

## Informal Opinions Approved in 1st Quarter Calendar Year 2026 January 1 – March 31, 2026\*

**\*Per Administrative Rule 340-X-1-.04, informal opinions are confidential. What follows is a basic summary of the most frequently asked questions and the general answers given. This summary is not to be relied upon or to be a summary of every informal we have given. Many informals we give are on the same issue and many requests involve issues under another agency's jurisdiction to which we refer the requestor.**

### Topic Summary

1.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from holding the outside employment or private work, provided all related work is performed on personal time and the public employee does not use the public position, confidential information, or public resources for private benefit. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
2.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from holding the additional public role, provided all duties are performed on personal time and no public position or public resources from either role are used to benefit the other. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
3.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the proposed private transaction with a public official if full value is paid, the terms are commercially reasonable, and the arrangement is not offered to corruptly influence official action.
4.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from resigning from one public position and being appointed to another, provided the public official did not use the original position to obtain the appointment. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
5.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from running for public office while retaining public employment, provided campaign activities are conducted on personal time and without use of the public position, public resources, or confidential information. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
6.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from entering a commercially reasonable lease or rental arrangement with the public body, provided the public official does not vote, participate, discuss, or otherwise use the position to obtain the arrangement. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
7.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the former public employee from returning to work for a public entity, provided the former position or confidential information was not used to create or obtain the work and no improper influence was involved. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
8.	The Ethics Act places the duty to complete required ethics training on the public official or public employee, not the employer. The employer may still notify the individual of the requirement.
9.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the proposed attendance or participation under the facts presented.

10.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official or public employee from accepting the proposed benefit because a statutory exception or non-prohibited source applies, provided it is not given to corruptly influence official action.
11.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official or public employee from accepting the proposed item or benefit, provided it is not received for the purpose of corruptly influencing official action. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
12.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from holding the outside employment or private work, provided all related work is performed on personal time and the public employee does not use the public position, confidential information, or public resources for private benefit. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
13.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from running for public office while retaining public employment, provided campaign activities are conducted on personal time and without use of the public position, public resources, or confidential information. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
14.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from buying or improving private property in the public employee's jurisdiction, provided the public employee abstains from any official involvement with inspections or decisions affecting those properties.
15.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from voting on matters that do not uniquely benefit the public official. The public official may receive the same compensation as similarly situated persons, but may not receive extra compensation because of the public position. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
16.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official or public employee from accepting the proposed benefit because a statutory exception or non-prohibited source applies, provided it is not given to corruptly influence official action.
17.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the former public employee from returning to work for a public entity, provided the former position or confidential information was not used to create or obtain the work and no improper influence was involved. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
18.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the proposed action involving a family member, provided the public official or public employee does not use the public position to benefit the family member. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
19.	The campaign-finance guidance states that contributions may not be accepted, solicited, or received during the applicable blackout period, but may be accepted outside that period.
20.	The described uncompensated grassroots advocacy is not treated as lobbying under the Ethics Act, so the individual would not be required to register as a lobbyist based on those facts.
21.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from proceeding with the proposed conduct under the facts presented. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
22.	The Fair Campaign Practices Act permits the use of campaign funds for an expense that is necessary and ordinary to the campaign and would not be incurred but for the candidacy.
23.	The campaign-finance guidance states that contributions may not be accepted, solicited, or received during the applicable blackout period, but may be accepted outside that period.

