

**As Adopted by the House**

**134th General Assembly  
Regular Session  
2021-2022**

**S. C. R. No. 3**

**Senator Hottinger**

**Cosponsors: Senators Antonio, Blessing, Brenner, Cirino, Craig, Dolan, Gavarone, Hackett, Hoagland, Huffman, S., Johnson, Kunze, Lang, Maharath, Manning, McColley, Peterson, Reineke, Roegner, Schaffer, Schuring, Sykes, Thomas, Williams, Wilson, Yuko Representatives Abrams, Baldrige, Bird, Blackshear, Brent, Callender, Carfagna, Carruthers, Click, Crawley, Creech, Cross, Crossman, Cutrona, Dean, Denson, Ferguson, Fraizer, Ghanbari, Grendell, Gross, Hall, Holmes, Hoops, Householder, Jarrells, John, Johnson, Jones, Kick, Koehler, Lampton, Lanese, LaRe, Lepore-Hagan, Lightbody, Lipps, Liston, Loychik, Manning, McClain, Miller, A., Miller, J., Miranda, O'Brien, Patton, Pavliga, Plummer, Powell, Ray, Riedel, Robinson, Roemer, Russo, Schmidt, Smith, K., Smith, M., SobECKi, Stein, Swearingen, Sweeney, Sykes, Troy, Upchurch, Weinstein, West, White, Wiggam, Wilkin, Young, B., Young, T.,**

**Speaker Cupp**

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**A C O N C U R R E N T R E S O L U T I O N**

To adopt the Legislative Code of Ethics for the 1  
members and employees of both chambers of the 2  
134th General Assembly, employees of any 3  
legislative agency, and candidates for the 135th 4  
General Assembly. 5

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

WHEREAS, The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee, appointed 6  
by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President 7  
of the Senate pursuant to section 101.34 of the Revised Code, is 8

required to recommend a Code of Ethics that is consistent with 9  
the law to govern all members and employees of each chamber of 10  
the General Assembly and all candidates for the office of member 11  
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, Joint~~ 18  
~~Education Oversight Committee, Legislative Information Systems,~~ 19  
~~Legislative Inspector General, Legislative Service Commission,~~ 20  
and Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission, and candidates 21  
for the office of member of the General Assembly; now therefore 22  
be it 23

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives and the Senate 24  
of the ~~132nd-134th~~ General Assembly adopt the following 25  
Legislative Code of Ethics: 26

LEGISLATIVE CODE OF ETHICS 27

FOR MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE 28

~~132nd-134th~~ OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 29

EMPLOYEES OF ANY LEGISLATIVE AGENCY, 30

AND CANDIDATES FOR THE ~~133rd-135th~~ GENERAL ASSEMBLY 31

Section 1. CONDUCT 32

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

Representatives and all employees of any legislative agency 39  
shall conduct themselves at all times so as to reflect credit 40  
upon the employee's respective chamber of the General Assembly 41  
or institution of employment, shall obey all rules of the 42  
employee's respective chamber of the General Assembly or 43  
institution of employment, and shall conform the employee's 44  
conduct to this Code of Ethics. 45

Section 2. DISCLOSURE STATEMENT 46

(A) The Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall 47  
accept disclosure statements filed by members and employees of 48  
the General Assembly and employees of any legislative agency 49  
pursuant to section 102.02 of the Revised Code and shall 50  
maintain a file of all disclosure statements that are filed 51  
pursuant to that section. Every member of the General Assembly 52  
and every employee of the General Assembly and any legislative 53  
agency who is required to file a financial disclosure statement, 54  
within the period prescribed by law, shall file with the Office 55  
of the Legislative Inspector General, a disclosure statement as 56  
provided for by section 102.02 of the Revised Code. Each member 57  
and each employee of the General Assembly and employee of any 58  
legislative agency required to file a financial disclosure 59  
statement, within the period and in the manner prescribed by 60  
section 102.02 of the Revised Code, shall receive from the 61  
Office of the Legislative Inspector General the form on which 62  
the statement shall be prepared. 63

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

legislative agents. 72

(C) Division ~~(A) (8)~~ (A) (2) (h) of section 102.02 of the 73  
Revised Code requires a member of the General Assembly and an 74  
employee of the General Assembly or any legislative agency 75  
required to file a disclosure statement under section 102.02 of 76  
the Revised Code to identify on a disclosure statement the 77  
source and amount of any payment of expenses incurred for travel 78  
to destinations inside or outside this state that the member or 79  
employee receives in the member's or employee's own name or that 80  
another person receives for the member's or employee's use or 81  
benefit in connection with the member's or employee's official 82  
duties, except for expenses for travel to meetings or 83  
conventions of a national or state organization to which any 84  
state agency, including, but not limited to, any legislative 85  
agency or state institution of higher education as defined in 86  
section 3345.011 of the Revised Code, pays membership dues, or 87  
any political subdivision or any office or agency of a political 88  
subdivision pays membership dues. 89

(D) Division ~~(A) (9)~~ (A) (2) (i) of section 102.02 of the 90  
Revised Code requires a member of the General Assembly and an 91  
employee of the General Assembly or any legislative agency 92  
required to file a disclosure statement under section 102.02 of 93  
the Revised Code to identify on a disclosure statement the 94  
source of payment of expenses for meals and other food and 95  
beverages that are incurred in connection with the person's 96  
official duties and that exceed one hundred dollars aggregated 97  
per calendar year, except for expenses for meals and other food 98  
and beverages provided at a meeting at which the member or 99  
employee participated in a panel, seminar, or speaking 100  
engagement or at a meeting or convention of a national or state 101  
organization to which a state agency, including, but not limited 102  
to, any legislative agency or state institution of higher 103  
education as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised Code, 104

pays membership dues, or any political subdivision or any office 105  
or agency of a political subdivision pays membership dues. 106

