

## **Chapter 8**

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**[HISTORY: Adopted by the Town Commissioners of the Town of Perryville during codification 12-6-83 by Res. No. 83-1; see Ch. 1, General Provisions, Art. II. Repealed and replaced by Chapter 8 Financial Disclosure and Ethics, Code of the Town of Perryville, Sections 8-1 through 8-9, by Ordinance 2011-1 adopted 9-6-11, approved by the State Ethics Commission 5-17-12, and effective 5-17-12. Sections 8-4(j)(4) and 8-7(d) repealed and reenacted, with amendments, by Ordinance 2012-2 adopted on 5-1-12, approved by the State Ethics Commission 5-17-12, and effective 5-21-12. Repealing and reenacting, with amendments Chapter 8 Financial Disclosure and Ethics, Section 8-4 (j)(4) Code of Perryville by Ord. 2014-01, adopted 02-12-14, approved 02-27-14 by the State Ethics Commission, effective 03-04-14. Added Section 8-5A, adopted 04-05-16 by Ord. 2016-04, effective 04-25-16. Repealing and reenacting, with amendments Chapter 8, Sections 8-4 and 8-5 by Ord. 2018-02, which did not pass the State Ethics Commission so did not become effective. Repealing and reenacting with amendments Chapter 8, Sections 8-4 and 8-5 by Ord. 2018-16, adopted 11-6-18, approved by State Ethics Commission 02-14-2019. Repealing and reenacting, with amendments Chapter 8 Financial Disclosure and Ethics, Sections 8-4(H)(3), 8-4(I), 8-5(D)(2), 8-5(F)(4)(i), and 8-5(G)(2) and adding Sections 8-1(A), 8-4(K) , 8-5(J) and 8-5(F)(10) by Ord. 2022-15, adopted 12-**

**6, 2022, approved by the State Ethics Commission January 5, 2023. Adding Chapter 8 Financial Disclosure and Ethics Section 8-(F)(11) Ord. 2022-17 Amended 2-7-23]**

## **Chapter 8 – FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE AND ETHICS**

### **§ 8-1 Short Title.**

This Chapter May Be Cited As The Town Of Perryville Public Ethics Ordinance.

### **§ 8-1A Definitions.**

In addition to those definitions contained elsewhere in this chapter, the following terms have the meaning set forth below:

- (A) “Quasi-Governmental Entity” means an entity that is created by State statute, that performs a public function, and that is supported in whole or in part by the State but is managed privately.

### **§ 8-2 Applicability.**

The Provisions of this Chapter apply, as noted, to all Elected Officials, Employees, and Appointees to Boards and Commissions of The Town of Perryville and to Candidates for Elective Office in the Town.

### **§ 8-3 Ethics Commission.**

(A) There is a Town of Perryville Ethics Commission that consists of three regular members appointed by the Mayor and Commissioners. The Mayor and Commissioners may appoint an alternate member of the Commission to act at any time that a regular member is unable or unavailable to act. All members of the commission shall be residents of the Town when they are appointed and during their term of office.

(B) Commission members serve terms of three years. The Mayor and Commissioners shall appoint an individual to fill a vacancy on the commission to serve for the remainder of the term for which the vacancy was filled.

(C) The commission shall:

(1) Devise, receive and maintain all forms required by this chapter;

(2) Develop procedures and policies for advisory opinion requests and provide published advisory opinions to persons subject to this chapter regarding the applicability of the provisions of this chapter to them;

(3) Develop procedures and policies for the processing of complaints to make appropriate determinations regarding complaints filed by any person alleging violations of this chapter; and

(4) Conduct a public information program regarding the purposes and application of this chapter.

(D) The Town Attorney or another Attorney designated by the Town Council shall advise the Commission.

(E) The Commission shall certify to the State Ethics Commission on or before October 1 of each year that the Town is in compliance with the requirements of State Government Article, Title § 8, Subtitle 8, Annotated Code of Maryland for elected local officials.

(F) The Commission shall determine if changes to this chapter are required to be in compliance with the requirements of State Government Article, Title § 8, Subtitle 8, Annotated Code of Maryland, and shall forward any recommended changes and amendments to the Town Council for enactment.

(G) The Commission may adopt other policies and procedures to assist in the implementation of the Commission's programs established in this chapter.

#### **§ 8-4 Conflicts of Interest.**

(A) In this section, "qualified relative" means a spouse, parent, child, or sibling.

