



THE ADVISOR

Select Committee on Legislative Ethics

MARCH 2016

Annual Disclosures

Miss the deadline? You still need to file!

PLEASE REMEMBER:

ANY association that begins after February 18, 2016, requires a disclosure within 30 days, with the exception of travel/hospitality which has a 60 day filing period.

If you are unsure as to whether or not you need to file, please contact our office at 269-8179.

Committee Members

H Conner Thomas, Chair

Skip Cook

Gary J Turner

Sen Gary Stevens

Sen Dennis Egan

Rep Chris Tuck

Rep Charisse Millett

Staff:

Jerry Anderson,

Administrator

269-0150

Janice Stewart

Administrative Assistant

269-8179

ATTENTION RECENTLY HIRED LEGISLATIVE EMPLOYEES!

Online ethics training is now available at the following link. Training must be completed within 30 days of hire date.

Click this link: [Ethics Training](#) to access the videos and other materials. When completed, you must click the submission button to notify the Ethics Committee that you have complied with the training requirement.

Please contact Janice Stewart at janice.stewart@akleg.gov, or 269-8179 if you have any questions or need assistance.

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APOC LEGISLATIVE FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES

The annual Legislative Financial Disclosure (AS 24.60.200) for Legislators and Legislative Directors is due to APOC by Tuesday, March 15, 2016. If you have questions, please call APOC at 276-4176.

Legislative staff is permitted to help with preparing and filing a legislator's annual disclosure on state time.

CAMPAIGN YEAR ALERT!

Campaign Communications & Use of State Funds

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

A statement such as "I hope to continue working for you on these issues" is campaign related and a prohibited use of state resources. In other words, if you vote for me I will do "this" during my next term of office. The 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 s/he will pursue in the next legislative session.

- * **May a legislator include in a legislative newsletter a statement 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.

Link to full decision: [H 10-01](#)

- * **The cutoff date for the use of state funds for printing legislative newsletters – specifically the Legislative Print Shop – Begins 60 days prior to the Primary election and ends the day after the General election – AS 24.60.030(c).**

June 17, 2016 is 60 days before the primary election for this election year.

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?**

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 hand out legislative newsletters door-to-door during an election year?**

The newsletter may be handed out 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. 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. AO 07-07.

ENDORSEMENT OF MUNICIPAL CANDIDATES DURING A LEGISLATIVE SESSION

As 24.60.031 does not prohibit a legislator or legislative employee from endorsing a candidate for state or municipal office at any time, unless the endorsement is part of a solicitation for a contribution. [AO 07-06](#).

◆ Example of permitted activity:

Legislator or legislative employee endorses a municipal candidate in an ad or campaign flier that does not include a solicitation for campaign contributions.

◆ Examples of prohibited activity:

Hosting or co-hosting a fundraiser for a municipal candidate; or having your name listed on the invitation for the fundraiser.



Retired Ethics Committee Administrator Joyce Anderson was presented with a Legislative Citation from Senator Berta Gardner and Representative Chris Tuck at the January 2016 Full Ethics Committee meeting held in Juneau. Joyce served as committee administrator from 2001 until 2014, and was recognized for her tireless efforts and excellent performance during her time with the committee.