(E) (1) Except as otherwise provided in division (E) (2) of 107  
this section, in accordance with section 102.02 of the Revised 108  
Code, every member of the General Assembly and every employee of 109  
the General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file 110  
an annual statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code 111  
shall disclose the source of a gift or gifts, where the value of 112  
the gift or gifts aggregated per calendar year exceeds seventy- 113  
five dollars, except gifts received by will or by virtue of 114  
section 2105.06 of the Revised Code, or received from spouses, 115  
parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, siblings, 116  
nephews, nieces, uncles, aunts, cousins, brothers-in-law, 117  
sisters-in-law, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, fathers-in-law, 118  
mothers-in-law, step-relations, or any person to whom the member 119  
or employee of the General Assembly or employee of any 120  
legislative agency stands in loco parentis, or received by way 121  
of distribution from any inter vivos or testamentary trust 122  
established by a spouse or by an ancestor. 123

(2) In accordance with section 102.02 of the Revised Code, 124  
every member of the General Assembly and every employee of the 125  
General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file an 126  
annual statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code shall 127  
disclose the source of a gift or gifts from a legislative agent, 128  
where the value of the gift or gifts aggregated per calendar 129  
year exceeds twenty-five dollars. 130

Section 3. LICENSE DISCLOSURE 131

Any member of the General Assembly who engages in the 132  
conduct or practice of a particular business, profession, trade, 133  
or occupation that is subject to licensing or regulation by any 134  
branch, department, division, institution, instrumentality, 135  
board, commission, or bureau of the state shall file a notice 136

that the member is the holder of a particular license, or is 137  
engaged in such activity, as part of the financial disclosure 138  
statement required by section 102.02 of the Revised Code. 139

Section 4. VOTING ABSTENTION 140

(A) A member who has reason to believe that the member has 141  
a substantial personal interest in legislation may request 142  
permission of the chair to abstain from voting on the 143  
legislation and may state the member's reason for the request. 144  
The request shall be granted by the chair or the member's 145  
respective chamber of the General Assembly pursuant to the rules 146  
of that chamber. The request and permission to abstain shall be 147  
entered in the House or Senate Journal, as is appropriate. 148

(B) No member of the General Assembly shall vote on any 149  
legislation that the member knows is then being actively 150  
advocated if the member is one of the following with respect to 151  
a legislative agent or employer that is then actively advocating 152  
on that legislation: 153

(1) An employee, as defined in section 102.031 of the 154  
Revised Code; 155

(2) A business associate, as defined in section 102.031 of 156  
the Revised Code; 157

(3) A person, other than an employee, who is hired under 158  
contract to perform certain services, and such position involves 159  
a substantial and material exercise of administrative discretion 160  
in the formulation of public policy. 161

(C) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may impose a 162  
fine of not more than one thousand dollars upon a member of the 163  
General Assembly who violates division (B) of this section. 164

Section 5. COMPENSATION 165

(A) Except as provided in division (D) of section 102.04 of 166

the Revised Code, no person elected to or employed by the 167  
General Assembly or employed by any legislative agency shall 168  
receive or agree to receive, directly or indirectly, 169  
compensation other than from the house with which the person 170  
serves or from any legislative agency, if the person is a 171  
legislative agency employee, for any service rendered or to be 172  
rendered by the person personally in any case, proceeding, 173  
application, or other matter that is before the General Assembly 174  
or any department, division, institution, instrumentality, 175  
board, commission, or bureau of the state, excluding the courts. 176

Division (A) of this section shall not be construed to 177  
prohibit the performance of ministerial functions, including, 178  
but not limited to, the filing or amendment of tax returns, 179  
applications for permits and licenses, incorporation papers, 180  
security registrations, and other documents. 181

Except as provided in division (D) of section 102.04 of the 182  
Revised Code, no person elected to or employed by the General 183  
Assembly or employed by any legislative agency shall sell or 184  
agree to sell, except through competitive bidding, any goods or 185  
services to the General Assembly or any department, division, 186  
institution, instrumentality, board, commission, or bureau of 187  
the state, excluding the courts. 188

(B) No member or employee of the General Assembly or 189  
employee of any legislative agency shall knowingly accept any of 190  
the following from a legislative agent: 191

(1) The payment of any expenses for travel or lodging 192  
except as otherwise authorized by division (H) of section 102.03 193  
of the Revised Code; 194

(2) More than seventy-five dollars aggregated per calendar 195  
year as payment for meals and other food and beverages, other 196  
than for those meals and other food and beverages provided to 197  
the member or employee at a meeting at which the member or 198

employee participates in a panel, seminar, or speaking 199  
engagement, at a meeting or convention of a national 200  
organization to which either house of the General Assembly or 201  
any state agency, including, but not limited to, any legislative 202  
agency or state institution of higher education as defined in 203  
section 3345.011 of the Revised Code, pays membership dues, or 204  
at a dinner, party, or function to which all members of the 205  
General Assembly or all members of either house of the General 206  
Assembly are invited. 207

(C) No member or employee of the General Assembly or 208  
employee of any legislative agency shall knowingly accept from a 209  
legislative agent a gift of any amount in the form of cash or 210  
the equivalent of cash, or a gift or gifts of any other thing of 211  
value where the value of the gift or gifts aggregated per 212  
calendar year exceeds seventy-five dollars. As used in this 213  
division, "gift" does not include any contribution as defined in 214  
section 3517.01 of the Revised Code or any gifts of meals and 215  
other food and beverages or the payment of expenses incurred for 216  
travel to destinations either inside or outside this state that 217  
is received by a member of the General Assembly and that is 218  
incurred in connection with the member's official duties. 219

(D) It is not a violation of division (B) (2) of this 220  
section if, within sixty days after receiving notice pursuant to 221  
division (F) (2) of section 101.73 of the Revised Code from a 222  
legislative agent that the legislative agent has provided a 223  
member of the General Assembly or an employee of the General 224  
Assembly or any legislative agency with more than seventy-five 225  
dollars aggregated in a calendar year as payment for meals and 226  
other food and beverages that were purchased for consumption on 227  
the premises in which the food and beverages were sold, the 228  
member or employee of the General Assembly or employee of any 229  
legislative agency returns to that legislative agent the amount 230  
received that exceeds seventy-five dollars. 231