24.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the proposed private transaction with a public official if full value is paid, the terms are commercially reasonable, and the arrangement is not offered to corruptly influence official action.
25.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from holding the additional public role, provided all duties are performed on personal time and no public position or public resources from either role are used to benefit the other. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
26.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public body from hiring a family member of a public employee, but the public employee may not use their position to influence the hiring or otherwise assist the family member. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
27.	The response confirms that existing advisory opinions address the issue and notes that the affected public official or public employee may request an informal opinion for their specific facts.
28.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit a former public entity from being hired by a public agency and representing that public agency before their former public employer.
29.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the former public employee from returning to work for a public entity, provided the former position or confidential information was not used to create or obtain the work and no improper influence was involved. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
30.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the former public employee from returning to work for a public entity, provided the former position or confidential information was not used to create or obtain the work and no improper influence was involved. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
31.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the former public employee from returning to work for a public entity, provided the former position or confidential information was not used to create or obtain the work and no improper influence was involved. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
32.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit a public official from participating a matter that does not involve a business with which the public official is associated.
33.	The response confirms that the Commission changed its revolving-door interpretation and points to current guidance indicating that rehiring by a public entity is not barred under the Ethics Act. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
34.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit a family member of a public employee from lobbying.
35.	The Ethics Act does not expressly prohibit the public official from being hired as a consultant by another public body, but the issue may be governed by other law. If otherwise allowed, the public official may not use the public position or public resources to obtain or perform the work, and no corrupt influence may be involved.
36.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from working as a public employee for another entity, and it does not prohibit the official from voting or participating in matters related to their public employer provided they will not be uniquely affected by the matter.
37.	The campaign-finance guidance states that contributions may not be accepted, solicited, or received during the applicable blackout period.

38.	The mother of a public employee is not considered to be a family member of a public employee for the purposes of the Ethics Act. A spouse is considered to be a family member of a public official.
39.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit a city from providing meals and refreshments to public employees. This is a public spending issue outside of the scope of the Ethics Act.
40.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit a public official from working for the federal government provided they do not use their position to benefit themselves or any business with which they are associated.
41.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official or public employee from accepting an offer of transportation and lodging to facilitate their participation in an economic development function from a business that is not a principal provided it is not received for the purpose of corruptly influencing an official action.
42.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from seeking employment with the private entity described after they leave their public position.
43.	The Ethics Act generally prohibits a public employee from soliciting a thing of value from a lobbyist or principal, but the described sponsorships for widely attended events fall within an exception. The public employee should ensure the solicitation is not tied to corrupt influence.
44.	The described uncompensated grassroots advocacy is not treated as lobbying under the Ethics Act, so the individual would not be required to register as a lobbyist based on those facts.
45.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the individual from running for public office while serving in the volunteer role, but other non-ethics restrictions may apply. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
46.	The public officials must complete required ethics training by the applicable deadline, either online or through an arranged in-person training.
47.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit a public official from participating in matters involving the public employer of the official's family member. However there may be restrictions outside of the Ethics Act that are applicable.
48.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from using images of themselves in campaign materials. The opinion recommends checking other election-law restrictions that may apply. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
49.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from running for public office while retaining public employment, provided campaign activities are conducted on personal time and without use of the public position, public resources, or confidential information. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
50.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit a lobbyist from serving on the public advisory body. Public officials and public employees must avoid soliciting anything from the lobbyist other than lawful campaign contributions. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
51.	The Ethics Act prohibits a former public employee from accepting a position with a private entity that would require them to interact with their former public employer on behalf of their private employer within two years of leaving their public position.
52.	The Ethics Act prohibits a former public employee from representing a client or private employer before their former public employer.

53.	The Ethics Act prohibits public officials and public employees from using public property for private benefit unless otherwise authorized. Whether personal use of a public vehicle is permissible depends on the facts and any lawful policy or employment agreement.
54.	The Ethics Act protects complaints and related investigative information from disclosure, subject to limited exceptions for sharing with law-enforcement authorities.
55.	The informal opinion states that the board members are public officials for purposes of the Ethics Act and that existing revolving-door guidance may be used for future hiring questions involving former officials or employees.
56.	The Ethics Act applies to state, county, and municipal public officials and public employees, not federal employees. The individual should consult the relevant employer for any separate restrictions.
57.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from directing public support to an organization when the public official and family members are uncompensated and have no financial interest in the organization.
58.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the former public employee from returning to work for a public entity, provided the former position or confidential information was not used to create or obtain the work and no improper influence was involved. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
59.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the candidate from withdrawing from a campaign to accept the public position described in the request. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
60.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from running for and holding a position while serving in public office. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking any other applicable rules or policies.
61.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from creating, fundraising for, or personally donating to a scholarship fund. The public official may not solicit donations from lobbyists, solicit anything to corruptly influence official action, convert funds to personal use, or use public resources for fundraising.
62.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee's minor children from riding in a state vehicle to an official work function when the trip would occur anyway and transporting them creates no additional public cost.
63.	Mayors and municipal council members must complete required ethics training within 120 days after being sworn into office.
64.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from voting on matters affecting an investment entity that is not an associated business, so long as the matters do not affect the public official's private employer. If a matter involves the public official's workplace or could affect the employer, additional guidance should be sought before voting or participating.
65.	The FCPA does not allow the public official to use principal campaign committee funds to support a local proposition because that activity would require separate PAC registration and campaign funds cannot be used for PAC activity. The public official may still speak in favor of the proposition.
66.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the candidate from bringing low-cost refreshments while distributing campaign materials, provided they are not offered to corruptly influence any official action.
67.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from driving an assigned public vehicle for the purposes presented.

