

As Adopted by the House

131st General Assembly

Regular Session

2015-2016

H. C. R. No. 3

Representative Amstutz

Cosponsors: Representatives Anielski, Antani, Antonio, Ashford, Baker, Blessing, Boose, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Buchy, Burkley, Butler, Celebrezze, Clyde, Conditt, Craig, Cupp, Curtin, Derickson, Dever, DeVitis, Dovilla, Driehaus, Duffey, Gerberry, Ginter, Green, Grossman, Hackett, Hagan, Hall, Hambley, Hayes, Hill, Howse, Johnson, G., Johnson, T., Koehler, Kraus, Kuhns, Kunze, Landis, LaTourette, Leland, Lepore-Hagan, Maag, McClain, McColley, O'Brien, M., Patterson, Phillips, Reineke, Rezabek, Roegner, Rogers, Romanchuk, Ruhl, Ryan, Schaffer, Scherer, Sears, Sheehy, Slaby, Slesnick, Smith, R., Sprague, Strahorn, Sweeney, Sykes, Thompson, Young, Zeltwanger, Speaker Rosenberger

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To adopt the Legislative Code of Ethics for the 1 members and employees of both chambers of the 2 131st General Assembly, employees of any 3 legislative agency, and candidates for the 132nd 4 General Assembly. 5

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF OHIO (THE SENATE CONCURRING):

WHEREAS, The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee, 6 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and 7 the President of the Senate pursuant to section 101.34 of the 8 Revised Code, is required to recommend a Code of Ethics that 9 is consistent with the law to govern all members and 10

employees of each chamber of the General Assembly and all 11
candidates for the office of member of each chamber; and 12

WHEREAS, The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee is the 13
appropriate ethics committee for matters relating to members and 14
employees of the General Assembly, employees of any legislative 15
agency, including the Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board, 16
Correctional Institution Inspection Committee, Joint Committee 17
on Agency Rule Review, Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee, 18
Legislative Information Systems, Legislative Inspector General, 19
Legislative Service Commission, and Ohio Constitutional 20
Modernization Commission, and candidates for the office of 21
member of the General Assembly; now therefore be it 22

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives and the Senate 23
of the 131st General Assembly adopt the following Legislative 24
Code of Ethics: 25

LEGISLATIVE CODE OF ETHICS 26

FOR MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE 27

131st OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 28

EMPLOYEES OF ANY LEGISLATIVE AGENCY, 29

AND CANDIDATES FOR THE 132nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY 30

SECTION 1. CONDUCT 31

All members of the Senate or the House of Representatives 32
shall conduct themselves at all times so as to reflect credit 33
upon the member's respective chamber of the General Assembly, 34
shall obey all rules of the member's respective chamber of the 35
General Assembly, and shall conform the member's conduct to this 36
Code of Ethics. All employees of the Senate or House of 37
Representatives and all employees of any legislative agency 38
shall conduct themselves at all times so as to reflect credit 39
upon the employee's respective chamber of the General Assembly 40

or institution of employment, shall obey all rules of the 41
employee's respective chamber of the General Assembly or 42
institution of employment, and shall conform the employee's 43
conduct to this Code of Ethics. 44

SECTION 2. DISCLOSURE STATEMENT 45

(A) The Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall 46
accept disclosure statements filed by members and employees of 47
the General Assembly and employees of any legislative agency 48
pursuant to section 102.02 of the Revised Code and shall 49
maintain a file of all disclosure statements that are filed 50
pursuant to that section. Every member of the General Assembly 51
and every employee of the General Assembly and any legislative 52
agency who is required to file a financial disclosure statement, 53
within the period prescribed by law, shall file with the Office 54
of the Legislative Inspector General, a disclosure statement as 55
provided for by section 102.02 of the Revised Code. Each member 56
and each employee of the General Assembly and employee of any 57
legislative agency required to file a financial disclosure 58
statement, within the period and in the manner prescribed by 59
section 102.02 of the Revised Code, shall receive from the 60
Office of the Legislative Inspector General the form on which 61
the statement shall be prepared. 62

(B) Division (A) (2) (c) of section 102.02 of the Revised 63
Code applies to members of the General Assembly who are 64
attorneys or physicians or who otherwise engage in the practice 65
of a profession and to the clients, patients, and other 66
recipients of professional services of members of the General 67
Assembly who are attorneys or physicians or who otherwise engage 68
in the practice of a profession, even if those clients, 69
patients, and other recipients of professional services are 70
legislative agents. 71

(C) Division (A) (8) of section 102.02 of the Revised Code 72

requires a member of the General Assembly and an employee of the 73
General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file a 74
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code to 75
identify on a disclosure statement the source and amount of any 76
payment of expenses incurred for travel to destinations inside 77
or outside this state that the member or employee receives in 78
the member's or employee's own name or that another person 79
receives for the member's or employee's use or benefit in 80
connection with the member's or employee's official duties, 81
except for expenses for travel to meetings or conventions of a 82
national or state organization to which any state agency, 83
including, but not limited to, any legislative agency or state 84
institution of higher education as defined in section 3345.011 85
of the Revised Code, pays membership dues, or any political 86
subdivision or any office or agency of a political subdivision 87
pays membership dues. 88

(D) Division (A) (9) of section 102.02 of the Revised Code 89
requires a member of the General Assembly and an employee of the 90
General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file a 91
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code to 92
identify on a disclosure statement the source of payment of 93
expenses for meals and other food and beverages that are 94
incurred in connection with the person's official duties and 95
that exceed one hundred dollars aggregated per calendar year, 96
except for expenses for meals and other food and beverages 97
provided at a meeting at which the member or employee 98
participated in a panel, seminar, or speaking engagement or at a 99
meeting or convention of a national or state organization to 100
which a state agency, including, but not limited to, any 101
legislative agency or state institution of higher education as 102
defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised Code, pays membership 103
dues, or any political subdivision or any office or agency of a 104
political subdivision pays membership dues. 105

(E) (1) Except as otherwise provided in division (E) (2) of this section, in accordance with section 102.02 of the Revised Code, every member of the General Assembly and every employee of the General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file an annual statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code shall disclose the source of a gift or gifts, where the value of the gift or gifts aggregated per calendar year exceeds seventy-five dollars, except gifts received by will or by virtue of section 2105.06 of the Revised Code, or received from spouses, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, siblings, nephews, nieces, uncles, aunts, cousins, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, fathers-in-law, mothers-in-law, step-relations, or any person to whom the member or employee of the General Assembly or employee of any legislative agency stands in loco parentis, or received by way of distribution from any inter vivos or testamentary trust established by a spouse or by an ancestor.

