



THE ADVISOR

*The Legislative Ethics Act has, as an inspirational goal,
to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.*



SELECT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ETHICS

MARCH 2020

Campaign Fundraising Prohibition

Remember that AS 24.60.031(a) and (b) prohibit campaign fundraising

...on a day when either house of the legislature is in regular or special session, solicit or accept a contribution or a promise or pledge to make a contribution...

Check for and remove donation language and payment buttons from your campaign websites during session.

Contact the Ethics Office for further details at
907-269-0150 or Ethics.Committee@akleg.gov

True or False

A legislative staffer may on government time make a reservation for a legislator to attend a partisan political event.

See page 3 for the answer.

Committee Members

Lee Holmes, Chair
H. Conner Thomas
Skip Cook
Deb Fancher
Joyce M. Anderson
Sen John Coghill
Sen Tom Begich
Rep Louise Stutes
Rep DeLena Johnson

Staff

Jerry D. Anderson,
Administrator
269-0150

Jacqui Yeagle,
Admin Assistant
269-8179



The Select Committee on Legislative Ethics has an alternate public member vacancy.

Public members are selected by the Chief Justice of the Alaska Supreme Court and ratified by two thirds of the full membership of the legislature. Public members serve a three-year term.

Apply to be an alternate public member of the committee by sending a letter of interest along with a resume to Chief Justice Joel Bolger, Alaska Supreme Court, 303 K St., Anchorage, AK 99501. Include your political party affiliation as noted on your voter registration on file with the Alaska Division of Elections.

Learn more about the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics at <http://ethics.akleg.gov/>.

In This Issue

- ◆ Campaign Fundraising Prohibitions
- ◆ Alternate Public Member Vacancy
- ◆ Legislative Purpose Test
- ◆ Disclosure Filing
- ◆ Campaign Communications & Use of State Funds
- ◆ Contact the Ethics Office

Legislative Purpose Test

Before taking action or accepting a gift of travel, ask yourself:

- What is the legislative purpose of my action?
- Is the activity or service necessary to perform my official duties?

If not, do not take action or accept a gift of travel.

Remember:

- There is no definition of “legislative purpose” in the Legislative Ethics Act.
- Each situation may need to be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Several statutes and formal advisory opinions provide guidance.
- Contact the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 or Ethics.Committee@akleg.gov for more information.



APOC Legislative Financial Disclosures

Attention Legislators and Legislative Directors:

Your annual Legislative Financial Disclosure (AS 24.60.200) is due to APOC by Monday, March 16, 2020.

If you have questions, call APOC at 276-4176.

Legislative staff is permitted to help with preparing and filing a legislator’s annual financial disclosure on state time using a government computer.

File Your Ethics Disclosures Online

1. Go to <http://intranet.akleg.gov/> and scroll down to “File now” under the “File an Ethics Disclosure” section.
2. Go to the line that begins with “Click HERE.”
3. Double click on the word “HERE.”
4. Enter your credentials (your computer log-in).
5. Click on the type of disclosure you want to file.
6. Complete the form using drop down menus when available.
(Provide complete information. Gifts of travel are for the purpose of obtaining information about matters of legislative concern. Include a one or two sentence narrative addressing how the information obtained is a matter of legislative concern.)
7. Check your completed disclosure for accuracy and click submit.

Reminder: Disclosures required for new associations

Disclosures must be filed within 30 days of the beginning of an association regardless of whether it’s during session or during the interim.

Board memberships (within 30 days of the beginning of the association). *Example:* A legislator or legislative employee is elected to a condo association board on March 12, 2020.

Close economic associations (both parties must file a disclosure within 30 days of the beginning of the association). *Example:* A legislator purchases a piece of artwork worth \$250 or more from a legislative employee on April 15, 2020.

State Benefit and Loan Programs (within 30 days of the beginning of participation). *Example:* A legislator or legislative employee receives a new commercial fishing loan on April 5, 2020.

State Contracts, Leases, and Grants (within 30 days of the beginning of the association). *Example:* A legislator or legislative employee renegotiates a state contract on July 1, 2020.

If you are unsure as to whether you need to file a disclosure, contact the Ethics Office at 269-0150 or 269-8179.

CAMPAIGN YEAR ALERT!

Campaign Communications & Use of State Funds

- **May a legislator include in an election year legislative newsletter a statement that the legislator will be pursuing particular legislation in the next legislative session?**

No. A statement such as “I hope to continue working for you on these issues” is campaign-related and a prohibited use of state resources. The ethics committee noted in Complaint Decision H 10-01 that legislators routinely mention legislation they are working on or plan to pursue. However, during an election year these statements leave the reader with the impression the legislator is advocating for votes based on future action the legislator will pursue in the next legislative session. [Complaint Decision H 10-01](#)

- **May a legislator include in a legislative newsletter a statement that the legislator is running for another term or for another office?**

No. Including a statement such as “I have filed for a new term as your State Representative/Senator” would be campaigning and in violation of the use of state resources for a campaign purpose in that the legislator would be expressly advocating for the legislator’s re-election in addition to providing a private benefit to the legislator. [Complaint Decision H 10-01](#)

- **When is the last day to print legislative newsletters?**

The cutoff period for the use of state funds for printing legislative newsletters – specifically the Legislative Print Shop – begins 60 days prior to the Primary election, **June 19, 2020**, and ends the day after the General election – AS 24.60.030(c).

Note: State funds referenced in this statute include the prohibition of the use of a legislative office printer. State funds referenced in this statute do not include a legislator’s internal office allowance account or the legislator’s POET account.

- **May a legislator send a printed or e-newsletter during the one month prior to an election?**

Yes, but...there is no cutoff date stipulated in the Act for mailing a printed or e-newsletter during a campaign period. The ethics committee has recommended a cutoff date of one month prior to an election due to the appearance of campaigning. The closer to Election Day a legislative newsletter is sent the greater the appearance the distribution could be considered a political campaign mailing. However, this is a decision the legislator must make based on all factors.

- **May a legislator distribute legislative newsletters door-to-door during an election year?**

Yes, but...a newsletter may be distributed door-to-door as long as the legislator does not perform campaign-related activities at the same time. Distributing newsletters door-to-door gives the appearance of campaigning and door knocking is a major component of a campaign. In other words, the distribution and discussion at the door shall not be “re-elect me” in nature. If this were to occur, the legislator would be in violation of the use of state resources – a legislative newsletter – for campaign purposes. [Advisory Opinion 07-07](#)

True or false

Question on page 1. Answer: False. A political event has no legislative purpose. See page 2 for more information.



DISCLAIMER

Information in this newsletter is given as a general overview. Your circumstances may require more specific information and advice. Please contact the ethics office if you have any questions as to whether your intended action is in compliance with the Ethics Act AS 24.60.

Contact the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics

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