

Sec. 2-189. Lobbying.

Lobbying of evaluation committee members, county government employees, or elected officials regarding requests for proposals, requests for qualifications, bids, or contracts, or during the pendency of bid protest, by the bidder/proposer/protestor or any member of the bidder's/proposer's/protestor's staff, an agent of the bidder/proposer/protestor, or any person employed by any legal entity affiliated with or representing an organization that is responding to the requests for proposal, requests for qualification, bid or contract, or has a pending bid protest is strictly prohibited either upon advertisement or on a date established by the board of county commissioners and shall be prohibited until either an award is final or the protest is finally resolved by the county administrator or purchasing director; provided, however, nothing herein shall prohibit a prospective bidder/proposer from contacting the purchasing department to address situations such as clarification and/or questions related to the procurement process. For purposes of this provision lobbying activities shall include but not be limited to, influencing or attempting to influence action or non-action in connection with any requests for proposal, requests for qualification, bid or contract through direct or indirect oral or written communication or an attempt to obtain goodwill of persons and/or entities specified in this provision. Such actions may cause any requests for proposal, requests for qualification, bid or contract to be rejected.

(Ord. No. 02-35, 5-7-02; Ord. No. 04-64, § 12, 9-21-04; Ord. No. 04-87, § 1, 12-7-04)

Editor's note: Ord. No. 04-64, § 12, adopted Sept. 21, 2004, renumbered the former § 2-190 as § 2-189.

Sec. 26-271. Definitions.

Compensation means any payment received or to be received by a lobbyist for the performance of lobbying activities. The compensation is a fee, salary, retainer, forbearance, forgiveness or any combination thereof.

Expenditure means a payment, distribution, loan, advance, reimbursement, deposit or anything of value made by a lobbyist or a principal for the purpose of lobbying.

Lobbying means meeting privately with a member of the board of county commissioners, for the purpose of encouraging the passage, defeat or modification of any item pending before the county commission.

Lobbyist means a person who for compensation engages in lobbying as defined in this article.

Principal means the person, firm, corporation or other entity which has retained or employed a lobbyist.

(Ord. No. 97-19, § 1, 4-8-97)

Sec. 26-272. Registration of lobbyists.

All lobbyists shall sign in at the time of the lobbying in a notebook for that purpose in the board of county commissioners reception area. Simultaneously, they shall also register on a registry of lobbyists maintained and available for public inspection in the board records section of the Board of County commissioners' clerk's office. The lobbyist shall provide his or her name, business address, the name and business address of each principal represented, the general and specific areas of legislative interest, and the nature and extent of any direct business association or partnership with any current member of the board. The clerk shall provide forms on which the lobbyists may supply the aforesaid information. In the event any lobbying meeting as defined herein occurs outside of county offices in Clearwater, the lobbyist shall register within 30 days following the lobbying activity.

(Ord. No. 97-19, § 2, 4-8-97; Ord. No. 02-97, § 2, 12-3-02; Ord. No. 06-01, § 1, 1-10-06)

Sec. 26-273. Statement of lobbying expenditures.

A lobbyist shall annually on or before January 1 of each year submit to the clerk's office a signed statement under oath listing all lobbying expenditures for the preceding calendar year, the sources of the funds, and an itemization as to the amount expended for each member of the board of county commissioners by each registered lobbyist. The statement shall be made on forms provided by the clerk's office.

The clerk of the board of county commissioners shall maintain the expenditure statements in a book or file which shall be open for public inspection. On January 1 of each year, the clerk shall notify any registered lobbyist who has failed to file the required report. Any lobbyist who has further failed to file by February 1, in addition to any other penalty provided for herein, shall not be permitted to reregister as a lobbyist or to engage in any further lobbying activities.

(Ord. No. 97-19, § 3, 4-8-97)

Sec. 26-274. Exceptions.

(a) The following persons shall not be required to register:

(1) An elected official or government employee acting in his official capacity or in

PINELLAS COUNTY STATEMENT OF ETHICS

We, the employees of Pinellas County, as providers of public service and, in order to inspire confidence and trust, are committed to the highest standards of personal integrity, honesty and competence.

To This End We Will

Provide open and accessible government, giving courteous, responsive service to all citizens equally.

Accept only authorized compensation for the performance of our duties and respectfully decline any offers of gifts or gratuities from those with whom we do business.

Disclose or report any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Comply with all laws and regulations applicable to the County and impartially apply them to everyone.

Neither apply nor accept improper influences, favoritism and personal bias.

Use County funds and resources efficiently, including materials, equipment and our time.

Respect and protect the privileged information to which we have access in the course of our duties, never using it to stir controversy, to harm others or for private gain.

Recognizing that government must serve the best interests of all citizens, we stand as representatives of responsible government, acting at all times to merit public confidence in ourselves and Pinellas County.