

THE ADVISOR

High moral and ethical standards are essential to assure the trust, respect, and confidence of the people of Alaska.



SELECT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ETHICS

DECEMBER 2024

Ethics Training is for Everyone in 2025!

AS 24.60.155 requires that all legislative employees who will serve over a 30-day time period complete a legislative ethics course administered by the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics at the start of a new legislative session or within 30 days of beginning service. Ethics training is required at the beginning of each legislative session regardless of whether you completed training in a previous year.

Ethics training consists of three segments: Harassment Prevention, Ethics and Civility, and an overview of the Ethics Act. Plan to attend training for about 3.5 hours.

Attendance will be taken at all sessions. If special circumstances prevent you from attending in-person, contact Ethics Administrator Kevin Reeve at 907-269-0150.

Juneau in-person training sessions planned

- **January 17—An in-person training session for new and returning employees** is planned for the morning of Friday, January 17. If you are a returning employee and you will be in Juneau on that day, plan to attend this in-person training.
- **January 30—An in-person training for returning legislators** is planned for the morning of Thursday, January 30.
- **January 31—An in-person make up training session for everyone** is planned the morning of Friday, January 31.

Training sessions under development

- **In person and remote make up training for everyone** is to be determined.
- **Anchorage in person training** is to be determined.

More information about the training sessions will be in the January 2025 Advisor. If you have questions about ethics training, [email](#) or call the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150.

Ethics Committee 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.

Do you know someone who may **be interested in serving as a public member on the Ethics Committee?** Let them know they can apply by sending a letter of interest, a copy of their resume, and their political affiliation (on file with the Alaska Division of Elections) to The Honorable Peter Maassen, Alaska Supreme Court, 303 K St., Anchorage, AK 99501. Learn about the [Select Committee on Legislative Ethics](#) here.

Committee Members

Deb Fancher, Chair

Skip Cook

Jerry McBeath

Conner Thomas

Joyce Anderson

Sen Gary Stevens

Sen Löki Tobin

Rep DeLena Johnson

Rep Sara Hannan

Ethics Office

Kevin Reeve, Administrator

Jacqui Yeagle, Assistant

Phone 907-269-0150

Disclosure Notes

Do You Participate in a State Benefit or Loan Program?

A legislator or legislative employee may, without disclosure to the committee, participate in state benefit programs or receive loans from the state if the program or loan meets three criteria:

- 1) The program is generally available to members of the public
- 2) The program is subject to fixed, objective eligibility standards, and
- 3) The program requires minimal discretion in determining qualification. (AS 24.60.050)

Annually, the Ethics Office surveys all state departments to identify the benefit and loan programs that do not meet the referenced criteria. The Ethics Committee reviews and approves the compiled list of programs. The final list of programs requiring disclosure are listed in Appendix C of the Standards of Conduct Handbook.

If you participate in a state benefit or loan program that does not meet the referenced criteria, you may be required to file a disclosure of your participation.

Disclosures are due within 30 of the beginning of the association and annually. Contact the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 for more information.

Are You Leaving Legislative Service?

The Ethics Act (AS 24.60) requires legislators, legislative employees, and public members of the Ethics Committee to disclose to the public certain activities and associations.

If you leave legislative service *WITHOUT FILING* a required disclosure, AS 24.60.115 requires you to file a final disclosure within 90 days after leaving service.

Required disclosures include:

Membership on a Board of Directors
State Benefit and Loan Programs
Representation for Compensation
State Contracts, Leases, and Grants over \$5000
Close Economic Association
Close Economic Association - *Lobbyist Spouse or Domestic Partner*
Gift of Travel and/or Hospitality Primarily for Matters of Legislative Concern
Gift of Travel and/or Hospitality - *Family Member*
Gift of Legal Services in Matters of Legislative Concern
Gift for Compassionate Reasons
Sanctioned Charity Event
Sanctioned Charity Event - *Family Member*

Filing prior to leaving your job is simplest. We encourage doing so before leaving legislative service. Contact the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 for more information.

File Ethics Disclosures Online. It's Easy!

1. Go to <http://intranet.akleg.gov/> and scroll down to the "File an Ethics Disclosure" section.
2. Click on "Login."
3. Enter your credentials (your computer log-in, not your email address).
4. Click on the type of disclosure you want to file.
5. Complete the form using drop down menus when available. Provide complete information. Remember, gifts of travel are for the purpose of obtaining information about matters of legislative concern. **Attach a detailed agenda and a one sentence narrative that addresses how the information you obtained at the event is a matter of legislative concern.**
6. Check your completed disclosure for accuracy and click "Proceed."
7. Review your disclosure and if correct, press "Submit."

Need More Help Filing Your Disclosure?

Download a four-page detailed instruction handout at <https://ethics.akleg.gov/disclosures.php> or contact the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 or 907-269-8179 if you need more information.