(2) In accordance with section 102.02 of the Revised Code, every member of the General Assembly and every employee of the General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file an annual statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code shall disclose the source of a gift or gifts from a legislative agent, where the value of the gift or gifts aggregated per calendar year exceeds twenty-five dollars.

SECTION 3. LICENSE DISCLOSURE

Any member of the General Assembly who engages in the conduct or practice of a particular business, profession, trade, or occupation that is subject to licensing or regulation by any branch, department, division, institution, instrumentality, board, commission, or bureau of the state shall file a notice that the member is the holder of a particular license, or is engaged in such activity, as part of the financial disclosure statement required by section 102.02 of the Revised Code.

SECTION 4. VOTING ABSTENTION 139

(A) A member who has reason to believe that the member has 140
a substantial personal interest in legislation may request 141
permission of the chair to abstain from voting on the 142
legislation and may state the member's reason for the request. 143
The request shall be granted by the chair or the member's 144
respective chamber of the General Assembly pursuant to the rules 145
of that chamber. The request and permission to abstain shall be 146
entered in the House or Senate Journal, as is appropriate. 147

(B) No member of the General Assembly shall vote on any 148
legislation that the member knows is then being actively 149
advocated if the member is one of the following with respect to 150
a legislative agent or employer that is then actively advocating 151
on that legislation: 152

(1) An employee, as defined in section 102.031 of the 153
Revised Code; 154

(2) A business associate, as defined in section 102.031 of 155
the Revised Code; 156

(3) A person, other than an employee, who is hired under 157
contract to perform certain services, and such position involves 158
a substantial and material exercise of administrative discretion 159
in the formulation of public policy. 160

(C) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may impose a 161
fine of not more than one thousand dollars upon a member of the 162
General Assembly who violates division (B) of this section. 163

SECTION 5. COMPENSATION 164

(A) Except as provided in division (D) of section 102.04 of 165
the Revised Code, no person elected to or employed by the 166
General Assembly or employed by any legislative agency shall 167
receive or agree to receive, directly or indirectly, 168
compensation other than from the house with which the person 169

serves or from any legislative agency, if the person is a 170
legislative agency employee, for any service rendered or to be 171
rendered by the person personally in any case, proceeding, 172
application, or other matter that is before the General Assembly 173
or any department, division, institution, instrumentality, 174
board, commission, or bureau of the state, excluding the courts. 175

Division (A) of this section shall not be construed to 176
prohibit the performance of ministerial functions, including, 177
but not limited to, the filing or amendment of tax returns, 178
applications for permits and licenses, incorporation papers, 179
security registrations, and other documents. 180

Except as provided in division (D) of section 102.04 of the 181
Revised Code, no person elected to or employed by the General 182
Assembly or employed by any legislative agency shall sell or 183
agree to sell, except through competitive bidding, any goods or 184
services to the General Assembly or any department, division, 185
institution, instrumentality, board, commission, or bureau of 186
the state, excluding the courts. 187

(B) No member or employee of the General Assembly or 188
employee of any legislative agency shall knowingly accept any of 189
the following from a legislative agent: 190

(1) The payment of any expenses for travel or lodging 191
except as otherwise authorized by division (H) of section 102.03 192
of the Revised Code; 193

(2) More than seventy-five dollars aggregated per calendar 194
year as payment for meals and other food and beverages, other 195
than for those meals and other food and beverages provided to 196
the member or employee at a meeting at which the member or 197
employee participates in a panel, seminar, or speaking 198
engagement, at a meeting or convention of a national 199
organization to which either house of the General Assembly or 200
any state agency, including, but not limited to, any legislative 201

agency or state institution of higher education as defined in 202
section 3345.011 of the Revised Code, pays membership dues, or 203
at a dinner, party, or function to which all members of the 204
General Assembly or all members of either house of the General 205
Assembly are invited. 206

(C) No member or employee of the General Assembly or 207
employee of any legislative agency shall knowingly accept from a 208
legislative agent a gift of any amount in the form of cash or 209
the equivalent of cash, or a gift or gifts of any other thing of 210
value where the value of the gift or gifts aggregated per 211
calendar year exceeds seventy-five dollars. As used in this 212
division, "gift" does not include any contribution as defined in 213
section 3517.01 of the Revised Code or any gifts of meals and 214
other food and beverages or the payment of expenses incurred for 215
travel to destinations either inside or outside this state that 216
is received by a member of the General Assembly and that is 217
incurred in connection with the member's official duties. 218

(D) It is not a violation of division (B) (2) of this 219
section if, within sixty days after receiving notice pursuant to 220
division (F) (2) of section 101.73 of the Revised Code from a 221
legislative agent that the legislative agent has provided a 222
member of the General Assembly or an employee of the General 223
Assembly or any legislative agency with more than seventy-five 224
dollars aggregated in a calendar year as payment for meals and 225
other food and beverages that were purchased for consumption on 226
the premises in which the food and beverages were sold, the 227
member or employee of the General Assembly or employee of any 228
legislative agency returns to that legislative agent the amount 229
received that exceeds seventy-five dollars. 230

SECTION 6. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION 231

No present or former member or employee of the General 232
Assembly or present or former employee of any legislative agency 233

shall disclose or use for the member's or employee's personal 234
profit, without appropriate authorization, any information 235
acquired by the member or employee in the course of the member's 236
or employee's official duties that has been clearly designated 237
to the member or employee as confidential when such confidential 238
designation is warranted because of the status of the 239
proceedings or the circumstances under which the information was 240
received and preserving its confidentiality is necessary to the 241
proper conduct of government business. No present or former 242
member or employee of the General Assembly or present or former 243
employee of any legislative agency shall disclose or use, 244
without appropriate authorization, any information acquired by 245
the member or employee in the course of the member's or 246
employee's official duties that is confidential because of 247
statutory provisions, except as provided in section 101.30 of 248
the Revised Code or Section 12 or 13 of Article II, Ohio 249
Constitution. 250