(B) All Town elected officials, officials appointed to Town boards and commissions subject to this chapter, and employees are subject to this section.

(C) Participation prohibitions. Except as permitted by commission regulation or opinion, an official or employee may not participate in:

(1) Except in the exercise of an Administrative or Ministerial duty that does not affect the disposition or decision of the matter, any matter in which, to the knowledge of the official or employee, the official or employee, or a qualified relative of the official or employee, has an interest.

(2) Except in the exercise of an Administrative or Ministerial duty that does not affect the disposition or decision with respect to the matter, any matter, in which any of the following is a party:

(i) A business entity in which the official or employee has a direct financial interest of which the official or employee may reasonably be expected to know;

(ii) A business entity for which the official, employee, or a qualified relative of the official or employee is an officer, director, trustee, partner, member or employee;

(iii) A business entity with which the official or employee or, to the knowledge of the official or employee, a qualified relative is negotiating or has any arrangement concerning prospective employment.

(iv) If the contract reasonably could be expected to result in a conflict between the private interests of the official or employee and the official duties of the official or employee, a business entity that is a party to an existing contract with the official or employee, or which, to the knowledge of the official or employee, is a party to a contract with a qualified relative;

(v) An entity, doing business with the town, in which a direct financial interest is owned by another entity in which the official or employee has a direct financial interest, if the official or employee may be reasonably expected to know of both direct financial interests; or

(vi) A business entity that:

(a) The official or employee knows is a creditor or obligee of the official or employee or a qualified relative of the official or employee with respect to a thing of economic value; and

(b) As a creditor or obligee, is in a position to directly and substantially affect the interest of the official or employee or a qualified relative of the official or employee.

(3) A person who is disqualified from participating under paragraphs 1 or 2 of this subsection shall disclose the nature and circumstances of the conflict and may participate or act if:

(i) The disqualification leaves a body with less than a quorum capable of acting;

(ii) The disqualified official or employee is required by law to act; or

(iii) The disqualified official or employee is the only person authorized to act.

(4) A former regulated lobbyist who is or becomes subject to this chapter as an employee or an official, other than as an elected official or an appointed official, may not participate in a case, contract or other specific matter as an employee or official, other than an elected official or appointed official, for one calendar year after the termination of the registration of the former regulated lobbyist if the former regulated lobbyist previously assisted or represented another party for compensation in the matter.

(D) Employment and financial interest restrictions.

(1) Except as permitted by regulation of the commission when the interest is disclosed or when the employment does not create a conflict of interest or appearance of conflict, an official or employee may not:

(i) Be employed by or have a financial interest in any entity:

(a) Subject to the authority of the official or employee or the town office, department, agency, board or commission with which the official or employee is affiliated; or

(b) That is negotiating or has entered into a contract with, or that is administered by, the town or an office, department, agency, board, or commission of the town with which the official or employee is affiliated; or

(ii) Hold any other employment relationship that would impair the impartiality or independence of judgment of the official or employee.

(2) The prohibitions of paragraph 1 of this subsection do not apply to:

(i) An official or employee who is appointed to a regulatory or licensing authority pursuant to a statutory requirement that persons subject to the jurisdiction of the authority be represented in appointments to the authority;

(ii) Subject to other provisions of law, a member of a board or commission in regard to a financial interest or employment held at the time of appointment, provided the financial interest or employment is publicly disclosed to the appointing authority and the commission;

(iii) An official or employee whose duties are ministerial, if the private employment or financial interest does not create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest, as permitted and in accordance with regulations adopted by the commission; or

(iv) Employment or financial interests allowed by regulation of the commission if the employment does not create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest or if the financial interest is disclosed.

(E) Post-employment limitations and restrictions.

(1) A former official or employee may not assist or represent any party other than the town in a case, contract, or other specific matter involving the town if that matter is one in which the former official or employee significantly participated as an official or employee.

(2) A former elected official may not assist or represent another party for compensation, or otherwise act as a lobbyist, in a matter that is the subject of legislative action for one calendar year after the elected official leaves office.

(F) Contingent compensation. An official or employee may not assist or represent a party for contingent compensation in any matter before or involving the town.

(G) Use of prestige of office.

(1) An official or employee may not intentionally use the prestige of office or public position for the private gain of that official or employee or the private gain of another.

(2) This subsection does not prohibit the performance of usual and customary constituent services by an elected local official without additional compensation.