68.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the former public employee from returning to part-time or on-call work for the former public employer because the revolving-door restriction applies to certain private businesses, not public entities. The former employee must not have used the prior position or confidential information to obtain the work and should check retirement or other non-Ethics Act restrictions.
69.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the former public employee from being hired directly as a contractor by the former public employer under the facts presented. The opinion is limited to Ethics Act restrictions.
70.	Because the elected term had not yet expired, the Ethics Act prohibits the former public official from serving for a fee as a lobbyist or otherwise representing a client or private employer before the Legislature until two years after the elected term ends. The Act also prohibits paid representation before any legislative body or branch of state or local government during the remainder of the elected term.
71.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit a public official's family member from serving on the same council or voting at the same time as the public official. The opinion recommends checking residency, qualification, and other non-Ethics Act requirements.
72.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from holding a permit and performing outside work in another jurisdiction, provided the work is done on personal time and the public employee does not use the public position, public resources, or confidential information to obtain the permit or perform the work. The opinion is limited to Ethics Act restrictions and recommends checking employer policies.
73.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit a candidate, if elected, from donating a portion of the salary from the office to charitable organizations. The opinion is limited to Ethics Act restrictions and recommends checking other campaign-law requirements.
74.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from applying for a new public-sector position, provided the current public position, public resources, or public time are not used to help obtain the position.
75.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from accepting complimentary lodging and meals for attendance at a widely attended event related to official duties where the host is not a prohibited source, provided the benefit is not accepted to corruptly influence official action.
76.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from returning to part-time work with the same public entity after retirement, and it does not require stepping down from the current role before retirement. The former employee must not use the current position or confidential information to secure the work and should check non-Ethics Act retirement restrictions.
77.	Gift limits depend on who offers the gift and the specific facts, but the de minimis exception generally covers gifts under \$35 and no more than \$70 from the same source in a calendar year. Regardless of value, a public official or public employee may not solicit or accept anything to corruptly influence official action.
78.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the child of a sitting mayor from serving as a council member. Both public officials must avoid using their positions to benefit themselves, each other, family members, or associated businesses, and should check other local-law restrictions.
79.	The Ethics Act does not require disclosure of prior private business relationships or current private business arrangements between public officials when the arrangements do not involve the public body or public resources. The public officials still may not use their positions or public resources for personal gain.
80.	The Ethics Act requires a governmental agency head to report potential Ethics Act violations that come to the agency head's attention in an official capacity within 10 days. If evidence of a possible violation is presented at a public meeting, reporting to the Commission is strongly encouraged so the matter can be reviewed.

