

# South Carolina State Ethics Commission

We hope this digital brochure provides you with the necessary tools to ensure compliance with the Ethics Reform Act.



SC State Ethics Commission  
201 Executive Center Drive  
Suite 150  
Columbia, SC 29210

(803) 254-4192

[Visit our website](#)

## What is the SC State Ethics Commission?

The South Carolina State Ethics Commission is the state agency charged with enforcing the Ethics, Government Accountability and Campaign Reform Act of 1991.

The goal of the Ethics Reform Act is to make public servants more accountable to the citizens they serve in order to restore public trust in government institutions and the political and governmental processes.

## Why Are You Receiving This Brochure?

You are receiving this brochure because you are a public employee, as defined by the Ethics Reform Act, and as such you are subject to the Ethics Reform Act.

This brochure will include some of the Act's highlights but in no way encompasses all of the Act's requirements or prohibitions.

In additions to reading this brochure, we encourage you to read the Act in its entirety.

[Click here for the Ethics Reform Act](#)

## Your Time Versus the People's Time

As a public employee, your workday is dedicated to the people you serve.

Over the course of your public employment you may not:

- Use government equipment, personnel, materials or time to work on a second business.
- Receive anything of value in an attempt to influence your actions.
- Receive money other than your salary for advice or assistance given as a part of your official duties.

## All in The Family

Nepotism (favoritism based on kinship) is strictly forbidden by the Act. Over the course of your public employment you may not:

- Cause the employment, appointment, promotion or transfer of a family member to a position you supervise or manage.
- Participate in the discipline of a family member.
- Family members: spouse, parent, brothers, sister, child, *in-laws*, grandparent or grandchild.

### **A Little Extra Cash**

As a public employee, you may not:

- Solicit or receive money, in addition to that received in your official capacity, for advice or assistance given during your public employment.

- Use confidential information obtained over the course of your employment in order to obtain an economic benefit for you, your family or a business/person with whom you are associated.

- Solicit or receive anything of value to influence your decision making in the discharge of your duties or responsibilities.

### **Statement of Economic Interests**

Certain public employees are required to fill out a Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) form every year. Those employees include, but are not limited to:

- Chief administrative official, deputy administrative official or director of a division, institution or facility of any agency or department of state government.

- Chief financial official and chief purchasing official of each agency, institution or facility of state government.

A Statement of Economic Interests should contain the following information:

- Source, type and value of income received from a governmental entity.
- Listing of any private source of income received by you or a family member.

### **Getting Political**

You may not use government time, equipment, resources or property to influence the outcome of an election. Do not print campaign materials, make campaign calls or send campaign related emails using any government issued equipment.

### **Leaving the Public Sector**

We hate to see you go, but under certain circumstances your future employment may have restrictions:

- 1) If you were directly involved in procurement, you may not accept a new job in which your new employer is contracting with your former employer if the contract would fall under your official duties while you were a public employee.
- 2) You may not serve as a lobbyist or represent clients on a matter in which you directly or substantially participated.
- 3) You may not accept employment if the employment is from a person/entity regulated by your former employer *and* involves a matter in which you directly and substantially participated.

### **When in Doubt...**

If you have any questions about the Act – don't hesitate to contact us. As a public employee, you may request an informal opinion about any issue within our jurisdiction. Just email Courtney Laster at [claster@ethics.sc.gov](mailto:claster@ethics.sc.gov).

### **We Will Come to You**

If you believe that your staff would benefit from an in-person ethics training, please contact Meghan Walker at [mwalker@ethics.sc.gov](mailto:mwalker@ethics.sc.gov).

- We provide trainings for both large and small groups.
- Typically, the only cost associated with training is for mileage to and from the training location.

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