SECTION 7. IMPROPER INFLUENCE 251

(A) No member or employee of the General Assembly or 252
employee of any legislative agency shall use or attempt to use 253
or authorize the use of the authority or influence of the 254
member's or employee's office or employment to secure anything 255
of value or the promise or offer of anything of value that is of 256
such a character as to manifest a substantial and improper 257
influence upon the member or employee with respect to the 258
member's or employee's duties. 259

(B) No member or employee of the General Assembly or 260
employee of any legislative agency shall solicit or accept 261
anything of value that is of such a character as to manifest a 262
substantial and improper influence upon the member or employee 263
with respect to the member's or employee's duties. 264

(C) No member of the General Assembly shall solicit or 265

receive funds from any legislative agent who is registered 266
pursuant to section 101.72 of the Revised Code, for use other 267
than by a political party, campaign committee, legislative 268
campaign fund, political action committee, or political 269
contributing entity, as defined in section 3517.01 of the 270
Revised Code, except that a member may solicit or receive funds 271
from any legislative agent on behalf of religious and benevolent 272
organizations regulated by Chapter 1716. of the Revised Code or 273
charitable organizations that have registered with the Attorney 274
General pursuant to section 109.26 or 1716.02 of the Revised 275
Code. 276

(D) In the absence of bribery or another offense under the 277
Revised Code or a purpose to defraud, the receipt of 278
contributions, as defined in section 3517.01 of the Revised 279
Code, made to a campaign committee, political party, legislative 280
campaign fund, political action committee, or political 281
contributing entity on behalf of a member of or candidate for 282
the General Assembly does not violate divisions (A) and (B) of 283
this section. 284

(E) A member or employee of the General Assembly and an 285
employee of any legislative agency may accept travel, meals, and 286
lodging or expenses or reimbursement of expenses for travel, 287
meals, and lodging in connection with conferences, seminars, and 288
similar events related to the member's or employee's official 289
duties if the travel, meals, lodging, expenses, or reimbursement 290
is not of such a character as to manifest a substantial and 291
improper influence upon the member or employee with respect to 292
those duties and if, in relation to expenses or reimbursement 293
for travel or lodging provided to a member by a legislative 294
agent, the expenses or reimbursement are not made in violation 295
of division (C)(1) of section 102.031 of the Revised Code. A 296
member or employee who acts in compliance with this division 297
does not violate division (A), (B), or (C) of this section. 298

SECTION 8. STAFF USE	299
(A) A member of the General Assembly shall utilize General Assembly employees only for the official purposes for which they are employed.	300 301 302
(B) (1) In accordance with section 3517.092 of the Revised Code, no member of or candidate for the General Assembly, no campaign committee of a member of or candidate for the General Assembly, no legislative caucus campaign committee, and no other person or entity shall knowingly solicit or accept a contribution on behalf of that member or candidate, that member's or candidate's campaign committee, or a legislative caucus campaign committee from any of the following:	303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310
(a) A state employee whose appointing authority is the member of the General Assembly;	311 312
(b) A state employee whose appointing authority is authorized or required by law to be appointed by the member of the General Assembly;	313 314 315
(c) A state employee who functions in or is employed by the Ohio Senate, the Ohio House of Representatives, or any legislative agency;	316 317 318
(d) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, whose appointing authority will be the candidate for the General Assembly, if elected;	319 320 321
(e) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, whose appointing authority will be appointed by the candidate for the General Assembly, if elected, as authorized or required by law;	322 323 324
(f) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, who will function in or be employed in or by the same public agency, department, division, or office as the candidate for the General Assembly, if elected.	325 326 327 328

(2) As used in this section, "contribution" does not
include services provided by individuals volunteering a portion
of their time on behalf of a campaign.

(C) In addition to any complaint brought or penalty that
may be imposed under sections 3517.152 to 3517.157 of the
Revised Code, the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may receive
and initiate complaints against members and employees of, and
candidates for, the General Assembly and employees of any
legislative agency concerning conduct alleged to be in violation
of this section. Upon a finding of a violation of this section,
the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend whatever
sanction is appropriate with respect to a particular member,
employee, or candidate as will best maintain in the minds of the
public a good opinion of the conduct and character of members
and employees of the General Assembly.

SECTION 9. SEPARATION OF FUNDS

(A) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly
shall convert, receive, or accept for personal or business use
anything of value from the member's or candidate's campaign
fund, as defined in section 3517.01 of the Revised Code,
including, without limitation, payments to the member or
candidate for services personally performed by the member or
candidate, except as reimbursement for any of the following:

(1) Legitimate and verifiable prior campaign expenses
incurred by the member or candidate;

(2) Legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, and necessary
prior expenses incurred by the member or candidate in connection
with duties as the holder of a public office, including, without
limitation, expenses incurred through participation in
nonpartisan or bipartisan events where the participation of the
holder of a public office would normally be expected;

(3) Legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, and necessary 360
prior expenses incurred by a member or candidate while doing any 361
of the following: 362

(a) Engaging in activities in support of or opposition to 363
another candidate, political party, or ballot issue; 364

(b) Raising funds for a political party, political action 365
committee, campaign committee, legislative campaign fund, 366
political contributing entity, or other candidate; 367

(c) Participating in the activities of a political party, 368
political action committee, legislative campaign fund, political 369
contributing entity, or campaign committee; 370

(d) Attending a political party convention or other 371
political meeting. 372

(B) For purposes of division (A) of this section, an 373
expense is incurred whenever a member or candidate has either 374
made payment or is obligated to make payment, as by the use of a 375
credit card or other credit procedure, or by the use of goods or 376
services received on account. 377

(C) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly 378
shall knowingly receive or accept reimbursement for an expense 379
under division (A) of this section to the extent that the 380
expense previously was reimbursed or paid from another source of 381
funds. If an expense is reimbursed under division (A) of this 382
section and is later paid or reimbursed, wholly or in part, from 383
another source of funds, a member or candidate shall immediately 384
repay the reimbursement received under division (A) of this 385
section to the extent of the payment made or reimbursement 386
received from the other source. 387