81.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the retired public employee from returning briefly to work for the former public entity because the revolving-door restriction applies to certain private businesses, not public entities. The former employee must not have used the prior position or confidential information to secure the work and should check retirement or other non-Ethics Act restrictions.
82.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the retired public employee from returning to part-time or on-call work for the former public entity because the revolving-door restriction applies to certain private businesses, not public entities. The former employee must not have used the prior position or confidential information to secure the work and should check retirement or other non-Ethics Act restrictions.
83.	The FCPA does not allow a person to establish a principal campaign committee because for a position that is not a state or local office.
84.	The Commission recommended that the affected public official request guidance directly before the vote. Generally, a public official may not use the position for a family member's personal gain or vote or participate in a matter in which a family member has a financial interest; whether the position is compensated would be important.
85.	The FCPA requires a separate principal campaign committee for each office sought. The FCPA does not prohibit transferring funds from the prior committee to the new committee for the new race.
86.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit hiring a public official's family member for a public position when the public official is not involved in the hiring process and does not otherwise use the position to benefit the family member. The opinion is limited to the Ethics Act and recommends checking local-law or employment restrictions.
87.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit public officials or public employees from accepting a dinner invitation from a host that is not a registered principal, provided the dinner is not offered or accepted to corruptly influence official action.
88.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the former public employee from returning to part-time or on-call work for the former public entity because the revolving-door restriction applies to certain private businesses, not public entities. The former employee must not have used the prior position or confidential information to obtain the work and should check retirement or other non-Ethics Act restrictions.
89.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the retiring public employee from returning to the same public entity in an emeritus role and continuing grant-related work, because the revolving-door restriction applies to certain private businesses rather than public entities. The former employee must not use the current position or confidential information to obtain the role and should check retirement or other non-Ethics Act restrictions.
90.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from sponsoring, voting on, or otherwise supporting legislation that applies broadly to a large class of similarly situated public employees rather than uniquely benefiting the public official.
91.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from voting on or participating in a matter when the resolution will not affect the public official's financial interest.
92.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit a public official from allowing family members to serve as unpaid volunteers in the described role. The opinion recommends checking county or other non-Ethics Act requirements.
93.	Campaign funds may be deposited if the contribution was received after the applicable legislative blackout period ended. If the contribution was received during the blackout period, it should be returned.
94.	The FCPA permits the public official to use campaign funds in the manner described because the expense is reasonably related to the official position and would not have been incurred but for that position.

95.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official's business from bidding on or contracting for public work in the municipality where a separate statute permits it, provided the public official does not use the position, confidential information, or public resources to benefit the business. Any qualifying public contract must be filed with the Commission within 10 days, and the opinion recommends checking municipal-law requirements.
96.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit public employees from performing additional grant-related work and being paid from grant funds for that work under the facts presented. The opinion recommends checking local-law, employment, or other non-Ethics Act restrictions.
97.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from voting on or discussing legislation that affects a broad class of businesses and does not uniquely benefit a family member's associated business. The public official may continue participating under the facts presented.
98.	The Ethics Act does not require a public official to abstain from voting on or discussing matters involving a department or volunteer organization with which the public official is affiliated, so long as the matter does not uniquely benefit the public official.
99.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit an appointed public official from receiving compensation for that public role while also employed as a professor at a public educational institution. The opinion recommends checking with the employer and other appropriate offices for non-Ethics Act restrictions.
100.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from conducting the described private business activities provided all private work is performed on personal time and the public employee does not use the public position, confidential information, or public resources to benefit the private business. Any contract, invoice, or purchase order involving payment by a public entity must be filed with the Commission within 10 days.
101.	The Ethics Act prohibits the public official from posting campaign material on a social media page created for the public office, because that would use the public position or public resources to benefit the public official or campaign committee.
102.	The FCPA does not permit the political organization or PAC to accept a donation from a principal campaign committee, regardless of which account would receive the funds. The restriction applies to transfers between covered political committees and organizations.
103.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public official from advocating for a legislative amendment affecting a category of entities, provided the public official is not paid by a client or other entity to do so and does not solicit or receive anything to corruptly influence official action.
104.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from using accrued vacation leave before retirement. The opinion recommends checking employer and retirement-system rules for non-Ethics Act restrictions.
105.	If elected, the public official would not be required by the Ethics Act to abstain from discussions, votes, or selections involving the school board or school system unless the matter would uniquely benefit the public official. The public official also may not solicit or receive anything to corruptly influence official action.
106.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the public employee from accepting a discounted event fee where the provider is not a registered principal and the discount is available to a class of government employees or public-sector leaders. The response does not decide whether paying the travel and fee with public funds is permissible and recommends checking the appropriate authority.
107.	The Ethics Act does not prohibit the former public employee from returning part-time to the former public entity after retirement because the revolving-door restriction applies to certain private businesses, not public entities. The former employee must not use the prior position or confidential information to obtain the work and should check retirement or other non-Ethics Act restrictions.
108.	The Ethics Act prohibits the public employee from accepting employment with a private firm until two years have passed since the public employee last personally participated in the direct regulation of that firm, including review of plans submitted by the firm.