

ETHICS AND LOBBYING EDUCATION INFORMATION **FOR ETHICS LIAISONS**

MANDATORY EDUCATION. The State Government Ethics Act requires that every public servant and ethics liaison (1) complete an ethics and lobbying education presentation *within 6 months* of the person's election, reelection, appointment, or employment and (2) complete a refresher presentation *at least every two years thereafter*. The two-year time period commences from the date the individual last completed the ethics and lobbying education training.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION. If a public servant or ethics liaison fails to complete the required ethics education training when it is due, he or she can be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from his or her position. Therefore, it is very important that you check your internal records, consult with those subject to the education requirement, and ensure that you and they have taken the necessary education course(s).

EDUCATION OPTIONS. Public servants and ethics liaisons may complete the required basic or refresher ethics education by (1) attending a live presentation (including a distance video-streamed presentation at various locations throughout the State), or (2) completing the online program.

- **Live and Distance Video-Streamed Presentation Dates.** Live and distance programs are offered throughout the year, with a live Raleigh only presentation one month and a distance video-streamed presentation the next month. Dates, locations, and registration information are on the Commission's website: www.ethicscommission.nc.gov/education/eduSchedule.aspx.
- **Online Education.** The Commission also offers online ethics education. The education modules and instructions are on the Commission's website at www.ethicscommission.nc.gov/education/eduOnline.aspx.

PROOF OF COMPLIANCE -- ETHICS EDUCATION CERTIFICATION FORMS.

- **For Live/Distance Presentations.** The public servant or ethics liaison **must sign in at the presentation and then, after attending the training, he or she must complete, sign and file an Ethics Education Certification form with the State Ethics Commission.** They will need to print an Education Certification form from the website. To file the Certification form with the Commission they must scan and email, fax, hand deliver or mail the form to the Commission. **If they fail to sign in and file a signed complete Education Certification form with the State Ethics Commission, they will not receive credit for attending that live/distance education presentation.**
- **For the Online Training Program.** After the public servant or ethics liaison has completed the last module of online training, they will see a link to "Complete Program." **That link will take them to an online certification form where they will need to enter their name, check a box to indicate whether they are an ethics liaison, and check the boxes for all of the boards or agencies that they are employed by or serve on. Once they verify and electronically submit that form,** the State Ethics Commission will be electronically notified of their training completion. Simultaneously they will be emailed a Certification Form for their records. They should retain that form for future reference. **For the Online Training Program, they do not need to submit a hard copy of the certification form to the Commission.**

LIAISON ASSISTANCE. Making sure your people know of the education requirement, know what their education options are, and properly complete and submit the necessary certification form once they complete a program. Please periodically check the status of your board members' and/or employees' education compliance by going to www.ethicscommission.nc.gov/EthicLiaisons.aspx, remind your members/employees of their obligation to timely complete ethics education training and do what is necessary to be credited with completing the training to avoid embarrassing delinquency notices or enforcement actions.

QUESTIONS & ASSISTANCE. For help with any aspect of the education process, including registration, compliance, and submission of certification forms, please contact Dottie Benz, the Education Assistant, or Sue Lundberg, the Education Attorney, at (919) 814-3600 or email them at Education.Ethics@doa.nc.gov.