Section 6. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION 232

No present or former member or employee of the General 233  
Assembly or present or former employee of any legislative agency 234  
shall disclose or use for the member's or employee's personal 235  
profit, without appropriate authorization, any information 236  
acquired by the member or employee in the course of the member's 237  
or employee's official duties that has been clearly designated 238  
to the member or employee as confidential when such confidential 239  
designation is warranted because of the status of the 240  
proceedings or the circumstances under which the information was 241  
received and preserving its confidentiality is necessary to the 242  
proper conduct of government business. No present or former 243  
member or employee of the General Assembly or present or former 244  
employee of any legislative agency shall disclose or use, 245  
without appropriate authorization, any information acquired by 246  
the member or employee in the course of the member's or 247  
employee's official duties that is confidential because of 248  
statutory provisions, except as provided in section 101.30 of 249  
the Revised Code or Section 12 or 13 of Article II, Ohio 250  
Constitution. 251

Section 7. IMPROPER INFLUENCE 252

(A) No member or employee of the General Assembly or 253  
employee of any legislative agency shall use or attempt to use 254  
or authorize the use of the authority or influence of the 255  
member's or employee's office or employment to secure anything 256  
of value or the promise or offer of anything of value that is of 257  
such a character as to manifest a substantial and improper 258  
influence upon the member or employee with respect to the 259  
member's or employee's duties. 260

(B) No member or employee of the General Assembly or 261  
employee of any legislative agency shall solicit or accept 262  
anything of value that is of such a character as to manifest a 263

substantial and improper influence upon the member or employee 264  
with respect to the member's or employee's duties. 265

(C) No member of the General Assembly shall solicit or 266  
receive funds from any legislative agent who is registered 267  
pursuant to section 101.72 of the Revised Code, for use other 268  
than by a political party, campaign committee, legislative 269  
campaign fund, political action committee, or political 270  
contributing entity, as defined in section 3517.01 of the 271  
Revised Code, except that a member may solicit or receive funds 272  
from any legislative agent on behalf of religious and benevolent 273  
organizations regulated by Chapter 1716. of the Revised Code or 274  
charitable organizations that have registered with the Attorney 275  
General pursuant to section 109.26 or 1716.02 of the Revised 276  
Code. 277

(D) In the absence of bribery or another offense under the 278  
Revised Code or a purpose to defraud, the receipt of 279  
contributions, as defined in section 3517.01 of the Revised 280  
Code, made to a campaign committee, political party, legislative 281  
campaign fund, political action committee, or political 282  
contributing entity on behalf of a member of or candidate for 283  
the General Assembly does not violate divisions (A) and (B) of 284  
this section. 285

(E) A member or employee of the General Assembly and an 286  
employee of any legislative agency may accept travel, meals, and 287  
lodging or expenses or reimbursement of expenses for travel, 288  
meals, and lodging in connection with conferences, seminars, and 289  
similar events related to the member's or employee's official 290  
duties if the travel, meals, lodging, expenses, or reimbursement 291  
is not of such a character as to manifest a substantial and 292  
improper influence upon the member or employee with respect to 293  
those duties and if, in relation to expenses or reimbursement 294  
for travel or lodging provided to a member by a legislative 295  
agent, the expenses or reimbursement are not made in violation 296

of division (C) (1) of section 102.031 of the Revised Code. A 297  
member or employee who acts in compliance with this division 298  
does not violate division (A), (B), or (C) of this section. 299

Section 8. STAFF USE 300

(A) A member of the General Assembly shall utilize General 301  
Assembly employees only for the official purposes for which they 302  
are employed. 303

(B) (1) In accordance with section 3517.092 of the Revised 304  
Code, no member of or candidate for the General Assembly, no 305  
campaign committee of a member of or candidate for the General 306  
Assembly, no legislative caucus campaign committee, and no other 307  
person or entity shall knowingly solicit or accept a 308  
contribution on behalf of that member or candidate, that 309  
member's or candidate's campaign committee, or a legislative 310  
caucus campaign committee from any of the following: 311

(a) A state employee whose appointing authority is the 312  
member of the General Assembly; 313

(b) A state employee whose appointing authority is 314  
authorized or required by law to be appointed by the member of 315  
the General Assembly; 316

(c) A state employee who functions in or is employed by the 317  
Ohio Senate, the Ohio House of Representatives, or any 318  
legislative agency; 319

(d) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, whose 320  
appointing authority will be the candidate for the General 321  
Assembly, if elected; 322

(e) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, whose 323  
appointing authority will be appointed by the candidate for the 324  
General Assembly, if elected, as authorized or required by law; 325

(f) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, who 326

will function in or be employed in or by the same public agency, 327  
department, division, or office as the candidate for the General 328  
Assembly, if elected. 329

(2) As used in this section, "contribution" does not 330  
include services provided by individuals volunteering a portion 331  
of their time on behalf of a campaign. 332

(C) In addition to any complaint brought or penalty that 333  
may be imposed under sections 3517.152 to 3517.157 of the 334  
Revised Code, the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may receive 335  
and initiate complaints against members and employees of, and 336  
candidates for, the General Assembly and employees of any 337  
legislative agency concerning conduct alleged to be in violation 338  
of this section. Upon a finding of a violation of this section, 339  
the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend whatever 340  
sanction is appropriate with respect to a particular member, 341  
employee, or candidate as will best maintain in the minds of the 342  
public a good opinion of the conduct and character of members 343  
and employees of the General Assembly. 344

Section 9. SEPARATION OF FUNDS 345

(A) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly 346  
shall convert, receive, or accept for personal or business use 347  
anything of value from the member's or candidate's campaign 348  
fund, as defined in section 3517.01 of the Revised Code, 349  
including, without limitation, payments to the member or 350  
candidate for services personally performed by the member or 351  
candidate, except as reimbursement for any of the following: 352

(1) Legitimate and verifiable prior campaign expenses 353  
incurred by the member or candidate; 354

(2) Legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, and necessary 355  
prior expenses incurred by the member or candidate in connection 356  
with duties as the holder of a public office, including, without 357

limitation, expenses incurred through participation in 358  
nonpartisan or bipartisan events where the participation of the 359  
holder of a public office would normally be expected; 360

(3) Legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, and necessary 361  
prior expenses incurred by a member or candidate while doing any 362  
of the following: 363