(D) A member of the General Assembly may be reimbursed 388
under division (A) (1) or (3) of this section for expenses 389
incurred for the member's meals and lodging in Franklin County 390

if the expenses otherwise meet the requirements for 391
reimbursement under division (A) (1) or (3) of this section and 392
were not incurred while the member was in Franklin County to 393
attend floor sessions of the General Assembly or meetings of its 394
committees, except that a member may be reimbursed under 395
division (A) (1), (2), or (3) of this section for expenses 396
incurred for the member's meals in Franklin County at any time 397
if the expenses otherwise meet the requirements for 398
reimbursement under division (A) (1), (2), or (3) of this section 399
and were incurred for meals at which the member hosted other 400
persons. 401

(E) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly 402
shall accept for personal or business use anything of value from 403
a political party, political action committee, legislative 404
campaign fund, political contributing entity, or campaign 405
committee other than the member's or candidate's own campaign 406
committee, except for the following: 407

(1) Reimbursement for legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, 408
and necessary prior expenses not otherwise prohibited by law 409
incurred by the member or candidate while engaged in any 410
legitimate activity of the political party, political action 411
committee, legislative campaign fund, political contributing 412
entity, or such campaign committee. Without limitation, 413
reimbursable expenses under this division include those incurred 414
while doing any of the following: 415

(a) Engaging in activities in support of or opposition to 416
another candidate, political party, or ballot issue; 417

(b) Raising funds for a political party, campaign 418
committee, legislative campaign fund, or another candidate; 419

(c) Attending a political party convention or other 420
political meeting. 421

(2) Compensation not otherwise prohibited by law for actual 422
and valuable personal services rendered under a written contract 423
to the political party, political action committee, legislative 424
campaign fund, political contributing entity, or the member's or 425
candidate's own campaign committee for any legitimate activity 426
of the political party, political action committee, legislative 427
campaign fund, political contributing entity, or such campaign 428
committee. 429

Reimbursable expenses under this division do not include, 430
and it is a violation of this division for a member or candidate 431
to accept from a political party, political action committee, 432
legislative campaign fund, political contributing entity, or 433
campaign committee other than the member's or candidate's own 434
campaign committee, anything of value for activities primarily 435
related to the member's or candidate's own campaign for 436
election, except for contributions to the member's or 437
candidate's campaign committee. 438

For purposes of this division, an expense is incurred 439
whenever a member or candidate has either made payment or is 440
obligated to make payment, as by the use of a credit card or 441
other credit procedure, or by the use of goods or services 442
received on account. 443

(F) (1) Divisions (A) and (C) of this section do not 444
prohibit a member's or candidate's campaign committee from 445
making a direct advance or post payment from the member's or 446
candidate's campaign fund to vendors for goods and services for 447
which reimbursement is permitted under division (A) of this 448
section, except that no campaign committee shall pay a member or 449
candidate for services personally performed by the member or the 450
candidate. 451

(2) When any expense that may be reimbursed under division 452
(A), (C), or (E) of this section is part of other expenses that 453

may not be paid or reimbursed, the separation of the two types 454
of expenses for the purpose of allocating for payment or 455
reimbursement those expenses that may be paid or reimbursed may 456
be by any reasonable accounting method, considering all of the 457
surrounding circumstances. 458

(3) For purposes of divisions (A), (C), and (E) of this 459
section, mileage allowance at a rate not greater than that 460
allowed by the Internal Revenue Service at the time the travel 461
occurs may be paid instead of reimbursement for actual travel 462
expenses allowable. 463

(G) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall report 464
violations of this section to the Elections Commission pursuant 465
to division (E) (1) of Section 13 of this Code of Ethics. 466

SECTION 10. HONORARIA AND TESTIMONIALS 467

(A) No member of the General Assembly, employee of the 468
General Assembly who is required to file a financial disclosure 469
statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code, or employee 470
of any legislative agency who is required to file a financial 471
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code 472
shall solicit or accept an honorarium. This division and 473
divisions (A), (B), and (C) of Section 7 of this Code of Ethics 474
do not prohibit a member or employee who is required to file a 475
financial disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the 476
Revised Code from accepting the payment of actual travel 477
expenses, including any expenses incurred in connection with the 478
travel for lodging, and meals, food, and beverages provided to 479
the member or employee at a meeting at which the member or 480
employee participates in a panel, seminar, or speaking 481
engagement or provided to the member or employee at a meeting or 482
convention of a national organization to which either house of 483
the General Assembly, or any state agency, including, but not 484
limited to, any legislative agency or state institution of 485

higher education as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised Code, pays membership dues. This division and divisions (A), (B), and (C) of Section 7 of this Code of Ethics do not prohibit an employee of the General Assembly or employee of any legislative agency who is not required to file a financial disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code from accepting an honorarium or the payment of travel, meal, and lodging expenses if the honorarium, expenses, or both were paid in recognition of demonstrable business, professional, or esthetic interests of the employee that exist apart from the employee's public employment, including, but not limited to, such a demonstrable interest in public speaking and were not paid by any person or other entity, or by any representative or association of such person or entities, that is regulated by, doing business with, or seeking to do business with the General Assembly or any legislative agency.

(B) No member of the General Assembly shall conduct a public or private fund raising event that seeks to provide money for the member's personal use.

(C) As used in this section, "honorarium" means any payment made in consideration for any speech given, article published, or attendance at any public or private conference, convention, meeting, social event, meal, or similar gathering. "Honorarium" does not include ceremonial gifts or awards that have insignificant monetary value; unsolicited gifts of nominal value or trivial items of informational value; or earned income from any person, other than a legislative agent, for personal services that are customarily provided in connection with the practice of a bona fide business, if that business initially began before the member or employee conducting that business was elected or appointed to the member's or employee's office or position of employment.