(H) Solicitation and acceptance of gifts.

(1) An official or employee may not solicit any gift.

(2) An official or employee may not directly solicit or facilitate the solicitation of a gift, on behalf of another person, from an individual regulated lobbyist.

(3) An official or employee may not knowingly accept a gift, directly or indirectly, from a person that the official or employee knows or has the reason to know:

(i) Is doing business with or seeking to do business with the town office, department, agency, board or commission with which the official or employee is affiliated;

(ii) Has financial interests that may be substantially and materially affected, in a manner distinguishable from the public generally, by the performance or nonperformance of the official duties of the official or employee;

(iii) Is engaged in an activity regulated or controlled by the office, department, agency, board or commission with which the official or employee is affiliated;

(iv) Is a lobbyist with respect to matters within the jurisdiction of the official or employee; or

(v) Is an association, or any entity acting on behalf of an association that is engaged only in representing counties or municipal corporations.

(4) Paragraph (5) of this subsection does not apply to a gift:

(i) That would tend to impair the impartiality and the independence of judgment of the official or employee receiving the gift;

(ii) Of significant value that would give the appearance of impairing the impartiality and independence of judgment of the official or employee; or

(iii) Of significant value that the recipient official or employee believes or has reason to believe is designed to impair the impartiality and independence of judgment of the official or employee.

(5) Notwithstanding paragraph (3) and subject to paragraph (4) of this subsection, an official or employee may accept the following:

(i) Meals and beverages consumed in the presence of the donor or sponsoring entity;

(ii) Ceremonial gifts or awards that have insignificant monetary value;

(iii) Unsolicited gifts of nominal value that do not exceed \$ 20 in cost or trivial items of informational value;

(iv) Reasonable expenses for food, travel, lodging, and scheduled entertainment of the official or the employee at a meeting which is given in return for the participation of the official or employee in a panel or speaking engagement at the meeting;

(v) Gifts of tickets or free admission extended to an elected local official to attend a charitable, cultural, or political events, if the purpose of this gift or admission is a courtesy or ceremony extended to the elected official's office;

(vi) A specific gift or class of gifts that the commission exempts from the operation of this subsection upon a finding, in writing, that acceptance of the gift or class of gifts would not be detrimental to the impartial conduct of the business of the town and that the gift is purely personal and private in nature;

(vii) Gifts from a person related to the official or employee by blood or marriage, or any other individual who is a member of the household of the official or employee; or

(viii) Honoraria for speaking to or participating in a meeting provided that the offering of the honorarium is in not related in any way to the official's or employee's official position.

(I) Disclosure of confidential information. Other than in the discharge of official duties, an official or employee or former official or employee may not disclose or use confidential information, that the official or employee acquired by reason of the official's or employee's public position or former public position and that is not available to the public, for the economic benefit of the official or employee or that of another person.

(J) Participation in procurement.

(1) An individual who drafts or assists in the drafting of specifications, an invitation for bids, or a request for proposals for a procurement for the town, may not assist or represent another person, directly or indirectly, who is submitting a bid or proposal for the procurement.

(2) An individual who drafts or assists in the drafting of specifications, an invitation for bids, or a request for proposals for a procurement for the town, may not submit a bid or proposal for the procurement.

(3) A person who employs a current or former town official or employee who drafted or assisted in the drafting of specifications, an invitation for bids, or a request for proposals for a procurement for the town, may not submit a bid or proposal for that procurement or assist or represent another person, directly or indirectly, who is submitting a bid or proposal for the procurement.

(4) For purposes of paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) of this subsection, assisting in the drafting of specifications, an invitation for bids, or a request for proposals for a procurement does not include:

- (i) Providing descriptive literature such as catalogue sheets, brochures, technical data sheets, or standard specification “samples”, whether requested by the town or provided on an unsolicited basis;
- (ii) Submitting written comments on a specification prepared by the town or on a solicitation for a bid or proposal when comments are solicited from two or more persons as part of a request for information or a prebid or preproposal process;
- (iii) Providing specifications for a sole source procurement made in accordance with of the code of the Town of Perryville § 66 – 5(B) of the code of the Town of Perryville ; or
- (iv) Providing architectural and engineering services for:
  - (A) Programming, master planning, or other project planning services; or
  - (B) The design of a construction project if:
    - 1. The design services do not involve lead or prime design responsibilities or construction phase responsibilities on behalf of the town; and
    - 2. (I) The anticipated value of the procurement contract at the time of advertisement is at least \$1,000,000, and not more than \$40,000,000; or
    - (II) Regardless of the amount of the procurement contract, the payment to the individual or person for the design services does not exceed \$200,000.



