

**If the objector does not prevail**, that application may proceed to the next stage of the application process, unless other processes prevent it from proceeding

### Legal Rights, Limited Public Interest, Community

**If an objection against an applied-for primary string prevails**, that application is ineligible to proceed to the next stage of the application process

**If an objection prevails against one or more applied-for allocatable variant strings**, the application for the primary string and any unaffected allocatable variant strings may proceed to the next stage, excluding the variant strings that have been rendered ineligible by the objection

**If the objection does not prevail**, that application may proceed to the next stage of the application process, unless other processes prevent it from proceeding

**The panel might determine that an application cannot proceed** unless a new or modified RVC that is approved by ICANN is included in the applicable Registry Agreement

## What are the potential **Appeal** outcomes?

### Respondent prevails

The Objection Panel Determination is upheld.

### Appellant prevails

The Appellate Panel Determination substitutes the Objection Panel Determination.

### Other scenarios

- The application is withdrawn or terminated
- The appeal is withdrawn or dismissed on procedural grounds

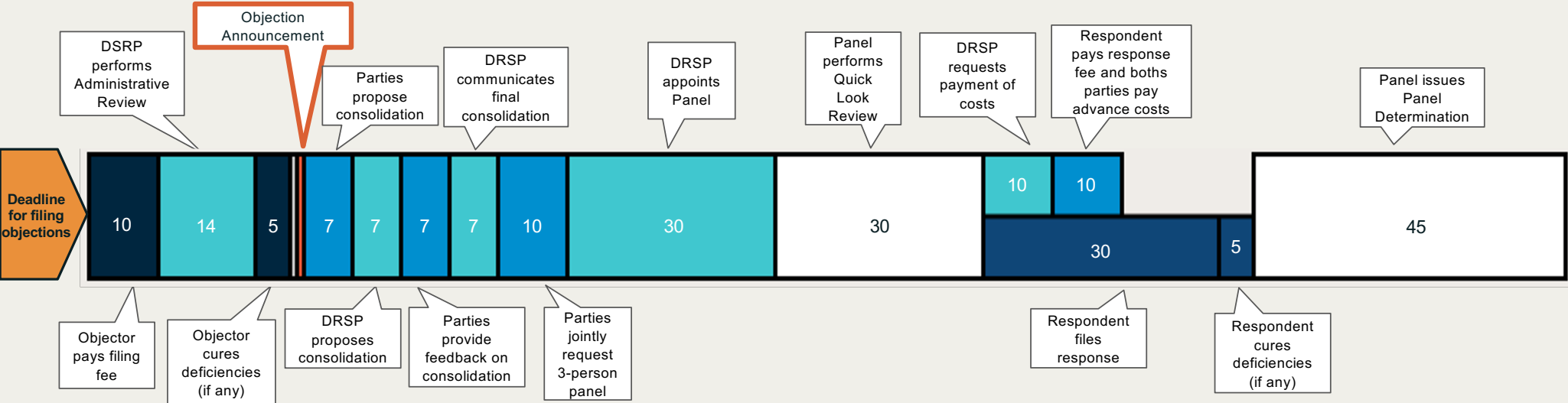
*Note that this slide was updated following the delivery of the webinars as the original slide was not accurate.*

