

INFORMATION SHEET - LOBBYIST FILING REQUIREMENTS

CITY OF CHICAGO BOARD OF ETHICS

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Information submitted by lobbyists must be submitted electronically on the Board's Electronic Lobbyist Filing system ("ELF"), on forms prescribed or approved by the Board.

A. WHO MUST REGISTER AND REPORT?

All persons (except those persons specifically exempted under §§2-156-010(p) and -220 of the Municipal Code) who lobby a City agency must register and file activity reports with the Chicago Board of Ethics using the Board's ELF system, which is at

https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/ethics/provdrs/lobby/svcs/electronic_lobbyistfilingsystem.html. This requirement extends to any person who undertakes to influence any legislative or administrative action on behalf of another, or as any part of his duties as an employee of another, regardless of whether the person is formally designated as a lobbyist by his or her employer.

B. REGISTRATION

All lobbyists register by filing, on the Board's ELF system, a Statement of Registration within five business days of first engaging in lobbying activity, and annually thereafter by January 20th. The registration statement shall be accompanied by a registration fee of \$350.00 per person identified as a lobbyist in the Registration Statement. In addition to this registration fee of \$350.00, there is also an annual fee of \$75.00 for each additional registered client after the first.

However, the Board does consider and may, in accordance with criteria established by rule, grant a waiver or reduction of the registration and client fees required for specific lobbyists, upon written request. (These lobbyists are those paid to lobby by a non-profit entity with for-profit members, and either: (i) the lobbyist's primary lobbying responsibilities are to foster small business initiatives primarily within a single official community or area or neighborhood; or (ii) the non-profit entity has been approved or is pending approval by the City Council to be a special service area provider.)

Payment is acceptable only in the form of certified check, cashier's check, business check, money order or electronically through the ELF system (which accepts credit card payments). Cash is not accepted. An incomplete Statement of Registration will not be accepted. Amendments to the registration must be filed within 14 days of any addition or substantial change to the information on record with the Board.

Also, a Statement of Registration or amendment requiring payment of a fee will not be accepted from any person who owes a fine to the Board of Ethics until the fine is paid in full.

C. ACTIVITY REPORTS

Four times each year, by January 20th, April 20th, July 20th, and October 20th, registrants must file an Activity Report, through the ELF system. This report has of three parts. Part I and Part II must be completed by all registrants every quarter. Part III must be completed for each client on whose behalf lobbying was performed in the previous quarter, or each client on whose behalf expenditures were made, or from whom compensation was received during the previous quarter. Incomplete reports will not be accepted. Lobbyists may request one 30-day extension of time for filing an Activity Report by submitting a written declaration of intention to defer filing not less than 10 days before the date on which the report is due.

D. TERMINATION NOTICE

When a registrant terminates all activity that requires registration, he or she must file, through the ELF system, a Termination Notice and a final Activity Report that covers the period between the most

recently filed Activity Report and the date of termination. **A Termination Notice received without a final Activity Report will not be accepted.**

E. Training

Each lobbyist must complete in each consecutive twelve month period an ethics education training course developed by the Board. The course may be offered in person, though the Board offers an on-line program each year.

F. FINES AND PENALTIES

A person who fails to register as required is subject to a fine of not less than \$500 and not more than \$2,000 for each offense.

Registrants who fail to file Activity Reports or do not re-register (or terminate) by the required filing deadline are subject to having their names published and a mandatory penalty of \$1,000 per day until the reports or re-registration (or termination) are filed.

A person who retains or employs a lobbyist who has failed to register as required is subject to a \$2,000 fine for each day that the non-registered lobbyist lobbies a City agency.

Lobbyists who fail to train as required are subject to having their names published and a fine of not less than \$200.00 nor more than \$750.00 per day for each such violation.

G. CONTINGENCY FEES PROHIBITED

To employ, retain or serve as a lobbyist for compensation that is contingent in whole or in part upon approval or disapproval of any legislative or administrative matter is prohibited. Any person who violates this prohibition is subject to a fine of not less than \$500 and not more than \$2,000 for each offense.

DEFINITIONS

- 1. LOBBYIST** means any person who, on behalf of any person other than himself, or as any part of his duties as an employee of another, undertakes to influence any legislative or administrative action, including but not limited to:

(1) a bond inducement ordinance; (2) a zoning matter; (3) a concession agreement; (4) the creation of a tax increment financing district; (5) the establishment of a Class 6(b) Cook County property tax classification; (6) the introduction, passage or other action to be taken on an ordinance, resolution, motion, order, appointment or other matter before the City Council; (7) the preparation of contract specifications; (8) the solicitation, award or administration of a contract; (9) the award or administration of a grant, loan, or other agreement involving the disbursement of public monies; or (10) any other determination made by an elected or appointed City official or employee of the City with respect to the procurement of goods, services or construction; provided, however, that a person shall not be deemed to have undertaken to influence any legislative or administrative action solely by submitting an application for a City permit or license or by responding to a City request for proposals or qualifications.

The term "lobbyist" shall include, but not be limited to, any attorney, accountant, or consultant engaged in the above-described activities; provided, however, that an attorney shall not be considered a lobbyist while representing clients in a formal adversarial hearing. (§2-156-010(p).)

- 2. PERSON** means any individual, entity, corporation, partnership, firm, association, union, trust, estate, as well as any parent or subsidiary of any of the foregoing, whether or not operated for profit. (§2-156-010(r).)
- 3. LEGISLATIVE ACTION** means the introduction, sponsorship, consideration, debate, amendment, passage, defeat, approval, veto or other official action or non-action of or on any ordinance, resolution, motion, order, appointment, application or other matter pending or proposed in the City Council or any committee or subcommittee thereof. (§2-156-010(o).)

4. **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION** means any decision on, or any proposal, consideration, enactment or making of any rule, regulation, or other official non-ministerial action or non-action by any executive department, or by any official or employee of an executive department, or any matter that is within the official jurisdiction of the executive branch. (§2-156-010(a).)
5. **AGENCY** means the City Council, any committee or other subdivision thereof, the Office of the Mayor, or any City department or other administrative unit, commission, board, or other division of the government of the City. (§2-156-010(b).)
6. **COMPENSATION** means money, thing of value or other pecuniary benefit received or to be received in return for, or as reimbursement for, services rendered or to be rendered. (§2-156-010(f).)
7. **EXPENDITURE** means a payment, distribution, loan, advance, deposit, or gift of money or anything of value. (§2-156-010(k).)
8. **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES** means services in any occupation requiring advanced or specialized education and training, including without limitation law, accounting, insurance, real estate, engineering, medicine, architecture, dentistry, banking, finance, public relations, education or consulting. (§2-156-010(v).)
9. **GIFT** means any thing of value given without fair-market consideration. (§2-156-010(m).)

Note: all legal citations in this Definitions section are from the Municipal Code of Chicago.