(K) An official or employee may not retaliate against an individual for reporting or participating in an investigation of a potential violation of this chapter.

**§ 8-5 Financial Disclosure – Elected Officials and Candidates to be Town Elected Officials. (Repealed §8-5A by Ord. 2019-19, 12-17-19)**

(A) This section applies to all elected officials and candidates to be town elected officials.

(B) (1) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, an elected official or a candidate to be a town elected official shall file the financial disclosure statement required under this section:

- (i) On a form provided by the commission;
- (ii) Under oath or affirmation; and
- (iii) With the commission.

(2) Deadlines for filing statements.

- (i) An incumbent elected official shall file a financial disclosure statement annually no later than April 30<sup>th</sup> of each year for the preceding calendar year.

(ii) An individual who is appointed to fill a vacancy in an elective office for which a financial disclosure statement is required and who has not already filed a financial disclosure statement, shall file a statement for the preceding calendar year within 30 days after appointment.

(iii)(a) An individual who, other than by reasons of death, leaves an office for which a statement is required shall file a statement within 60 days after leaving the office.

(b) The statement shall cover:

1. The calendar year immediately preceding the year in which the individual left office, unless a statement covering that year has already been filed by the individual; and

2. The portion of the current calendar year during which the individual held the office.

(C) Candidates to be elected officials.

(1) Except an official who has filed a financial disclosure statement under another provision of this section for the reporting period, a candidate to be an elected official

shall file a Financial Disclosure Statement each year beginning with the year in which the Certificate of Candidacy is filed through the year of the election.

(2) A candidate to be an elected official shall file a statement required under this section:

(a) In the year the certificate of candidacy is filed, no later than the filing of the certificate of candidacy;

(b) In the year of the election, on or before the earlier of April 15 or the last day for the withdrawal of candidacy; and

(c) In all other years for which a statement is required, on or before April 15.

(3) A candidate to be an elected official:

(a) Shall file the statement required under § 8-5(c)(2)(a) of this Chapter with the Town with the Certificate of Candidacy or with the Commission prior to filing the Certificate of Candidacy; and

(b) Shall file the statements required under § 8-5(c)(2)(b) and (c) with the Commission.

(4) The Town may not accept any Certificate of Candidacy unless a statement has been filed in proper form.

(5) If a candidate fails to file a statement required by this subsection after written notice is provided by the town at least 5 days before the last day for the withdrawal of candidacy, or at least 10 days before an election if no date is set for withdrawal of a candidacy, the candidate is deemed to have withdrawn the candidacy.

(6) If a candidate fails to file a statement required by this subsection, the Town shall provide written notice to the candidate directing the candidate to file the statement within 5 days from the date of the notice.

(7) Within 30 days of the receipt of a statement required under this subsection, the person receiving the statement shall forward the statement to the commission or the office designated by the commission.

(D) Public record.

(1) The commission or office designated by the commission shall maintain all Financial Disclosure Statements filed under this section and under section § 8-6.

(2) Financial Disclosure Statements shall be made available during normal office hours for examination and copying by the public subject to reasonable fees established by

the Town and administrative procedures established by the commission. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the commission may not make available for examination and copying by the public any portion of a financial disclosure statement that contains the home address of an individual. Additionally, the commission or office designated by the commission shall not provide public access to information related to consideration received from:

- (i) The University of Maryland Medical System;
- (ii) A governmental entity of the State or a local government in the State; or
- (iii) A quasi-governmental entity of the State or local government in the State.

(3) If an individual examines or copies a Financial Disclosure Statement, the commission or the office designated by the commission shall record:

- (i) The name and home address of the individual reviewing or copying the statement; and
- (ii) The name of the person whose Financial Disclosure Statement was examined or copied.

(4) Upon request by the official or employee whose Financial Disclosure Statement was examined or copied, the commission or the office designated by the commission shall provide the official or employee with a copy of the name and home address of the person who reviewed the official's or employee's Financial Disclosure Statement.

(E) Retention requirements. The commission or the office designated by the commission shall retain Financial Disclosure Statements for four years from the date of receipt.

(F) Contents of statement.

(1) Interests in real property.