(a) Engaging in activities in support of or opposition to 364  
another candidate, political party, or ballot issue; 365

(b) Raising funds for a political party, political action 366  
committee, campaign committee, legislative campaign fund, 367  
political contributing entity, or other candidate; 368

(c) Participating in the activities of a political party, 369  
political action committee, legislative campaign fund, political 370  
contributing entity, or campaign committee; 371

(d) Attending a political party convention or other 372  
political meeting. 373

(B) For purposes of division (A) of this section, an 374  
expense is incurred whenever a member or candidate has either 375  
made payment or is obligated to make payment, as by the use of a 376  
credit card or other credit procedure, or by the use of goods or 377  
services received on account. 378

(C) No member or candidate for the General Assembly 379  
shall knowingly receive or accept reimbursement for an expense 380  
under division (A) of this section to the extent that the 381  
expense previously was reimbursed or paid from another source of 382  
funds. If an expense is reimbursed under division (A) of this 383  
section and is later paid or reimbursed, wholly or in part, from 384  
another source of funds, a member or candidate shall immediately 385  
repay the reimbursement received under division (A) of this 386  
section to the extent of the payment made or reimbursement 387  
received from the other source. 388

(D) A member of the General Assembly may be reimbursed 389  
under division (A) (1) or (3) of this section for expenses 390  
incurred for the member's meals and lodging in Franklin County 391  
if the expenses otherwise meet the requirements for 392  
reimbursement under division (A) (1) or (3) of this section and 393  
were not incurred while the member was in Franklin County to 394  
attend floor sessions of the General Assembly or meetings of its 395  
committees, except that a member may be reimbursed under 396  
division (A) (1), (2), or (3) of this section for expenses 397  
incurred for the member's meals in Franklin County at any time 398  
if the expenses otherwise meet the requirements for 399  
reimbursement under division (A) (1), (2), or (3) of this section 400  
and were incurred for meals at which the member hosted other 401  
persons. 402

(E) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly 403  
shall accept for personal or business use anything of value from 404  
a political party, political action committee, legislative 405  
campaign fund, political contributing entity, or campaign 406  
committee other than the member's or candidate's own campaign 407  
committee, except for the following: 408

(1) Reimbursement for legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, 409  
and necessary prior expenses not otherwise prohibited by law 410  
incurred by the member or candidate while engaged in any 411  
legitimate activity of the political party, political action 412  
committee, legislative campaign fund, political contributing 413  
entity, or such campaign committee. Without limitation, 414  
reimbursable expenses under this division include those incurred 415  
while doing any of the following: 416

(a) Engaging in activities in support of or opposition to 417  
another candidate, political party, or ballot issue; 418

(b) Raising funds for a political party, campaign 419  
committee, legislative campaign fund, or another candidate; 420

(c) Attending a political party convention or other political meeting. 421  
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(2) Compensation not otherwise prohibited by law for actual and valuable personal services rendered under a written contract to the political party, political action committee, legislative campaign fund, political contributing entity, or the member's or candidate's own campaign committee for any legitimate activity of the political party, political action committee, legislative campaign fund, political contributing entity, or such campaign committee. 423  
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Reimbursable expenses under this division do not include, and it is a violation of this division for a member or candidate to accept from a political party, political action committee, legislative campaign fund, political contributing entity, or campaign committee other than the member's or candidate's own campaign committee, anything of value for activities primarily related to the member's or candidate's own campaign for election, except for contributions to the member's or candidate's campaign committee. 431  
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For purposes of this division, an expense is incurred whenever a member or candidate has either made payment or is obligated to make payment, as by the use of a credit card or other credit procedure, or by the use of goods or services received on account. 440  
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(F) (1) Divisions (A) and (C) of this section do not prohibit a member's or candidate's campaign committee from making a direct advance or post payment from the member's or candidate's campaign fund to vendors for goods and services for which reimbursement is permitted under division (A) of this section, except that no campaign committee shall pay a member or candidate for services personally performed by the member or the candidate. 445  
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(2) When any expense that may be reimbursed under division (A), (C), or (E) of this section is part of other expenses that may not be paid or reimbursed, the separation of the two types of expenses for the purpose of allocating for payment or reimbursement those expenses that may be paid or reimbursed may be by any reasonable accounting method, considering all of the surrounding circumstances.

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

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

Section 10. HONORARIA AND TESTIMONIALS

(A) No member of the General Assembly, employee of the General Assembly who is required to file a financial disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code, or employee of any legislative agency who is required to file a financial disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code shall solicit or accept an honorarium. This division and divisions (A), (B), and (C) of Section 7 of this Code of Ethics do not prohibit a member or employee who is required to file a financial disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code from accepting the payment of actual travel expenses, including any expenses incurred in connection with the travel for lodging, and meals, food, and beverages provided to the member or employee at a meeting at which the member or employee participates in a panel, seminar, or speaking engagement or provided to the member or employee at a meeting or convention of a national organization to which either house of



the General Assembly, or any state agency, including, but not 485  
limited to, any legislative agency or state institution of 486  
higher education as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised 487  
Code, pays membership dues. This division and divisions (A), 488  
(B), and (C) of Section 7 of this Code of Ethics do not prohibit 489  
an employee of the General Assembly or employee of any 490  
legislative agency who is not required to file a financial 491  
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code 492  
from accepting an honorarium or the payment of travel, meal, and 493  
lodging expenses if the honorarium, expenses, or both were paid 494  
in recognition of demonstrable business, professional, or 495  
esthetic interests of the employee that exist apart from the 496  
employee's public employment, including, but not limited to, 497  
such a demonstrable interest in public speaking and were not 498  
paid by any person or other entity, or by any representative or 499  
association of such person or entities, that is regulated by, 500  
doing business with, or seeking to do business with the General 501  
Assembly or any legislative agency. 502

(B) No member of the General Assembly shall conduct a 503  
public or private fund raising event that seeks to provide money 504  
for the member's personal use. 505

