

Merom Brachman, *Chairman*  
Megan C. Kelley, *Vice Chair*  
Bruce E. Bailey  
Julie A. Rutter  
Elizabeth E. Tracy  
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Paul M. Nick  
*Executive Director*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## OHIO ETHICS COMMISSION ISSUES FORMAL ADVISORY OPINION

At its meeting on January 23, 2020, the Ohio Ethics Commission issued Advisory Opinion 2020-01. The opinion addresses whether public employees and officials are prohibited from accepting bequests from estates.

“The Ohio Ethics Law prohibits public servants from accepting supplemental compensation for the performance of their public duties,” said Executive Director Paul M. Nick. “The Commission recognizes, though, that some bequests are not intended to be provided in exchange for the public servant’s performance of his or her duties.”

The advisory opinion concludes that persons are not prohibited from giving, and public servants are not prohibited from accepting, bequests if the bequest arises substantially outside the scope of the public servant’s duties and there is no exchange or a reasonable expectation of an exchange for the public servant’s performance of his or her duties.

Advisory Opinion 2020-01 can be viewed at [this link](#).

At its meeting, the Commission also unanimously re-elected both Merom Brachman as Chair and Megan C. Kelley as Vice Chair. Mr. Brachman is a Columbus businessman and long-time member of the Commission. Ms. Kelley has served on the Commission since 2016 and is the Vice President of Public Policy & Government Relations for National Church Residences in Columbus.

The next meeting of the Ohio Ethics Commission is scheduled for March 6, 2020 at 11:00 am.

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