- (i) A statement filed under this section shall include a schedule of all interests in real property wherever located.

(ii) For each interest in real property, the schedule shall include:

(a) The nature of the property and the location by street address, mailing address, or legal description of the property;

(b) The nature and extent of the interest held, including any conditions and encumbrances on the interest;

(c) The date when, the manner in which, and the identity of the person from whom the interest was acquired;

(d) The nature and amount of the consideration given in exchange for the interest or, if acquired other than by purchase, the fair market value of the interest at the time acquired;

(e) If any interest was transferred, in whole or in part, at any time during the reporting period, a description of the interest transferred, the nature and amount of the consideration received for the interest, and the identity of the person to whom the interest was transferred; and

(f) The identity of any other person with an interest in the property.

(2) Interests in corporations, partnerships and limited liability companies.

(i) A statement filed under this section shall include a schedule of all interests in any corporation, partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability corporation or limited liability company, regardless of whether the corporation, partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability corporation or limited liability company does business with the town.

(ii) For each interest reported under this paragraph, the schedule shall include:

(a) The name and address of the principal office of the corporation, partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability corporation or limited liability company;

(b) The nature and amount of the interest held, including any conditions and encumbrances on the interest;

(c) With respect to any interest transferred, in whole or in part, at any time during the reporting period, a description of the interest transferred, the nature and amount of the consideration received for the interest and, if known, the identity of the person to whom the interest was transferred; and

(d) With respect to any interest acquired during the reporting period:

1. The date when, the manner in which, and the identity of the person from whom the interest was acquired; and

2. The nature and the amount of the consideration given in exchange for the interest or, if acquired other than by purchase, the fair market value of the interest at the time acquired.

(iii) An individual may satisfy the requirement to report the amount of the interest held under item (II)(b) of this paragraph by reporting, instead of a dollar amount:

(a) For an equity interest in a corporation or limited liability corporation, the number of shares held and, unless the corporation's stock is publicly traded, the percentage of equity interest held;

(b) For an equity interest in a partnership or a limited liability partnership, the percentage of equity interest held; or

(c) For an equity interest in a limited liability company, the percentage of equity interest held.

(3) Interests in business entities doing business with town.

(i) A statement filed under this section shall include a schedule of all interests in any business entity that does business with the town, other than interests reported under paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(ii) For each interest reported under this paragraph (3), the schedule shall include:

(a) The name and address of the principal office of the business entity;

(b) The nature and amount of the interest held, including any conditions to and encumbrances in the interest;

(c) With respect to any interest transferred, in whole or in part, at any time during the reporting period, a description of the interest transferred, the nature and amount of the consideration received in exchange for the interest and, if known, the identity of the person to whom the interest was transferred; and

(d) With respect to any interest acquired during the reporting period:

1. The date when, the manner in which, and the identity of the person from whom the interest was acquired; and

2. The nature and the amount of the consideration given in exchange for the interest or, if acquired other than by purchase, the fair market value of the interest at the time acquired.

(4) Gifts.

(i) A statement filed under this section shall include a schedule of each gift in excess of \$20 in value or a series of gifts totaling \$100 or more received during the reporting period from or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any one person who does business with or is regulated by the town or from an association, or any entity acting on behalf of an association, that is engaged only in representing counties or municipal corporations.

(ii) For each gift reported, the schedule shall include:

(a) A description of the nature and value of the gift; and

(b) The identity of the person from whom, or on behalf of whom, directly or indirectly, the gift was received.

(5) Employment with or interests in entities doing business with town.

(i) A statement filed under this section shall include a schedule of all offices, directorships, and salaried employment by the individual or member of the immediate family of the individual held at any time during the reporting period with entities doing business with the town.

(ii) For each position reported under this paragraph, the schedule shall include:

(a) The name and address of the principal office of the business entity;

(b) The title and nature of the office, directorship, or salaried employment held and the date it commenced; and

(c) The name of each town office, department, board, commission or agency with which the entity is involved.

(6) Indebtedness to entities doing business with the town.

(i) A statement filed under this section shall include a schedule of all liabilities, excluding retail credit accounts, to persons doing business with the town owed at any time during the reporting period:

(a) By the individual; or

(b) By a member of the immediate family of the individual if the individual was involved in the transaction giving rise to the liability.