Contact the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics

Mailing Address:

PO Box 90251
Anchorage, AK 99509-0251

Physical Location:

Anchorage Legislative Office Building
1500 W Benson Blvd Suite 220
Anchorage, AK 99503

Phone: 907-269-0150

FAX: 907-269-0152

Email: Ethics.Committee@akleg.gov

Website: <http://ethics.akleg.gov/>

Seasonal Gifts May be Subject to Restrictions in the Ethics Act

A selection of informal advice about common gift questions

May a legislative employee accept a gift card for \$25 for a coffee shop as a thank you for helping a constituent?

No. AS 24.60.030(a)(1) states a legislative employee may not solicit, agree to accept or accept a benefit other than official compensation for the performance of public duties.

May a legislative employee accept a book, valued at \$10, from the public?

The book can be accepted since it was not a gift for a 'job well done' but a book on a topic in which the employee has an interest. A legislative employee (and a legislator as well) may receive a gift that has a value of less than \$250 in a calendar from the same person.

May a legislative office accept the gift of a cake from a constituent as a thank you gift for work on the constituent case?

A gift of a cake is permitted. The cake has no "personal" value to either the office in general or staff in the office.

May a Legislative Information Office accept a gift of two smoked salmon filets?

The gift was to be shared with staff at the location as well. The value of the salmon was approximately \$80 to \$100. The gift may be accepted since the value is less than \$250. The inquirer asked if it was OK to give the name of the constituent if asked by other staff members. There was no ethics reason the name could not be provided.

Is a gift disclosure required for a gift of popcorn, intended for immediate consumption, by a legislative office?

No gift disclosure for required for an incidental office gift such as popcorn for immediate consumption.

Is receiving incidental gifts, like candy and oranges, okay for a legislative employee?

The items described and received are considered incidental gifts and are acceptable to receive. The inquirer said that each time they receive such a gift, they have told the donor a gift is not necessary when asking for help with a problem. This is a good practice to engage in to avoid the appearance of a conflict under AS 24.60.030(a)(1).

May a \$40 thank-you gift be provided for legislative employees who have worked on issues related to a specific legislative office?

This is probably an "incidental gift" given the \$40 suggested price tag. There is a prohibition against a legislative employee accepting a benefit other than official compensation for the performance of public duties under AS 24.60.030(a)(1). "Incidental gifts" are items such as candy, flowers, fruit basket or similar items. A gift certificate is not appropriate to give or for a legislative employee to accept.



Here's a Tip!

Keeping a gift log is a helpful way to track of gifts you receive throughout the year.

Download a gift log at <https://ethics.akleg.gov/disclosures.php>.

Remember the Two Key Gift Rules this Season!

RULE #1:

May not solicit, accept or receive gifts totaling \$250 or more in a calendar year from the same person.

Exceptions to Rule #1

- **Hospitality** at a residence within the state or at a social event or meal (No disclosure is required)
- **Discounts** generally available to the public or benefits the state (No disclosure is required)
- **Culturally shared food** (No disclosure is required)
- **Travel and hospitality** primarily for the purpose of obtaining information on a matter of legislative concern (Gift of travel disclosure is required within 60 days)
- **Gifts from an immediate family member** under AS 24.60.080(c)(5) (No disclosure is required)
- **Gifts not associated with the recipient's legislative status** (Confidential disclosure is required within 30 days)
- **Welcome to Juneau gifts or discounts** during session (No disclosure is required)
- **Legal services for a legislative matter** (Disclosure is required within 30 days)
- **Gift of transportation from** a legislator or a legislative employee to a legislator or legislative employee (No disclosure required)
- **Charitable contribution or ticket** to a sanctioned charity event (Disclosure required within 60 days)

RULE #2:

May not solicit, accept or receive a gift from a lobbyist.

Exceptions to Rule #2

- **Food and non-alcoholic beverage** for immediate consumption with a value of \$15 or less OR if the food and beverage is provided as part of an event open to all legislators or legislative employees. (No disclosure required)
- **A contribution, ticket, or ticket-related gift** to a sanctioned charitable event with an annual cumulative total value of less than \$250 from an individual lobbyist. (No disclosure required)
- **A gift unconnected with legislative status** from an immediate family member. (Lobbyist spouse, no disclosure required)
- **A gift delivered on the premises of a state facility** and accepted on behalf of a recognized nonpolitical charitable organization. (No disclosure required)
- **A compassionate gift** (Preapproval is required and a disclosure is required within 30 days)

DISCLAIMER

Information provided is a general overview. Your circumstances may require specific information or advice.

Contact Ethics Committee Administrator Kevin Reeve at 907-269-0150 or 907-201-0125 to make sure your intended action complies with the Ethics Act AS 24.60.