SECTION 11. IMPROPER INDUCEMENT 518

If any person attempts to induce a member or employee of or 519
candidate for the General Assembly or employee of any 520
legislative agency to violate any provision of this Code of 521
Ethics, the member, employee, or candidate shall report the 522
matter to the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. 523

SECTION 12. ADVISORY BODY 524

(A) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend 525
legislation relating to ethics, conflicts of interest, and 526
financial disclosure and, upon a vote of a majority of its 527
members, may render advisory opinions with regard to questions 528
concerning these matters for members and employees of and 529
candidates for the General Assembly and for employees of any 530
legislative agency. 531

(B) When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee renders an 532
advisory opinion that has been publicly sought and that relates 533
to a special set of circumstances involving ethics, conflicts of 534
interest, or financial disclosure under Chapter 102. or section 535
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the person to whom the 536
opinion was directed or who was similarly situated may 537
reasonably rely upon such opinion and shall be immune from 538
criminal prosecutions, civil suits, or actions for removal from 539
the person's office or position of employment for a violation of 540
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code 541
based on facts and circumstances covered by the opinion, if the 542
opinion states that there is no violation of Chapter 102. or 543
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code. The committee 544
shall include in every advisory opinion it renders a statement 545
as to whether the set of circumstances described in the advisory 546
opinion constitutes a violation of section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of 547
the Revised Code. When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee 548
renders an opinion that has been publicly sought, the advisory 549
opinion is a public record available under section 149.43 of the 550
Revised Code. 551

(C) When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee renders a written opinion that has been privately sought and that relates to a special set of circumstances involving ethics, conflicts of interest, or financial disclosure under Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the written opinion does not have the legal effect of an advisory opinion issued under division (B) of this section. When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee renders a written opinion that has been privately sought, the written opinion is not a public record available under section 149.43 of the Revised Code.

The person to whom a written opinion is issued under this division may request the committee to issue the written opinion as an advisory opinion. The person may make the request at any time within thirty days after the written opinion is issued and prior to committing any proposed action discussed in the written opinion. Upon receiving a timely request and with the approval of a majority of the members of the committee, the committee may issue the written opinion as an advisory opinion. If the committee issues the written opinion as an advisory opinion, the advisory opinion has the same legal effect as an advisory opinion issued under division (B) of this section and is a public record available under section 149.43 of the Revised Code. If the person commits any proposed action discussed in the written opinion before the committee issues the written opinion as an advisory opinion, the advisory opinion grants no immunity to the person regarding any action that is discussed in the written opinion and that the person commits before the committee issues the written opinion as an advisory opinion.

(D) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall issue an advisory opinion under division (B) of this section or a written opinion under division (C) of this section, whether it is publicly or privately sought, only at a meeting of the committee and only with the approval of a majority of the members of the

committee. 585

(E) All requests for an opinion shall be submitted in 586
writing by the member or employee of or candidate for the 587
General Assembly or employee of any legislative agency who 588
desires the opinion and shall state in the request whether the 589
opinion is being publicly or privately sought. If the request 590
fails to state whether the opinion is being publicly or 591
privately sought, the committee shall consider the opinion to be 592
privately sought. The committee shall issue in writing all 593
advisory opinions that have been publicly sought, appropriately 594
number them, and make them available for public inspection. The 595
Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall conduct all of its 596
proceedings surrounding the rendering of an opinion so as to 597
protect the confidentiality of those named in the request for 598
the opinion. 599

SECTION 13. CONSIDERATION AND HEARING OF COMPLAINTS 600

(A) (1) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall 601
receive, and may initiate, complaints concerning breach of 602
privilege and complaints against members and employees of and 603
candidates for the General Assembly and employees of any 604
legislative agency concerning conduct alleged to be misconduct, 605
a violation of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the 606
Revised Code, or this Code of Ethics, ~~or the House or Senate~~ 607
~~rules~~. All complaints except those by the committee shall be by 608
affidavit made on personal knowledge, subject to the penalties 609
of perjury. A complaint by the committee shall be by affidavit, 610
based upon facts that constitute reasonable cause to believe 611
that a breach of privilege, misconduct, or a violation of ~~the~~ 612
~~House or Senate rules,~~ this Code of Ethics, ~~or~~ Chapter 102. or 613
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, ~~7~~ has occurred. 614
The complaint shall not contain innuendo, speculative 615
assertions, or conclusory statements. 616

At the first meeting of the committee in each calendar year, the chairperson of the committee for that year shall appoint an investigation subcommittee. The subcommittee shall consist of the chairperson of the committee for that year and a member of the committee who is a member of the chamber and political party of which the chairperson is not a member. This subcommittee shall have the authority to issue subpoenas regarding complaints referred to it and approve depositions by the Office of the Legislative Inspector General.

(2) A complaint other than a complaint by the committee shall be filed with the executive director of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General of the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. Upon receiving the complaint, the executive director or the executive director's designee shall gather, if necessary, preliminary facts surrounding the complaint for presentation to the chairperson or committee. Thereafter, the executive director shall seal the complaint and deliver it to the chairperson of the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. A complaint by the committee shall be drafted by the legal counsel of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, and, if at least eight members of the committee approve the draft complaint, the draft complaint shall be a complaint by the committee and shall be filed with the Office of the Legislative Inspector General and delivered to the chairperson of the committee.

Within fourteen days after the filing of a complaint by a complainant, the chairperson shall notify the complainant that the complaint has been filed with the committee, that all further proceedings of the committee are confidential, that the committee is required to dismiss the complaint if it is not disposed of within six months after the complaint is filed, and that, if a report dealing with the complaint has not been published in the House or Senate Journal, as appropriate, within that time, the complaint has been dismissed because no violation

was found to have been committed by the accused person. Within 650
fourteen days after the filing of any complaint, the chairperson 651
shall deliver a copy of the complaint to the accused person and 652
shall notify the accused person that the accused person may 653
file, within twenty days after receiving the copy, a written 654
response to the complaint with the executive director of the 655
Office of the Legislative Inspector General and, if desired, may 656
file in addition to the written response a request to appear 657
personally before the committee to answer to the complaint. The 658
executive director immediately shall seal the written response 659
to the complaint, the request, or both and deliver the written 660
response, the request, or both to the chairperson. 661