(C) As used in this section, "honorarium" means any payment 506  
made in consideration for any speech given, article published, 507  
or attendance at any public or private conference, convention, 508  
meeting, social event, meal, or similar gathering. "Honorarium" 509  
does not include ceremonial gifts or awards that have 510  
insignificant monetary value; unsolicited gifts of nominal value 511  
or trivial items of informational value; or earned income from 512  
any person, other than a legislative agent, for personal 513  
services that are customarily provided in connection with the 514  
practice of a bona fide business, if that business initially 515  
began before the member or employee conducting that business was 516  
elected or appointed to the member's or employee's office or 517

position of employment. 518

Section 11. IMPROPER INDUCEMENT 519

If any person attempts to induce a member or employee of or 520  
candidate for the General Assembly or employee of any 521  
legislative agency to violate any provision of this Code of 522  
Ethics, the member, employee, or candidate shall report the 523  
matter to the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. 524

Section 12. ADVISORY BODY 525

(A) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend 526  
legislation relating to ethics, conflicts of interest, and 527  
financial disclosure and, upon a vote of a majority of its 528  
members, may render advisory opinions with regard to questions 529  
concerning these matters for members and employees of and 530  
candidates for the General Assembly and for employees of any 531  
legislative agency. 532

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

renders an opinion that has been publicly sought, the advisory 550  
opinion is a public record available under section 149.43 of the 551  
Revised Code. 552

(C) When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee renders a 553  
written opinion that has been privately sought and that relates 554  
to a special set of circumstances involving ethics, conflicts of 555  
interest, or financial disclosure under Chapter 102. or section 556  
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the written opinion does 557  
not have the legal effect of an advisory opinion issued under 558  
division (B) of this section. When the Joint Legislative Ethics 559  
Committee renders a written opinion that has been privately 560  
sought, the written opinion is not a public record available 561  
under section 149.43 of the Revised Code. 562

The person to whom a written opinion is issued under this 563  
division may request the committee to issue the written opinion 564  
as an advisory opinion. The person may make the request at any 565  
time within thirty days after the written opinion is issued and 566  
prior to committing any proposed action discussed in the written 567  
opinion. Upon receiving a timely request and with the approval 568  
of a majority of the members of the committee, the committee may 569  
issue the written opinion as an advisory opinion. If the 570  
committee issues the written opinion as an advisory opinion, the 571  
advisory opinion has the same legal effect as an advisory 572  
opinion issued under division (B) of this section and is a 573  
public record available under section 149.43 of the Revised 574  
Code. If the person commits any proposed action discussed in the 575  
written opinion before the committee issues the written opinion 576  
as an advisory opinion, the advisory opinion grants no immunity 577  
to the person regarding any action that is discussed in the 578  
written opinion and that the person commits before the committee 579  
issues the written opinion as an advisory opinion. 580

(D) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall issue an 581  
advisory opinion under division (B) of this section or a written 582

opinion under division (C) of this section, whether it is 583  
publicly or privately sought, only at a meeting of the committee 584  
and only with the approval of a majority of the members of the 585  
committee. 586

(E) All requests for an opinion shall be submitted in 587  
writing by the member or employee of or candidate for the 588  
General Assembly or employee of any legislative agency who 589  
desires the opinion and shall state in the request whether the 590  
opinion is being publicly or privately sought. If the request 591  
fails to state whether the opinion is being publicly or 592  
privately sought, the committee shall consider the opinion to be 593  
privately sought. The committee shall issue in writing all 594  
advisory opinions that have been publicly sought, appropriately 595  
number them, and make them available for public inspection. The 596  
Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall conduct all of its 597  
proceedings surrounding the rendering of an opinion so as to 598  
protect the confidentiality of those named in the request for 599  
the opinion. 600

Section 13. CONSIDERATION AND HEARING OF COMPLAINTS 601

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

speculative assertions, or conclusory statements. 616

At the first meeting of the committee in each calendar 617  
year, the chairperson of the committee for that year shall 618  
appoint an investigation subcommittee. The subcommittee shall 619  
consist of the chairperson of the committee for that year and a 620  
member of the committee who is a member of the chamber and 621  
political party of which the chairperson is not a member. This 622  
subcommittee shall have the authority to issue subpoenas 623  
regarding complaints referred to it and approve depositions by 624  
the Office of the Legislative Inspector General. 625

(2) A complaint other than a complaint by the committee 626  
shall be filed with the executive director of the Office of the 627  
Legislative Inspector General of the Joint Legislative Ethics 628  
Committee. Upon receiving the complaint, the executive director 629  
or the executive director's designee shall gather, if necessary, 630  
preliminary facts surrounding the complaint for presentation to 631  
the chairperson or committee. Thereafter, the executive director 632  
shall seal the complaint and deliver it to the chairperson of 633  
the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. A complaint by the 634  
committee shall be drafted by the legal counsel of the Office of 635  
the Legislative Inspector General, and, if at least eight 636  
members of the committee approve the draft complaint, the draft 637  
complaint shall be a complaint by the committee and shall be 638  
filed with the Office of the Legislative Inspector General and 639  
delivered to the chairperson of the committee. 640

Within fourteen days after the filing of a complaint by a 641  
complainant, the chairperson shall notify the complainant that 642  
the complaint has been filed with the committee, that all 643  
further proceedings of the committee are confidential, that the 644  
committee is required to dismiss the complaint if it is not 645  
disposed of within six months after the complaint is filed, and 646  
that, if a report dealing with the complaint has not been 647  
published in the House or Senate Journal, as appropriate, within 648

that time, the complaint has been dismissed because no violation 649  
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 a violation 669  
of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised 670  
Code, the committee shall refer the complaint to the Office of 671  
the Legislative Inspector General for further investigation and 672  
may delegate to the investigation subcommittee appointed 673  
pursuant to division (A) (1) of this section the authority to 674  
issue subpoenas regarding a given complaint or other matter. The 675  
chairperson of the committee shall notify the accused of the 676  
referral. Unless eight members of the committee find that the 677  
complaint before the committee alleges facts that, on their 678  
face, constitute a breach of privilege, misconduct, a violation 679  
of this Code of Ethics, or a violation of Chapter 102. or 680  
sections 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the committee 681

