

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ETHICS
Alaska State Legislature**

THE ADVISOR

March 2007

Committee Members: Chair H. Conner Thomas, Senator Gary Stevens, Senator Con Bunde, Representative Bob Roses, Representative Berta Gardner, Dennis “Skip” Cook, Ann Rabinowitz, Gary J. Turner and Herman G. Walker Jr.

Alternate Legislative Members: Senator Hollis French, Senator Gary Wilken, Representative Carl Gatto and Representative Lindsey Holmes.

Staff: Joyce Anderson

QUOTE OF THE MONTH: “The purpose of ethics laws, first and foremost, lies in promoting both the reality and perceptions of integrity in government.”

Mark Davies quoted in Government Ethics and Law Enforcement: Toward Global Guidelines (2000).

***** DISCLOSURES *****

KEEP IN MIND: The requirement to file a disclosure applies to legislators, legislative staff, LAA staff, employees of the Office of the Ombudsman and Office of Victim’s Rights.

The following DISCLOSURES are due Thursday, March 15.
(Note: You may file a disclosure any time prior to the filing date.)

Thursday, March 15 deadline applies:

If the association/participation occurred during the last 30 days of the previous regular session or if during the interim.

- **Membership on a Board of Directors** - AS 24.60.030(f) – Are you an officer or board member of an organization that may have substantial interest in legislative matters?
- **Participation in Certain State Benefit and Loan Programs** - AS 24.60.050(c)(d) - Do you presently or did you during the interim have an outstanding benefit or loan amount administered through the state? Disclosure depends on award criteria. Call the ethics office to determine if you must disclose.
- **Representation Before a State Agency** - AS 24.60.100 - Are you on contract/agreement to represent a client before a State agency, board or commission?
- **Interests in State Contracts and Leases (including certain family members)** - AS 24.60.040 – Do you or any immediate family members have a contract or lease through the State with an annual value of \$5000 or more?
- **Close Economic Associations** - AS 24.60.070 – Is there a financial relationship between you and a person covered by the Legislative Ethics Code (i.e., legislators, legislative directors, legislative employees if one supervises the other, other public officials who must file a Financial Disclosure with APOC, and registered lobbyists)? Examples: share housing expenses, business partners, or a paid consultant on a legislator’s campaign.

The following disclosure is due annually by **Thursday, March 15** which covers the previous calendar year.

- **Gifts Not Connected with Legislative Status** - AS 24.60.080(c)(6) – Have you received a gift(s) worth more than \$250 in a calendar year from the same person/entity other than an immediate family member?

The following disclosures are always due **within 30 days of receipt of the gift.**

- **Gift of Travel/Hospitality for Legislative Matters** - AS 24.60.080(c)(4) – Have you taken a trip for legislative matters which was paid with funds other than legislative funds?
- **Gift Received by Family Member Because of Legislative Connection** – AS 24.60.080(i) - Did an immediate family receive a gift worth \$250 or more because of your legislative connection? For example, did a family member accompany you to a conference and some or all of the costs associated with the conference were paid

for by an organization/entity.

Did an immediate family member receive a gift that is prohibited under the gift statute? For example, did a family receive a gift (other than food and beverage for immediate consumption or a ticket to a pre-approved charity event) from a lobbyist during the legislative session. If so, the gift must be disclosed regardless of the amount.

- **Gift of Legal Services Related to Legislative Matters - AS 24.60.080(c)(8)** – Did you receive a gift of legal services related to legislative matters worth \$250 or more?
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Must be delivered to Legislative Council within 60 days.

- **Gift from Another Government – AS 24.60.080(f)** – Have you received a gift from another government or official from another government worth \$250 or more?
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IMPORTANT: Fines are levied for late disclosures. The fine is \$2.00 per day up to a maximum of \$100. Committee policy has been to allow for one late disclosure before levying fines. A late disclosure is a “one time only” waiver.

- The forms for all disclosures are on the ethics website www.legis.state.ak.us (click on Ethics and then Disclosures).
 - Please give the Ethics Office a call if you have questions about what to disclose or when the disclosure is due.
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When completing disclosures, please keep in mind:

- 1. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY OR TYPE YOUR DISCLOSURE INFORMATION. Remember, the Ethics Office and the Senate Secretary or House Clerk must be able to read the information on your disclosure form.**
- 2. An original copy of the disclosure is not required. A fax copy is acceptable. Keep the original in your Ethics file for future reference if needed.**
- 3. Please complete all required information. Remember, these are public disclosures and the public has a right to know.**
- 4. Under the ‘address’ section for the discloser, keep in mind if you list your home address, your home address will be printed in the Legislative Journal. It is appropriate to list your legislative office address.**

TRAVEL/HOSPITALITY disclosures:

1. The purpose of the trip must include the location of the meeting/conference/etc.
2. The purpose of the trip needs to be more specific than “legislative information fact gathering.” What was the topic of the fact-gathering meeting?
3. Also, if attending a conference, please spell out the name of the organization. An acronym may be familiar to you but not to the public.
4. Remember to include the address of the donor on the form and the occupation of the organization.
5. **IMPORTANT:** Travel/hospitality disclosures are due within 30 days of receipt of the gift. The committee considers “receipt of the gift” the day the funds are received or the day the conference/meeting begins and not the date reimbursement is received.

APRIL 3RD STATEWIDE ADVISORY VOTE

The Ethics Office has received many calls asking what is appropriate to include in a constituent newsletter or other communications concerning the April 3 statewide advisory vote and what are the parameters on the use of government resources for informing the public about this issue.

1. Action to support or oppose an advisory vote is related to the duties of the legislature.
2. Legislators need to hear from their constituents and others concerning public issues. In carrying out this dialogue, a legislator may use state resources. Some examples are listed below:
 - Direct staff to conduct research.
 - Communications may take any form including individual letters, mass mailings, brochures, or handouts and any other written or electronic communication.
 - Personal appearances in the media and at events and gatherings.
 - Attend public functions and direct staff to attend on their behalf to both gather and present information.

3. Legislators may include in their communications information on their position concerning the April 3 advisory vote.
4. Legislators may also include in their communications a statement encouraging participation in the public process of voting by supplying the date of the election, the hours the polls are open and the number to call to obtain more information on the process of voting. Do not include a statement such as “Vote (Yes or No) on April 3.” This type of statement would be considered campaigning.
5. State resources may not be used to solicit contributions in support of or opposition to the advisory vote.
6. The ethics code does not prohibit legislators or legislative staff from engaging in campaign activity on their own time and without the use of state resources; i.e., soliciting contributions to a campaign either in support of or opposition to the advisory vote.

Please give the Ethics Office a call if you have any questions concerning disclosures.

Ethics Committee Office
716 West 4th Avenue, Suite 230
Anchorage AK 99501
Mail: P.O. Box 101468, Anchorage AK 99510-1468
Phone: 269-0150 Fax: 269-0152
Pouch: Ethics/Anch LIO
www.legis.state.ak.us (click on Ethics)
<http://ethics.legis.state.ak.us>
Email: ethics_committee@legis.state.ak.us