Within forty-five days after the filing of any complaint 662
and at least twenty days after the chairperson has delivered a 663
copy of the complaint to the accused person, the chairperson 664
shall convene a meeting of the committee regarding the 665
complaint. If at least eight members of the committee find that 666
the complaint before the committee is not frivolous and that the 667
facts alleged constitute on their face a breach of privilege, 668
misconduct, a violation of this Code of Ethics ~~or the House or~~ 669
~~Senate Rules~~, or a violation of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 670
or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the committee shall refer the 671
complaint to the Office of the Legislative Inspector General for 672
further investigation and may delegate to the investigation 673
subcommittee appointed pursuant to division (A)(1) of this 674
section the authority to issue subpoenas regarding a given 675
complaint or other matter. The chairperson of the committee 676
shall notify the accused of the referral. Unless eight members 677
of the committee find that the complaint before the committee 678
alleges facts that, on their face, constitute a breach of 679
privilege, misconduct, a violation of this Code of Ethics ~~or the~~ 680
~~House or Senate Rules~~, or a violation of Chapter 102. or 681
sections 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the committee 682

shall dismiss the complaint. 683

(B) The Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall 684
investigate each complaint referred to it by the committee and 685
shall investigate any other matters as directed by the 686
committee. The Office of the Legislative Inspector General may 687
request further information from the complainant, any person 688
presenting charges to the committee, the accused person if the 689
information sought is directly relevant to a complaint or 690
charges received by the committee pursuant to this section, and 691
any other person it believes may have information pertaining to 692
the complaint or other matter referred for investigation to the 693
Office of the Legislative Inspector General. It may request the 694
committee to issue a subpoena to obtain any necessary 695
information. Upon the approval of the investigation subcommittee 696
appointed pursuant to division (A) (1) of this section, the 697
Office of the Legislative Inspector General may depose any 698
person. Any person interviewed or deposed by the Office of the 699
Legislative Inspector General may be represented by an attorney. 700
The substance of any request for further information and the 701
information provided pursuant to any request are confidential. 702
Except as otherwise provided in this section, the person from 703
whom information is requested shall not divulge the substance of 704
the committee's request to any person other than the person's 705
attorney and shall not divulge the information provided in 706
response to the request to any person other than the person's 707
attorney and any person necessary to prepare the information for 708
delivery to the committee. Except as otherwise provided in this 709
section, no attorney or person who prepares information for 710
delivery to the committee shall divulge the substance of the 711
committee's request or the information provided in response to 712
the request. 713

Upon the completion of an investigation based on a 714
complaint referred to the Office of the Legislative Inspector 715

General, the executive director, or the executive director's 716
designee, shall present to the committee the executive 717
director's or designee's preliminary findings with respect to 718
the facts and evidence gathered regarding the complaint. Upon 719
receiving the preliminary findings, the committee, upon a vote 720
of at least eight members of the committee, may refer the 721
complaint back to the Office of the Legislative Inspector 722
General for further investigation, hold a hearing pursuant to 723
divisions (D) and (G) of this section, order remedial action 724
pursuant to division (D) of this section, or dismiss the 725
complaint. 726

Upon the completion of an investigation of any other matter 727
referred to the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, the 728
executive director or the executive director's designee shall 729
present to the committee the executive director's or designee's 730
preliminary findings with respect to the facts and evidence 731
gathered regarding the matter referred. Upon receiving the 732
preliminary findings, the committee, upon a vote of at least 733
eight members of the committee, may refer the matter back to the 734
Office of the Legislative Inspector General for further 735
investigation, request that a complaint be drafted by the legal 736
counsel of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, 737
terminate the investigation, or hold a hearing pursuant to 738
division (E) of this section. 739

Before the fifth day of each month, the executive director 740
of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall make a 741
report, in writing, to the committee regarding the status of any 742
ongoing investigation that the committee referred to the Office 743
of the Legislative Inspector General. 744

(C) Before the committee takes any formal action against a 745
person who is the subject of an investigation based upon a 746
complaint filed with the committee, the committee shall consider 747
the complaint. 748

(D) The committee may defer action on a complaint against 749
members and employees of and candidates for the General Assembly 750
and employees of any legislative agency when the complaint 751
alleges conduct that at least eight members of the committee 752
find reason to believe is being reviewed by appropriate law 753
enforcement or regulatory authorities, or when at least eight 754
members of the committee determine that it is appropriate for 755
the conduct alleged in the complaint to be reviewed initially by 756
law enforcement or regulatory authorities. 757

(E) (1) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with 758
the committee, at least eight members of the committee find that 759
the complaint is not frivolous and there is reasonable cause to 760
believe that the facts alleged in the complaint constitute a 761
breach of privilege, misconduct, or a violation of Chapter 102. 762
or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, or this Code 763
of Ethics, ~~or the House or Senate Rules,~~ the committee shall 764
hold a hearing. At the hearing, the legal counsel of the Office 765
of the Legislative Inspector General shall present to the 766
committee the case against the accused person, introduce 767
evidence, call witnesses, and cross-examine witnesses. The 768
chairperson of the committee shall make all rulings regarding 769
procedure and the admissibility of evidence. The hearing and all 770
related proceedings of the committee are absolutely confidential 771
as provided under this Code of Ethics and section 102.06 of the 772
Revised Code. No member or employee of the committee, person who 773
staffs or otherwise serves the committee, witness, or other 774
person shall divulge any information about the hearing or 775
related proceedings, except that a witness and the complainant 776
may consult with an attorney before and after the hearing and 777
any related proceeding, any witness may be represented by an 778
attorney while the witness is being examined or cross-examined, 779
the accused person may be represented by an attorney at all 780
stages of the proceedings, and the attorney of the accused 781

person may attend all hearings and related proceedings of the 782
committee. 783

(2) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with the 784
committee, at least eight members of the committee find that the 785
complaint is frivolous or that there is no reasonable cause to 786
believe that the charge or complaint constitutes a breach of 787
privilege, misconduct, or a violation of Chapter 102. or section 788
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, or this Code of Ethics, 789
~~or the House or Senate Rules,~~ the committee shall dismiss the 790
complaint and notify the accused person in writing of the 791
dismissal of the complaint. If the committee so dismisses the 792
complaint, the committee shall not issue a report of its 793
findings unless the accused person requests a report. If the 794
accused person requests a report, the committee shall issue a 795
report in accordance with division (F) (2) of this section. 796