shall dismiss the complaint. 682

(B) The Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall 683  
investigate each complaint referred to it by the committee and 684  
shall investigate any other matters as directed by the 685  
committee. The Office of the Legislative Inspector General may 686  
request further information from the complainant, any person 687  
presenting charges to the committee, the accused person if the 688  
information sought is directly relevant to a complaint or 689  
charges received by the committee pursuant to this section, and 690  
any other person it believes may have information pertaining to 691  
the complaint or other matter referred for investigation to the 692  
Office of the Legislative Inspector General. It may request the 693  
committee to issue a subpoena to obtain any necessary 694  
information. Upon the approval of the investigation subcommittee 695  
appointed pursuant to division (A) (1) of this section, the 696  
Office of the Legislative Inspector General may depose any 697  
person. Any person interviewed or deposed by the Office of the 698  
Legislative Inspector General may be represented by an attorney. 699  
The substance of any request for further information and the 700  
information provided pursuant to any request are confidential. 701  
Except as otherwise provided in this section, the person from 702  
whom information is requested shall not divulge the substance of 703  
the committee's request to any person other than the person's 704  
attorney and shall not divulge the information provided in 705  
response to the request to any person other than the person's 706  
attorney and any person necessary to prepare the information for 707  
delivery to the committee. Except as otherwise provided in this 708  
section, no attorney or person who prepares information for 709  
delivery to the committee shall divulge the substance of the 710  
committee's request or the information provided in response to 711  
the request. 712

Upon the completion of an investigation based on a 713  
complaint referred to the Office of the Legislative Inspector 714

General, the executive director, or the executive director's 715  
designee, shall present to the committee the executive 716  
director's or designee's preliminary findings with respect to 717  
the facts and evidence gathered regarding the complaint. Upon 718  
receiving the preliminary findings, the committee, upon a vote 719  
of at least eight members of the committee, may refer the 720  
complaint back to the Office of the Legislative Inspector 721  
General for further investigation, hold a hearing pursuant to 722  
divisions ~~(D)~~(E) and (G) of this section, order remedial action 723  
pursuant to division ~~(D)~~(E) of this section, or dismiss the 724  
complaint. 725

Upon the completion of an investigation of any other matter 726  
referred to the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, the 727  
executive director or the executive director's designee shall 728  
present to the committee the executive director's or designee's 729  
preliminary findings with respect to the facts and evidence 730  
gathered regarding the matter referred. Upon receiving the 731  
preliminary findings, the committee, upon a vote of at least 732  
eight members of the committee, may refer the matter back to the 733  
Office of the Legislative Inspector General for further 734  
investigation, request that a complaint be drafted by the legal 735  
counsel of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, 736  
terminate the investigation, or hold a hearing pursuant to 737  
division (E) of this section. 738

Before the fifth day of each month, the executive director 739  
of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall make a 740  
report, in writing, to the committee regarding the status of any 741  
ongoing investigation that the committee referred to the Office 742  
of the Legislative Inspector General. 743

(C) Before the committee takes any formal action against a 744  
person who is the subject of an investigation based upon a 745  
complaint filed with the committee, the committee shall consider 746  
the complaint. 747



(D) The committee may defer action on a complaint against 748  
members and employees of and candidates for the General Assembly 749  
and employees of any legislative agency when the complaint 750  
alleges conduct that at least eight members of the committee 751  
find reason to believe is being reviewed by appropriate law 752  
enforcement or regulatory authorities, or when at least eight 753  
members of the committee determine that it is appropriate for 754  
the conduct alleged in the complaint to be reviewed initially by 755  
law enforcement or regulatory authorities. 756

(E) (1) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with 757  
the committee, at least eight members of the committee find that 758  
the complaint is not frivolous and there is reasonable cause to 759  
believe that the facts alleged in the complaint constitute a 760  
breach of privilege, misconduct, or a violation of Chapter 102. 761  
or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, or this Code 762  
of Ethics, the committee shall hold a hearing. At the hearing, 763  
the legal counsel of the Office of the Legislative Inspector 764  
General shall present to the committee the case against the 765  
accused person, introduce evidence, call witnesses, and cross- 766  
examine witnesses. The chairperson of the committee shall make 767  
all rulings regarding procedure and the admissibility of 768  
evidence. The hearing and all related proceedings of the 769  
committee are absolutely confidential as provided under this 770  
Code of Ethics and section 102.06 of the Revised Code. No member 771  
or employee of the committee, person who staffs or otherwise 772  
serves the committee, witness, or other person shall divulge any 773  
information about the hearing or related proceedings, except 774  
that a witness and the complainant may consult with an attorney 775  
before and after the hearing and any related proceeding, any 776  
witness may be represented by an attorney while the witness is 777  
being examined or cross-examined, the accused person may be 778  
represented by an attorney at all stages of the proceedings, and 779  
the attorney of the accused person may attend all hearings and 780

related proceedings of the committee. 781

(2) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with the 782  
committee, at least eight members of the committee find that the 783  
complaint is frivolous or that there is no reasonable cause to 784  
believe that the charge or complaint constitutes a breach of 785  
privilege, misconduct, or a violation of Chapter 102. or section 786  
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, or this Code of Ethics, 787  
the committee shall dismiss the complaint and notify the accused 788  
person in writing of the dismissal of the complaint. If the 789  
committee so dismisses the complaint, the committee shall not 790  
issue a report of its findings unless the accused person 791  
requests a report. If the accused person requests a report, the 792  
committee shall issue a report in accordance with division (F) 793  
(2) of this section. 794

(3) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with the 795  
committee, the committee finds by unanimous concurrence of its 796  
membership that there is reasonable cause to believe that the 797  
charges presented constitute a breach of privilege, misconduct, 798  
or a violation of this Code of Ethics but do not constitute a 799  
violation of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the 800  
Revised Code and also finds by unanimous concurrence of its 801  
membership that the breach of privilege, misconduct, or 802  
violation was in good faith and without wrongful intent and the 803  
person has taken or will take suitable remedial action, it may 804  
order the person to take any further remedial action it 805  
considers necessary and, upon satisfaction that any order it 806  
makes is complied with, terminate the investigation, with the 807  
concurrence of the accused person. If an investigation is so 808  
terminated, the committee shall not issue a report of its 809  
findings unless the accused person requests a report. If the 810  
accused person requests a report, the committee shall issue a 811  
report in accordance with division (F) (2) of this section. If 812  
the accused person fails to comply with an order of the 813

committee, the committee, upon concurrence of at least eight of 814  
its members, shall proceed with the original complaint filed 815  
against the person. 816