(ii) For each liability reported under this paragraph, the schedule shall include:

(a) The identity of the person to whom the liability was owed and the date the liability was incurred;

(b) The amount of the liability owed as of the end of the reporting period;

(c) The terms of payment of the liability and the extent to which the principal amount of the liability was increased or reduced during the year; and

(d) The security given, if any, for the liability.

(7) Employment of immediate family members by town. A statement filed under this section shall include a schedule of the immediate family members of the individual employed by the town in any capacity at any time during the reporting period.

(8) Sources of earned income.

(i) A statement filed under this section shall include a schedule of the name and address of each place of employment and of each business entity of which the individual or a member of the individual's immediate family was a sole or partial owner and from which the individual or member of the individual's immediate family received earned income, at any time during the reporting period.

(ii) A minor child's employment or business ownership need not be disclosed if the agency that employs the individual does not regulate, exercise authority over, or contract with the place of employment or business entity of the minor child.

(iii) For a statement filed on or after January 1, 2019, if the individual's spouse is a regulated lobbyist, the statement shall include the name and address of the entity that has engaged the spouse for lobbying purposes.

(9) A statement filed under this section may also include a schedule of additional interests or information that the individual making the statement wishes to disclose.

(10) An individual shall disclose the information specified in General Provisions Article §5-607 (J)(1), Annotated Code of Maryland, for any financial or contractual relationship with:

- (a) The University of Maryland Medical System;
- (b) A governmental entity of the State or a local government in the State or a local government in the State; or
- (c) A quasi-governmental entity of the State or local government in the State.

For each financial or contractual relationship reported, the schedule shall include:

- (a) A description of the relationship;
- (b) The subject matter of the relationship; and
- (c) The consideration.

(11) Relationships. A Statement filed under this section shall include a schedule that discloses any relationships, familial, sexual, or romantic) at any time during the reporting

period between the Mayor or any Commissioner and Town Employee or contractor or vendor that does business with the Town.

(G) For the purposes of § 8-5(F)(1), (2) and (3) of this chapter, the following interests are considered to be the interests of the individual making the statement:

(1) An interest held by a member of the individual's immediate family, if the interest was, at any time during the reporting period, directly or indirectly controlled by the individual.

(2) An interest held, at any time during the applicable period, by:

- (i) A business entity in which the individual held a 10% or greater interest;
- (ii) A business entity described in section (I) of this subsection in which the business entity held a 25% or greater interest;
- (iii) A business entity described in section (II) of this subsection in which the business entity held a 50% or greater interest; and
- (iv) A business entity in which the individual directly or indirectly, through an interest in one or more combination of other business entities, holds a 10% or greater interest.

(3) An interest held by a trust or an estate in which, at any time during the reporting period:

- (i) The individual held a reversionary interest or was a beneficiary, or
- (ii) If a revocable trust, the individual was a settlor.

(H)(1) The commission shall review the financial disclosure statements submitted under this section for compliance with the provisions of this section and shall notify an individual submitting the statement of any omissions or deficiencies.

(2) The commission may take appropriate enforcement action to ensure compliance with this section.

(I) For purposes of this section "Interest" does not include a mutual fund or exchange-traded fund that is publicly traded on a national scale unless the mutual fund or exchange-traded fund is composed primarily of holdings of stocks and interests in a specific sector or area that is regulated by the individual's governmental unit.

(J) An individual who is required to disclose the name of a business under this section shall disclose any other names that the business is trading as or doing business as.



**§ 8-6 Financial Disclosure – Employees and Appointed Officials.**

(A) This section only applies to the following appointed officials and employees:

- (1) The Town Administrator.
- (2) The Chief of Police.
- (3) All Town Supervisors.
- (4) Members of the Ethics Commission.
- (5) Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- (6) Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- (7) Members of all other Town decision-making boards.

(B) A statement filed under this section shall be filed with the commission under oath or affirmation.

(C) On or before April 30 of each year during which an official or employee holds office or employment, an official or employee shall file a statement disclosing gifts received during the preceding calendar year from any person that contracts with or is regulated by town, including the name of the donor of the gift and the approximate retail value at the time of receipt.

(D) An official or employee shall disclose employment and interests that raise conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest in connection with a specific proposed action by the employee or official sufficiently in advance of the action to provide adequate disclosure to the public.

(E) The commission shall maintain all disclosure statements filed under this section as public records available for public inspection and copying as provided in §§ 8-5(D) and (E) of this chapter.