(3) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with the 797
committee, the committee finds by unanimous concurrence of its 798
membership that there is reasonable cause to believe that the 799
charges presented constitute a breach of privilege, misconduct, 800
or a violation of this Code of Ethics ~~or the House or Senate~~ 801
~~Rules~~ but do not constitute a violation of Chapter 102. or 802
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code and also finds by 803
unanimous concurrence of its membership that the breach of 804
privilege, misconduct, or violation was in good faith and 805
without wrongful intent and the person has taken or will take 806
suitable remedial action, it may order the person to take any 807
further remedial action it considers necessary and, upon 808
satisfaction that any order it makes is complied with, terminate 809
the investigation, with the concurrence of the accused person. 810
If an investigation is so terminated, the committee shall not 811
issue a report of its findings unless the accused person 812
requests a report. If the accused person requests a report, the 813
committee shall issue a report in accordance with division (F) 814

(2) of this section. If the accused person fails to comply with 815
an order of the committee, the committee, upon concurrence of at 816
least eight of its members, shall proceed with the original 817
complaint filed against the person. 818

(F) (1) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight 819
members of the committee find, based upon a preponderance of the 820
evidence, that the facts alleged in the complaint are true and 821
constitute a violation of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 822
2921.43 of the Revised Code, the committee, upon concurrence of 823
at least eight of its members, shall order the Office of the 824
Legislative Inspector General to prepare a report of the 825
committee's findings to the appropriate prosecuting authority or 826
other appropriate body for proceedings in prosecution of the 827
violations and, in accordance with division (F) (1) of this 828
section, issue a report to the General Assembly recommending 829
reprimand, censure, expulsion, or other sanction the committee 830
considers appropriate. Upon acceptance by at least eight members 831
of the committee of the report to the appropriate prosecuting 832
authority or other appropriate body, the committee shall report 833
its findings to the appropriate prosecuting authority, the 834
Elections Commission, or other appropriate body. This report is 835
the investigative report described in division (E) of section 836
101.34 of the Revised Code and shall contain any findings of 837
fact and conclusions of law made by the committee. This report 838
shall not contain any papers, records, affidavits, or documents 839
upon any complaint, inquiry, or investigation relating to the 840
proceedings of the committee. If at least eight members of the 841
committee find, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, that 842
the facts alleged in the complaint are true and constitute a 843
violation of division (B) of section 102.031 of the Revised 844
Code, the committee may impose a fine of not more than one 845
thousand dollars upon the member. 846

(2) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight 847

members of the committee find, based upon a preponderance of the 848
evidence, that a breach of privilege has been committed or that 849
a member or employee of or candidate for the General Assembly or 850
employee of any legislative agency has violated a provision of 851
this Code of Ethics ~~or the House or Senate Rules~~ that is not a 852
violation of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the 853
Revised Code, or has committed misconduct, the committee, upon 854
concurrence of at least eight of its members and in accordance 855
with division (F)(1) of this section, may issue a report 856
recommending reprimand, censure, expulsion, or other sanction 857
the committee considers appropriate or, upon a finding by 858
unanimous concurrence of its membership that the breach of 859
privilege, misconduct, or violation was in good faith and 860
without wrongful intent and the person has taken or will take 861
suitable remedial action, may order the person to take any 862
further remedial action it considers necessary and, upon 863
satisfaction that any order it makes is complied with, dismiss 864
the complaint without issuing a report of its findings, unless 865
the accused person requests a report. If the accused person 866
requests a report, the committee shall issue a report in 867
accordance with division (F)(2) of this section. If the person 868
fails to comply with an order of the committee, the committee, 869
upon concurrence of eight of its members, shall recommend some 870
sanction. 871

(3) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight 872
members of the committee do not find, based upon a preponderance 873
of the evidence, that the facts alleged in a complaint 874
constitute a breach of privilege, misconduct, or a violation of 875
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, ~~—~~ 876
or this Code of Ethics, ~~or the House or Senate Rules,~~ the 877
committee shall dismiss the complaint. The complaint shall also 878
be dismissed if the committee has not conducted a hearing within 879
ninety days after the complaint is filed with the committee, or 880

if the committee has not finally disposed of the complaint 881
within six months after the complaint is filed with the 882
committee. The committee shall notify the accused person in 883
writing of the dismissal of the complaint. The committee shall 884
not issue a report of its findings unless the accused person 885
requests a report. If the accused person requests a report, the 886
committee shall issue a report in accordance with division (F) 887
(2) of this section. If the committee issues the report, all 888
evidence and the record of the hearing shall remain confidential 889
unless the accused person also requests that the evidence and 890
record be made public. Upon request by the accused person, the 891
committee shall make the evidence and the record available for 892
public inspection. 893

(G) (1) Any report of the committee that is issued pursuant 894
to division (E) (1) of this section and contains a finding that 895
the facts in the complaint are true and constitute a violation 896
of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised 897
Code, or that is issued pursuant to division (E) (2) of this 898
section and contains a finding that a breach of privilege, 899
misconduct, or violation of this Code of Ethics ~~or the House or~~ 900
~~Senate Rules~~ has occurred and recommends reprimand, censure, 901
expulsion, or another appropriate sanction, shall be entered in 902
the House Journal and the Senate Journal. The House of 903
Representatives and the Senate shall vote on approval of any 904
report entered in the House or Senate Journal in accordance with 905
this division. Concurrence of two-thirds of the members of both 906
the House and the Senate shall be necessary for approval of the 907
report, and, upon approval, any recommended sanction shall be 908
imposed immediately. 909

(2) If the investigation of the committee results in a 910
finding that a complaint that is filed is frivolous or that no 911
misconduct, breach of privilege, or violation of Chapter 102. or 912
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, or this Code of 913