(F) (1) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight 817  
members of the committee find, based upon a preponderance of the 818  
evidence, that the facts alleged in the complaint are true and 819  
constitute a violation of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 820  
2921.43 of the Revised Code, the committee, upon concurrence of 821  
at least eight of its members, shall order the Office of the 822  
Legislative Inspector General to prepare a report of the 823  
committee's findings to the appropriate prosecuting authority or 824  
other appropriate body for proceedings in prosecution of the 825  
violations and, in accordance with division (F) (1) of this 826  
section, issue a report to the General Assembly recommending 827  
reprimand, censure, expulsion, or other sanction the committee 828  
considers appropriate. Upon acceptance by at least eight members 829  
of the committee of the report to the appropriate prosecuting 830  
authority or other appropriate body, the committee shall report 831  
its findings to the appropriate prosecuting authority, the 832  
Elections Commission, or other appropriate body. This report is 833  
the investigative report described in division (E) of section 834  
101.34 of the Revised Code and shall contain any findings of 835  
fact and conclusions of law made by the committee. This report 836  
shall not contain any papers, records, affidavits, or documents 837  
upon any complaint, inquiry, or investigation relating to the 838  
proceedings of the committee. If at least eight members of the 839  
committee find, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, that 840  
the facts alleged in the complaint are true and constitute a 841  
violation of division (B) of section 102.031 of the Revised 842  
Code, the committee may impose a fine of not more than one 843  
thousand dollars upon the member. 844

(2) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight 845  
members of the committee find, based upon a preponderance of the 846

evidence, that a breach of privilege has been committed or that 847  
a member or employee of or candidate for the General Assembly or 848  
employee of any legislative agency has violated a provision of 849  
this Code of Ethics that is not a violation of Chapter 102. or 850  
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, or has committed 851  
misconduct, the committee, upon concurrence of at least eight of 852  
its members and in accordance with division (F)(1) of this 853  
section, may issue a report recommending reprimand, censure, 854  
expulsion, or other sanction the committee considers appropriate 855  
or, upon a finding by unanimous concurrence of its membership 856  
that the breach of privilege, misconduct, or violation was in 857  
good faith and without wrongful intent and the person has taken 858  
or will take suitable remedial action, may order the person to 859  
take any further remedial action it considers necessary and, 860  
upon satisfaction that any order it makes is complied with, 861  
dismiss the complaint without issuing a report of its findings, 862  
unless the accused person requests a report. If the accused 863  
person requests a report, the committee shall issue a report in 864  
accordance with division (F)(2) of this section. If the person 865  
fails to comply with an order of the committee, the committee, 866  
upon concurrence of eight of its members, shall recommend some 867  
sanction. 868

(3) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight 869  
members of the committee do not find, based upon a preponderance 870  
of the evidence, that the facts alleged in a complaint 871  
constitute a breach of privilege, misconduct, or a violation of 872  
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code 873  
or this Code of Ethics, the committee shall dismiss the 874  
complaint. The complaint shall also be dismissed if the 875  
committee has not conducted a hearing within ninety days after 876  
the complaint is filed with the committee, or if the committee 877  
has not finally disposed of the complaint within six months 878  
after the complaint is filed with the committee. The committee 879

shall notify the accused person in writing of the dismissal of 880  
the complaint. The committee shall not issue a report of its 881  
findings unless the accused person requests a report. If the 882  
accused person requests a report, the committee shall issue a 883  
report in accordance with division (F) (2) of this section. If 884  
the committee issues the report, all evidence and the record of 885  
the hearing shall remain confidential unless the accused person 886  
also requests that the evidence and record be made public. Upon 887  
request by the accused person, the committee shall make the 888  
evidence and the record available for public inspection. 889

(G) (1) Any report of the committee that is issued pursuant 890  
to division (E) (1) of this section and contains a finding that 891  
the facts in the complaint are true and constitute a violation 892  
of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised 893  
Code, or that is issued pursuant to division (E) (2) of this 894  
section and contains a finding that a breach of privilege, 895  
misconduct, or violation of this Code of Ethics has occurred and 896  
recommends reprimand, censure, expulsion, or another appropriate 897  
sanction, shall be entered in the House Journal and the Senate 898  
Journal. The House of Representatives and the Senate shall vote 899  
on approval of any report entered in the House or Senate Journal 900  
in accordance with this division. Concurrence of two-thirds of 901  
the members of both the House and the Senate shall be necessary 902  
for approval of the report, and, upon approval, any recommended 903  
sanction shall be imposed immediately. 904

(2) If the investigation of the committee results in a 905  
finding that a complaint that is filed is frivolous or that no 906  
misconduct, breach of privilege, or violation of Chapter 102. or 907  
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code or this Code of 908  
Ethics has been committed or if the committee terminates an 909  
investigation or dismisses a complaint pursuant to division (E) 910  
(2) or (3) of this section, the committee shall not issue a 911  
report of its findings unless the accused person requests a 912

report. If the accused person requests a report, the committee 913  
shall issue a report and publish it in the House Journal, if the 914  
accused person is a member or employee of, or candidate for, the 915  
House of Representatives, or the Senate Journal, if the accused 916  
person is a member or employee of, or candidate for, the Senate 917  
or an employee of any legislative agency. A report published in 918  
the House or Senate Journal under division (F)(2) of this 919  
section does not require a vote by the House or Senate. 920

