

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2017 RECONVENED SESSION

CHAPTER 829

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 2.2-419, 2.2-422, 2.2-423, 2.2-426, 2.2-430, 2.2-431, 2.2-3101, 2.2-3103.1, 2.2-3110, 2.2-3112, 2.2-3114, 2.2-3115, 2.2-3116, 2.2-3121, 2.2-4369, 24.2-502, 30-101, 30-103.1, 30-105, 30-106, 30-110, 30-124, 30-129.1, 30-356, and 30-356.2 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 5 of Chapter 31 of Title 2.2 a section numbered 2.2-3118.2 and by adding a section numbered 30-111.1, relating to lobbyist reporting, the State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act, and the General Assembly Conflicts of Interests Act; filing of required disclosures; registration of lobbyists; candidate filings; judges; definition of gift; informal advice; civil penalties; technical amendments.

[H 1854]

Approved April 26, 2017

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 2.2-419, 2.2-422, 2.2-423, 2.2-426, 2.2-430, 2.2-431, 2.2-3101, 2.2-3103.1, 2.2-3110, 2.2-3112, 2.2-3114, 2.2-3115, 2.2-3116, 2.2-3121, 2.2-4369, 24.2-502, 30-101, 30-103.1, 30-105, 30-106, 30-110, 30-124, 30-129.1, 30-356, and 30-356.2 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 5 of Chapter 31 of Title 2.2 a section numbered 2.2-3118.2 and by adding a section numbered 30-111.1 as follows:

§ 2.2-419. Definitions.

As used in this article, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Anything of value" means:

1. A pecuniary item, including money, or a bank bill or note;
2. A promissory note, bill of exchange, order, draft, warrant, check, or bond given for the payment of money;
3. A contract, agreement, promise, or other obligation for an advance, conveyance, forgiveness of indebtedness, deposit, distribution, loan, payment, gift, pledge, or transfer of money;
4. A stock, bond, note, or other investment interest in an entity;
5. A receipt given for the payment of money or other property;
6. A right in action;
7. A gift, tangible good, chattel, or an interest in a gift, tangible good, or chattel;
8. A loan or forgiveness of indebtedness;
9. A work of art, antique, or collectible;
10. An automobile or other means of personal transportation;
11. Real property or an interest in real property, including title to realty, a fee simple or partial interest, present or future, contingent or vested within realty, a leasehold interest, or other beneficial interest in realty;
12. An honorarium or compensation for services;
13. A rebate or discount in the price of anything of value unless the rebate or discount is made in the ordinary course of business to a member of the public without regard to that person's status as an executive or legislative official, or the sale or trade of something for reasonable compensation that would ordinarily not be available to a member of the public;
14. A promise or offer of employment; or
15. Any other thing of value that is pecuniary or compensatory in value to a person.

"Anything of value" does not mean a campaign contribution properly received and reported pursuant to Chapter 9.3 (§ 24.2-945 et seq.) of Title 24.2.

"Compensation" means:

1. An advance, conveyance, forgiveness of indebtedness, deposit, distribution, loan, payment, gift, pledge, or transfer of money or anything of value; or
2. A contract, agreement, promise or other obligation for an advance, conveyance, forgiveness of indebtedness, deposit, distribution, loan, payment, gift, pledge, or transfer of money or anything of value, for services rendered or to be rendered.

"Compensation" does not mean reimbursement of expenses if the reimbursement does not exceed the amount actually expended for the expenses and it is substantiated by an itemization of expenses.

"Council" means the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council established in § 30-355.

"Executive action" means the proposal, drafting, development, consideration, amendment, adoption, approval, promulgation, issuance, modification, rejection, or postponement by an executive agency or official of legislation or executive orders issued by the Governor. "Executive action" includes procurement transactions.

"Executive agency" means an agency, board, commission, or other body in the executive branch of state government. "Executive agency" includes the State Corporation Commission, the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission, and the Virginia Lottery.

"Executive official" means:

1. The Governor;
2. The Lieutenant Governor;
3. The Attorney General;
4. Any officer or employee of the office of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General other than a clerical or secretarial employee;
5. The Governor's Secretaries, the Deputy Secretaries, and the chief executive officer of each executive agency; or
6. Members of supervisory and policy boards, commissions and councils, as defined in § 2.2-2100, however selected.

"Expenditure" means:

1. A purchase, payment, distribution, loan, forgiveness of a loan or payment of a loan by a third party, advance, deposit, transfer of funds, a promise to make a payment, or a gift of money or anything of value for any purpose;
2. A payment to a lobbyist for salary, fee, reimbursement for expenses, or other purpose by a person employing, retaining, or contracting for the services of the lobbyist separately or jointly with other persons;
3. A payment in support of or assistance to a lobbyist or the lobbyist's activities, including the direct payment of expenses incurred at the request or suggestion of the lobbyist;
4. A payment that directly benefits an executive or legislative official or a member of the official's immediate family;
5. A payment, including compensation, payment, or reimbursement for the services, time, or expenses of an employee for or in connection with direct communication with an executive or legislative official;
6. A payment for or in connection with soliciting or urging other persons to enter into direct communication with an executive or legislative official; or
7. A payment or reimbursement for categories of expenditures required to be reported pursuant to this chapter.