~~Ethics, or the House or Senate Rules~~ has been committed or if 914
the committee terminates an investigation or dismisses a 915
complaint pursuant to division (E) (2) or (3) of this section, 916
the committee shall not issue a report of its findings unless 917
the accused person requests a report. If the accused person 918
requests a report, the committee shall issue a report and 919
publish it in the House Journal, if the accused person is a 920
member or employee of, or candidate for, the House of 921
Representatives, or the Senate Journal, if the accused person is 922
a member or employee of, or candidate for, the Senate or an 923
employee of any legislative agency. A report published in the 924
House or Senate Journal under division (F) (2) of this section 925
does not require a vote by the House or Senate. 926

(H) A person against whom a complaint is filed shall be 927
given by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by 928
personal service reasonable notice of the date, time, and place 929
of the hearing and a statement of the charges and the law or 930
provision directly involved, and shall be granted the following 931
rights: to be represented by counsel, to have counsel appointed 932
for the person if the person is unable to afford counsel without 933
undue hardship, to examine the evidence against the person, to 934
have access to all information relative to the complaint that is 935
in the possession or knowledge of the committee or the Office of 936
the Legislative Inspector General, to produce evidence and to 937
call and subpoena witnesses in the person's defense, to confront 938
the person's accusers, to cross-examine witnesses, to have a 939
stenographic record made of the hearing, to have the hearing 940
follow the rules of evidence applicable to the courts of this 941
state, and to have the hearing closed to the public. A person, 942
with the approval of the committee, may waive any or all of such 943
rights by executing a written waiver and filing it with the 944
committee. 945

(I) The chairperson of the committee and the executive 946

director and chief legal counsel of the Office of the 947
Legislative Inspector General may administer oaths, and the 948
committee or the investigation subcommittee appointed pursuant 949
to division (A) (1) of this section may issue subpoenas to any 950
person in the state compelling the attendance of witnesses and 951
the production of relevant papers, books, accounts, and records. 952
The committee or the investigation subcommittee shall issue 953
subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the 954
production of documents upon the request of an accused person. 955
Section 101.42 of the Revised Code shall govern the issuance of 956
such subpoenas insofar as applicable. Upon the refusal of any 957
person to obey a subpoena, be sworn, or answer as a witness, the 958
committee or the investigation subcommittee may apply to the 959
Court of Common Pleas of Franklin County under section 2705.03 960
of the Revised Code. The court shall hold proceedings in 961
accordance with Chapter 2705. of the Revised Code. The 962
committee, the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, or 963
the accused person may take the depositions of witnesses 964
residing within or without the state in the same manner as 965
prescribed by law for the taking of depositions in civil actions 966
in the court of common pleas. 967

(J) (1) All complaints, papers, records, affidavits, and 968
documents upon any complaint, inquiry, or investigation relating 969
to the proceedings of the committee shall be sealed and are 970
private and confidential, except as otherwise provided in this 971
section. The substance of any charges received by the committee 972
and of any request made by the committee for further 973
information, any information received by the committee, all 974
testimony and other evidence presented during a hearing, and all 975
committee discussions are private and confidential, except as 976
otherwise provided in this section. No person serving on or 977
employed in the service of the committee, or employee of the 978
Office of the Legislative Inspector General who staffs or 979

otherwise assists the committee or the Office of the Legislative Inspector General employee who staffs the committee shall divulge any of the following:

(a) Any matter concerning a complaint after it is filed with the executive director of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General;

(b) In the case of complaints initiated by the committee, any matter concerning a complaint after the matter is under investigation by the committee, whether before or after a complaint is filed;

(c) Any other information that is made private and confidential by this section.

(2) The requirement of confidentiality set forth in division (I)(1) of this section includes without limitation divulging any matter to members or employees of the House or Senate or employees of any legislative agency who are not members of or assigned to the committee or to any employees of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General who are not assigned to staff the committee or do not assist any Office of the Legislative Inspector General employee assigned to staff the committee, but does not prevent any of the following:

(a) The issuance of a final report by the committee or any commentary upon the contents of the final report;

(b) Discussion of any complaint, request for an advisory opinion, charges presented to the committee, information related to a complaint, to an advisory opinion request, or to charges presented to the committee, proceedings of the committee, or other papers, records, affidavits, documents, or proceedings that are made private and confidential by this section between the members of the committee and any of the following:

(i) Any employees or staff of the committee;

(ii) Any employees of the General Assembly assigned to serve the committee, and any employee who serves as legal counsel for a caucus of the General Assembly; 1011
1012
1013

(iii) Any employees of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General assigned to staff the committee; 1014
1015

(iv) Any other persons employed by or assigned to serve the committee. 1016
1017

(c) The preparation of any documents necessary for the operation of the committee by employees of the General Assembly assigned to the committee chairperson, employees of the General Assembly assigned to staff the committee, or employees of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General who assist the Office of the Legislative Inspector General employee assigned to staff the committee, except that any confidentiality requirements of this section applicable to the members of the committee shall apply to the employees of the General Assembly, committee, or Office of the Legislative Inspector General who prepare those documents. 1018
1019
1020
1021
1022
1023
1024
1025
1026
1027
1028

(K) If a complaint filed with the committee alleges a violation by a member of the committee, the member against whom the allegation is made shall not vote on the matter. The committee shall conduct no business concerning complaints unless a majority of its members are present. 1029
1030
1031
1032
1033

(L) The committee shall deliver all notices and other documents by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by personal service. 1034
1035
1036

(M) Within fourteen days after the final disposition of a complaint, either by dismissal or by referral to the appropriate prosecuting authority, the committee shall notify the complainant of the dismissal or referral by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by personal service. 1037
1038
1039
1040
1041

SECTION 14. AMENDMENTS TO THE ETHICS CODE 1042

The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend 1043
amendments to this Code of Ethics at any time by proposing to 1044
the General Assembly a concurrent resolution containing the 1045
desired amendments. 1046

SECTION 15. DISTRIBUTION OF ETHICS CODE 1047

Each member and employee of the General Assembly and each 1048
employee of any legislative agency shall be given a copy of this 1049
Code of Ethics within ten days after its adoption. 1050

SECTION 16. APPLICATION TO ~~131st~~ 132nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY 1051

The Code of Ethics for the ~~130th~~ 131st General Assembly 1052
shall be effective until the ~~131st~~ 132nd General Assembly adopts 1053
the Code of Ethics for the ~~131st~~ 132nd General Assembly. 1054