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**05**

# **Processes and Timelines**

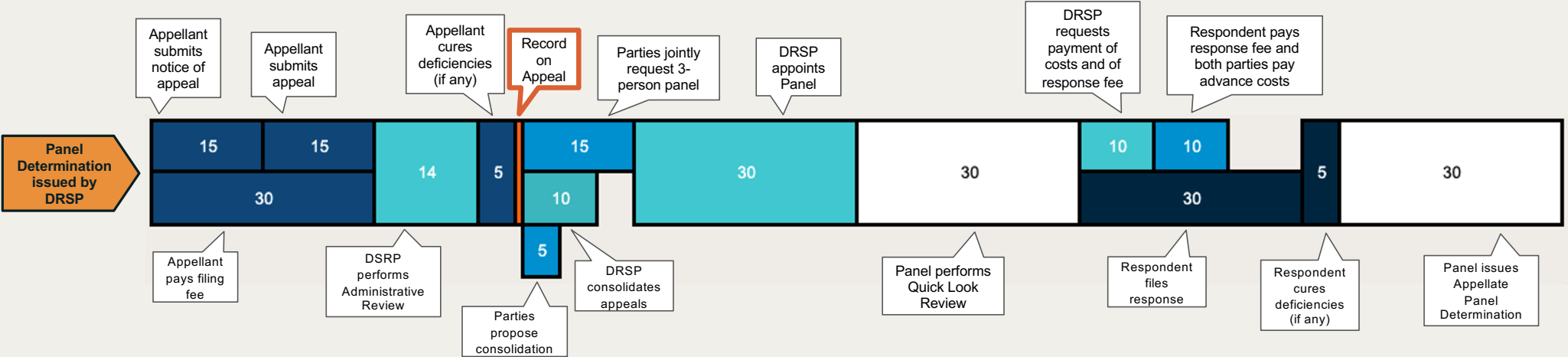
# Timeline for Objections



- Objector
- Applicant/Respondent
- Both Parties
- DRSP
- Panel
- Milestone

***Note:** This is a simplified overview indicating the maximum number of days each process should take, absent extraordinary circumstances. The actual timelines are subject to change based on a number of factors, including, but not limited to, particularly complex cases and the request of cooling-off periods and virtual hearings.*

# Timeline for Appeals



- Respondent
- Appellant
- Both Parties
- DRSP
- Panel
- Milestone

*Note: This is a simplified overview indicating the maximum number of days each process should take, absent extraordinary circumstances. The actual timelines are subject to change based on a number of factors, including, but not limited to, particularly complex cases.*

Objections	Appeals
The <b>Administrative Review</b> is performed by the DRSP and verifies compliance with procedural rules	
Objections/appeals may be <b>consolidated</b>	
The parties may request to have a 3-person <b>panel</b> , the default being one-person	
The <b>Quick Look Review</b> is performed by the Panel and determines whether an objection/appeal is manifestly unfounded, an abuse of the right to object, or both	
Applicants <b>must respond</b> to objections	Respondents <b>may elect to respond</b> to appeals
The Panel may request to hold <b>hearings</b> or provide <b>additional evidence</b>	N/A
The parties may elect to request a <b>cooling off period</b> , participate in <b>mediation</b> , and/or <b>settle</b>	N/A
The parties will have to make payments and submit required information within specified <b>deadlines</b>	
<b>Costs</b> are borne by the non-prevailing party	

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# 06 Readiness

# Reference Materials

- [New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook](#)
  - [Section 4.5 Objections and Appeals](#)
  - [Appendix 3 Materials Related to Objections and Appeals](#)
- **DRSP Rules**
  - WIPO | [String Confusion](#)
  - WIPO | [Legal Rights](#)
  - ICC | [Limited Public Interest](#)
  - ICC | [Community](#)

# Key Applicant Resources

## New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook

The authoritative document outlining the rules and procedures of the 2026 Round.

## New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Website

Source of 2026 Round news, announcements, information, and resources such as Key Topic Overviews, FAQs, system guides, micro videos and more.

## New gTLD Program Webinars

Register for future webinars, or access recordings of past events.

## Applicant Readiness Pathway

Curated learning resources organized by phases and learning outcomes to ensure a baseline understanding of ICANN and the DNS, plus in-depth discovery of the Applicant Journey, and tools for using TAMS.

## Topic Overviews and Other Resources

- [Community Input](#)
- [Objections and Appeals](#)
- [GAC Early Warning and Consensus Advice](#)
- [2026 Round Resources page](#)

## ICANN Global Support

Dedicated ICANN team available to answer inquiries and provide support throughout the application process.  
[globalsupport@icann.org](mailto:globalsupport@icann.org)

# Objections and Appeals Webinars

 Join our webinars!	Time 14:00-15:00 UTC	Time 06:00-07:00 UTC
<b>ICANN</b> General Overview	Tue, May 19	Tue, May 26
<b>WIPO</b>   World Intellectual Property Organization String Confusion, Legal Rights	Wed, May 20	Wed, May 27
<b>ICC</b>   International Chamber of Commerce Limited Public Interest, Community	Thu, May 21	Thu, May 28

**Register here**

<https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/resources/webinarspresentations/2026>

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# 07 Q&A

## NEW gTLD PROGRAM: 2026 ROUND

gTLD

# Thank you for your participation.

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