(H) A person against whom a complaint is filed shall be 921  
given by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by 922  
personal service reasonable notice of the date, time, and place 923  
of the hearing and a statement of the charges and the law or 924  
provision directly involved, and shall be granted the following 925  
rights: to be represented by counsel, to have counsel appointed 926  
for the person if the person is unable to afford counsel without 927  
undue hardship, to examine the evidence against the person, to 928  
have access to all information relative to the complaint that is 929  
in the possession or knowledge of the committee or the Office of 930  
the Legislative Inspector General, to produce evidence and to 931  
call and subpoena witnesses in the person's defense, to confront 932  
the person's accusers, to cross-examine witnesses, to have a 933  
stenographic record made of the hearing, to have the hearing 934  
follow the rules of evidence applicable to the courts of this 935  
state, and to have the hearing closed to the public. A person, 936  
with the approval of the committee, may waive any or all of such 937  
rights by executing a written waiver and filing it with the 938  
committee. 939

(I) The chairperson of the committee and the executive 940  
director and chief legal counsel of the Office of the 941  
Legislative Inspector General may administer oaths, and the 942  
committee or the investigation subcommittee appointed pursuant 943  
to division (A)(1) of this section may issue subpoenas to any 944  
person in the state compelling the attendance of witnesses and 945

the production of relevant papers, books, accounts, and records. 946  
The committee or the investigation subcommittee shall issue 947  
subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the 948  
production of documents upon the request of an accused person. 949  
Section 101.42 of the Revised Code shall govern the issuance of 950  
such subpoenas insofar as applicable. Upon the refusal of any 951  
person to obey a subpoena, be sworn, or answer as a witness, the 952  
committee or the investigation subcommittee may apply to the 953  
Court of Common Pleas of Franklin County under section 2705.03 954  
of the Revised Code. The court shall hold proceedings in 955  
accordance with Chapter 2705. of the Revised Code. The 956  
committee, the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, or 957  
the accused person may take the depositions of witnesses 958  
residing within or without the state in the same manner as 959  
prescribed by law for the taking of depositions in civil actions 960  
in the court of common pleas. 961

(J)(1) All complaints, papers, records, affidavits, and 962  
documents upon any complaint, inquiry, or investigation relating 963  
to the proceedings of the committee shall be sealed and are 964  
private and confidential, except as otherwise provided in this 965  
section. The substance of any charges received by the committee 966  
and of any request made by the committee for further 967  
information, any information received by the committee, all 968  
testimony and other evidence presented during a hearing, and all 969  
committee discussions are private and confidential, except as 970  
otherwise provided in this section. No person serving on or 971  
employed in the service of the committee, or employee of the 972  
Office of the Legislative Inspector General who staffs or 973  
otherwise assists the committee or the Office of the Legislative 974  
Inspector General employee who staffs the committee shall 975  
divulge any of the following: 976

(a) Any matter concerning a complaint after it is filed 977  
with the executive director of the Office of the Legislative 978

Inspector General;	979
(b) In the case of complaints initiated by the committee,	980
any matter concerning a complaint after the matter is under	981
investigation by the committee, whether before or after a	982
complaint is filed;	983
(c) Any other information that is made private and	984
confidential by this section.	985
(2) The requirement of confidentiality set forth in	986
division (I)(1) of this section includes without limitation	987
divulging any matter to members or employees of the House or	988
Senate or employees of any legislative agency who are not	989
members of or assigned to the committee or to any employees of	990
the Office of the Legislative Inspector General who are not	991
assigned to staff the committee or do not assist any Office of	992
the Legislative Inspector General employee assigned to staff the	993
committee, but does not prevent any of the following:	994
(a) The issuance of a final report by the committee or any	995
commentary upon the contents of the final report;	996
(b) Discussion of any complaint, request for an advisory	997
opinion, charges presented to the committee, information related	998
to a complaint, to an advisory opinion request, or to charges	999
presented to the committee, proceedings of the committee, or	1000
other papers, records, affidavits, documents, or proceedings	1001
that are made private and confidential by this section between	1002
the members of the committee and any of the following:	1003
(i) Any employees or staff of the committee;	1004
(ii) Any employees of the General Assembly assigned to	1005
serve the committee, and any employee who serves as legal	1006
counsel for a caucus of the General Assembly;	1007
(iii) Any employees of the Office of the Legislative	1008
Inspector General assigned to staff the committee;	1009



(iv) Any other persons employed by or assigned to serve the committee. 1010  
1011

(c) The preparation of any documents necessary for the 1012  
operation of the committee by employees of the General Assembly 1013  
assigned to the committee chairperson, employees of the General 1014  
Assembly assigned to staff the committee, or employees of the 1015  
Office of the Legislative Inspector General who assist the 1016  
Office of the Legislative Inspector General employee assigned to 1017  
staff the committee, except that any confidentiality 1018  
requirements of this section applicable to the members of the 1019  
committee shall apply to the employees of the General Assembly, 1020  
committee, or Office of the Legislative Inspector General who 1021  
prepare those documents. 1022

(K) If a complaint filed with the committee alleges a 1023  
violation by a member of the committee, the member against whom 1024  
the allegation is made shall not vote on the matter. The 1025  
committee shall conduct no business concerning complaints unless 1026  
a majority of its members are present. 1027

(L) The committee shall deliver all notices and other 1028  
documents by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by 1029  
personal service. 1030

(M) Within fourteen days after the final disposition of a 1031  
complaint, either by dismissal or by referral to the appropriate 1032  
prosecuting authority, the committee shall notify the 1033  
complainant of the dismissal or referral by certified mail, 1034  
return receipt requested, or by personal service. 1035

Section 14. AMENDMENTS TO THE ETHICS CODE 1036

The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend 1037  
amendments to this Code of Ethics at any time by proposing to 1038  
the General Assembly a concurrent resolution containing the 1039  
desired amendments. 1040

Section 15. DISTRIBUTION OF ETHICS CODE	1041
Each member and employee of the General Assembly and each	1042
employee of any legislative agency shall be given a copy of this	1043
Code of Ethics within ten days after its adoption.	1044
Section 16. APPLICATION TO <del>133rd</del> <u>135th</u> GENERAL ASSEMBLY	1045
The Code of Ethics for the <del>132nd</del> <u>134th</u> General Assembly	1046
shall be effective until the <del>133rd</del> <u>135th</u> General Assembly adopts	1047
the Code of Ethics for the <del>133rd</del> <u>135th</u> General Assembly.	1048