

THE VOICE OF ETHICS

A Publication of the Ohio Ethics Commission

2020 Quarter 4



As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.

- John Fitzgerald Kennedy

eTrained Before Midnight!

2020 – in some ways, the year dragged on, didn't it? Yet somehow, we find ourselves looking at the end of the calendar year wondering where the months went! If you are scrambling to complete any required training by the time the virtual ball drops on New Year's Eve, we have you covered for the Ohio Ethics Law! Here are numerous options for completing your Ethics Training before the countdown to 2021 begins:



E-Course: "Ohio Ethics Law 20/20!"

Each year, the Ohio Ethics Commission provides a convenient and interactive [e-course](#) which is available on our website and can be accessed 24/7. The e-course provides an overview of the Ethics Law and provides proof of completion at the end of the course.

Note for state employees and officials: This e-course meets the annual training requirement as outlined in the Governor's Ethics Executive Order 2019 – 11D for both financial disclosure filers and non-filers alike.

Note for attorneys: This e-course is approved for one general hour of self-study CLE.

Joint Webinars

Each month, the Ethics Commission conducts live webinars that provide an overview of the Ethics Law and anyone in public service is invited! These webinars also meet state employees' Ethics Law training requirement and provide proof of attendance. There are two final joint webinars available this year.

- November 19, 2020 (10 – 11 am)
- December 15, 2020 (10 – 11 am)

Click [here](#) to register. *Note for attorneys:* These webinars are also approved for one general hour of self-study CLE.

Customized Webinars

Because the Ohio Ethics Commission is not currently offering “in-person” trainings due to the pandemic, we are pleased to provide customized free live webinars for your agency, office, or conference. If you would like to schedule a live Ethics Law webinar for your next staff meeting, professional development day, or training, please email susan.willeke@ethics.ohio.gov to discuss parameters and scheduling.

CLE

For public practice attorneys who still may need those coveted ethics CLE hours, there is one final CLE opportunity in 2020 co-sponsored by the Ohio Ethics Commission and the Ohio Board of Professional Conduct.

On December 18, 2020 at 9 am, a pre-recorded CLE that is **approved for 2.5 hours of attorney conduct credit** will be streamed live. This free class was originally recorded in May and “re-aired” recently to more than 800 attorneys. While the December 18 “showing” of the CLE is the same recording, it has a new activity number from the Supreme Court.

If you are interested in virtually attending, please register at [this link](#).

Approximately one week prior to the CLE, you receive instructions on how to access the webinar on December 18.

Questions? Email susan.willeke@ethics.ohio.gov



New Financial Disclosure Filing Tools!

Financial disclosure at the Ohio Ethics Commission has never been easier with the convenient and easy-to-complete [online filing system](#) available on the Commission's website. However, for those who may have questions regarding completing their first (or 70th!) financial disclosure form, the Ethics Commission is pleased to unveil two new resources to assist filers in completing the online form.

The [FAQ Booklet](#) provides thorough yet understandable answers to some of the most commonly asked questions regarding filing financial disclosure including:

- Deadlines;
- Who files;
- What to include in each question on the form;
- How and what to attach to the form;
- And so much more!

Secondly, the Commission has created an [FDS e-course](#) that outlines how to complete and file your form. This resource is an especially helpful look for first-time filers, but also provides a helpful refresher for veteran filers, as well!

Be sure to check out these resources and consider them an early holiday gift from the Ohio Ethics Commission!



New Fact Sheets at Your Disposal!

Cleaning out closets? Redecorating a room? Decluttering your files? What projects did you check off your “to do” list in 2020? The Education Section of the Ohio Ethics Commission created numerous new fact sheets for your information and reading pleasure! Check out some of the new resources available on the Commission’s website!



Public School 101 Booklet

This booklet provides an outline of the Ethics Law specifically as it relates to officials and employees who work for or serve public school districts in Ohio.



Conflicts of Interest Overview

This brief fact sheet offers a glimpse into the two most common ways that conflicts of interest can occur in public service and how public officials and employees should respond.



Representation

This fact sheet, loosely referred to as the “Representation” fact sheet, gives guidance regarding rendering services on matters before public entities.



Firefighter Fact Sheet

A direct result of a commonly asked question, this fact sheet summarizes the “what to know” for township trustees who wish to serve as township firefighters.



Donations Overview

When is a gift a “thing of value” to a public employee or official and potentially illegal and when is the gift an acceptable donation to a public entity? Read this new fact sheet to find out!

If you need more in-depth guidance on these issues, don’t forget to review the Commission’s Advisory Opinions page on our website. Have ideas for new fact sheets that you would like to read? Email your literary inspiration to susan.willeke@ethics.ohio.gov!

We Want to Hear from You!

We are already planning our newsletters for 2021 and we would love to hear what's on your mind! What questions do you have about the Ethics Law? What articles would be helpful in the New Year? We'd be honored to address some of the questions or concerns you have in 2021, so email susan.willeke@ethics.ohio.gov with any topics you'd like to hear more about next year!

If this newsletter was forwarded to you, you can sign up to receive it electronically each quarter by submitting your e-mail address [here](#).



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