**§ 8-7 Lobbying.**

(A) A person shall file a lobbying registration statement with the commission if the person:

(1) Personally appears before a town official or employee with the intent to influence that person in performance of the official duties of the official or employee; and

(2) In connection with the intent to influence expends or reasonably expects to expend in a given calendar year in excess of \$25 on food, entertainment or other gifts for officials or employees of the town.

(B) A person shall file registration statement required under this section on or before the latter of January 15 of the calendar year or within 5 days after first performing an act that requires registration in the calendar year.

(C)(1) The registration statement shall identify:

(i) The registrant;

(ii) Any other person on whose behalf the registrant acts; and

(iii) The subject matter on which the registrant proposes to make appearances specified in subsection (a) of this section.

(2) The registration statement shall cover a defined registration period not to exceed one calendar year.

(D) Within 30 days after the end of any calendar year during which a person was registered under this section, the person shall file a report with the commission disclosing:

(1) The value, date, and nature of any food, entertainment or other gift provided to a town official or employee; and

(2) If a gift or series of gifts to a single official or employee exceeds \$25 in value, the identity of the official or employee.

(E) The commission shall maintain the registrations and reports filed under this section as public records available for public inspection and copying for four years after receipt by the commission.

#### **§ 8-8 Exemptions and Modifications.**

The commission may grant exemptions and modifications to the provisions of §§ 8-4 and §8-6 of this chapter to employees and to appointed members of town boards and commissions, when the commission finds that an exemption or modification would not be contrary to the purposes of this chapter, and the application of this chapter would:

(A) Constitute an unreasonable invasion of privacy; and

(B) Significantly reduce the availability of qualified persons for public service.

#### **§ 8-9 Enforcement.**

(A) The commission may:

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(1) Assess a late fee of \$2 per day up to a maximum of \$250 for a failure to timely file a financial disclosure statement required under §§ 8-5 or § 8-6 of this chapter;

(2) Assess a late fee of \$10 per day up to a maximum of \$250 for a failure to file a timely lobbyist registration or lobbyist report required under § 8-7 of this chapter; and

(3) Issue a cease and desist order against any person found to be in violation of this chapter.

(B)(1) Upon a finding of a violation of any provision of this chapter, the commission may:

(i) Issue an order of compliance directing the respondent to cease and desist from the violation;

(ii) Issue a reprimand; or

(iii) Recommend to the appropriate authority other appropriate discipline of the respondent, including censure or removal if that discipline is authorized by law.

(2) If the commission finds that a respondent has violated § 8-7 of this chapter, the commission may:

(i) Require a respondent who is a registered lobbyist to file any additional reports or information that reasonably related to the information that is required under § 8-7 of this chapter;

(ii) Impose a fine not exceeding \$1,000 for each violation; and

(iii) Suspend the registration of an individual registered lobbyist if the commission finds that the lobbyist has knowingly and willfully violated § 8-7 of this chapter or has been convicted of a criminal offense arising from lobbying activities.

(C)(1) Upon request by the commission, the town attorney or other attorney designated by the Town Council, may file a petition for injunctive or other relief in the circuit court for Cecil County, or in any other court having proper venue for the purpose of requiring compliance with the provisions of this chapter.

(2)(i) The court may:

(a) Issue an order to cease and desist from the violation;

(b) Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, void an official action taken by an official or employee with a conflict of interest prohibited by this chapter when the action arises from or concerns the subject matter of the conflict and if

the legal action is brought within 90 days of the occurrence of the official action, if the court deems voiding the action to be in the best interest of the public; or

(c) Impose a fine of up to \$500 for any violation of the provisions of this chapter, with each day upon which the violation occurs constituting a separate offense;

(ii) A court may not void any official action appropriating public funds, levying taxes, or providing for the issuance of bonds, notes, or other evidences of public obligations.

(D) In addition to any other enforcement provisions in this chapter, a person who the commission or a court finds has violated this chapter:

(1) Is subject to termination or other disciplinary action; and

(2) May be suspended from receiving payment of salary or other compensation pending full compliance with the terms of an order of the commission or a court.

(E) A Town official or employee found to have violated this chapter is subject to disciplinary or other appropriate personnel action, including removal from office, disciplinary action, suspension of salary, or other sanction.

(F) Violation of this chapter is a misdemeanor subject to a fine of up to \$500 or imprisonment of up to six months, or both.

(G) A finding of a violation of this chapter by the commission is public information.