

# COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

*Promoting Public Confidence in Government*

 **SEARCH**

**Go**

[Browse](#) [Search](#) [State Ethics Commission Home](#) [Back](#) [eMail](#)

## About the State Ethics Commission

The first Pennsylvania Public Official and Employee Ethics Act, Act 170 of 1978, 65 P.S. §401, et seq., primarily became effective January 1, 1979. The Act was amended and reenacted in 1989 by Act 9 of 1989 and in 1998 by Act 93 of 1998. (See Act 9 of 1989, 65 P.S. §401, et seq. and Act 93 of 1998, Chapter 11, 65 Pa.c.s. §1101 et seq.) The Act provides that public officials have a duty of public trust and that any effort to realize personal financial gain through public office is a violation of that trust. The Act was passed to strengthen faith and confidence of the people of the Commonwealth in their government. The Act established the State Ethics Commission to administer and enforce the provisions of the Act and to provide guidance regarding standards established by the Act.

### POWERS AND DUTIES

- Rendering prospective advisory opinions to present or former public officials and public employees, or their appointing authorities or employers, regarding such individuals' duties and responsibilities under the Ethics Act.
- Prescribing Financial Interests Statement forms for filing; receiving and reviewing statements of persons required to file; inspecting and auditing such statements to ascertain whether any reporting person has failed to file such statement or has filed a deficient statement.
- Accepting and filing information voluntarily supplied that exceeds requirements of the law.
- Preserving statements and reports filed with the Commission for a period of five years. Maintaining a master index of statements filed with the Commission and making statements available for public inspection and copying.
- Instructing other state and local agencies in the maintenance of systems which facilitate public access to such statements.
- Investigating alleged violations of the Ethics Act and issuing decisions in relation to said investigations. Holding hearings, taking testimony, issuing subpoenas, and compelling the attendance of witnesses.
- Preparing and publishing an annual report, special reports, educational materials, and technical studies to further the purposes of the Act.
- Prescribing rules and regulations to implement the provisions of the Ethics Act.
- Holding at least two public hearings each year to seek input from persons and organizations which represent individuals subject to the Ethics Act.

- + [About the SEC](#)
- + [Ethics Information](#)
- + [Lobbying in Pennsylvania](#)
- + [Gaming in Pennsylvania](#)
- + [Ethics Act Training](#)
- + [Right To Know Act](#)
  - [Public Meeting Videos](#)
  - [Receiving of Gifts, Transportation, etc.](#)
  - [Directions to the SEC](#)
  - [Links](#)
  - [Contact Us](#)

- [eAlerts!](#)
- [Employment](#)
- [SEC Calendar](#)

- [View Text only](#)
- [Site Index](#)
- [Home](#)

**Login**

**Register**