"Expenditure" does not mean a campaign contribution properly received and reported pursuant to Chapter 9.3 (§ 24.2-945 et seq.) of Title 24.2.

"Fair market value" means the price that a good or service would bring between a willing seller and a willing buyer in the open market after negotiations. If the fair market value cannot be determined, the actual price paid for the good or service shall be given consideration.

"Gift" means anything of value, including any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other item having monetary value, and includes services as well as gifts of transportation, local travel, lodgings, and meals, whether provided in-kind or by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred.

"Gift" does not mean:

1. Printed informational or promotional material;
2. A gift that is not used and, no later than 60 days after receipt, is returned to the donor or delivered to a charitable organization and is not claimed as a charitable contribution for federal income tax purposes;
3. A devise or inheritance;
4. A gift of a value of less than \$20;
5. Any offer of a ticket, coupon, or other admission or pass unless the ticket, coupon, admission, or pass is used;
6. Any food or beverages provided to an individual at an event at which the individual is performing official duties related to his public service;
7. Any food and beverages received at or registration or attendance fees waived for any event at which the individual is a featured speaker, presenter, or lecturer;
8. An unsolicited award of appreciation or recognition in the form of a plaque, trophy, wall memento, or similar item that is given in recognition of public, civic, charitable, or professional service;
9. Any gift to an individual's spouse, child, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, or first cousin; a person to whom the donee is engaged to be married; the donee's or his spouse's parent, grandparent, grandchild, brother, sister, step-parent, step-grandparent, step-grandchild, step-brother, or step-sister; or the donee's brother's or sister's spouse *or the donee's son-in-law or daughter-in-law*;
10. Travel provided to facilitate attendance by a legislator at a regular or special session of the General Assembly, a meeting of a legislative committee or commission, or a national conference where attendance is approved by the House Committee on Rules or its Chairman or the Senate Committee on Rules or its Chairman; ~~or~~
11. Travel related to an official meeting of, *or any meal provided for attendance at such meeting by*, the Commonwealth, its political subdivisions, or any board, commission, authority, or other entity, or

any charitable organization established pursuant to § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code affiliated with such entity, to which such person has been appointed or elected or is a member by virtue of his office or employment; or

12. Attendance at a reception or similar function where food, such as hors d'oeuvres, and beverages that can be conveniently consumed by a person while standing or walking are offered.

"Immediate family" means (i) the spouse and (ii) any other person who resides in the same household as the executive or legislative official and who is a dependent of the official.

"Legislative action" means:

1. Preparation, research, drafting, introduction, consideration, modification, amendment, approval, passage, enactment, tabling, postponement, defeat, or rejection of a bill, resolution, amendment, motion, report, nomination, appointment, or other matter by the General Assembly or a legislative official;

2. Action by the Governor in approving, vetoing, or recommending amendments for a bill passed by the General Assembly; or

3. Action by the General Assembly in overriding or sustaining a veto by the Governor, considering amendments recommended by the Governor, or considering, confirming, or rejecting an appointment of the Governor.

"Legislative official" means:

1. A member or member-elect of the General Assembly;

2. A member of a committee, subcommittee, commission, or other entity established by and responsible to the General Assembly or either house of the General Assembly; or

3. Persons employed by the General Assembly or an entity established by and responsible to the General Assembly.

"Lobbying" means:

1. Influencing or attempting to influence executive or legislative action through oral or written communication with an executive or legislative official; or

2. Solicitation of others to influence an executive or legislative official.

"Lobbying" does not mean:

1. Requests for appointments, information on the status of pending executive and legislative actions, or other ministerial contacts if there is no attempt to influence executive or legislative actions;

2. Responses to published notices soliciting public comment submitted to the public official designated in the notice to receive the responses;

3. The solicitation of an association by its members to influence legislative or executive action; or

4. Communications between an association and its members and communications between a principal and its lobbyists.

"Lobbyist" means:

1. An individual who is employed and receives payments, or who contracts for economic consideration, including reimbursement for reasonable travel and living expenses, for the purpose of lobbying;

2. An individual who represents an organization, association, or other group for the purpose of lobbying; or

3. A local government employee who lobbies.

"Lobbyist's principal" or "principal" means the entity on whose behalf the lobbyist influences or attempts to influence executive or legislative action. An organization whose employees conduct lobbying activities on its behalf is both a principal and an employer of the lobbyists. In the case of a coalition or association that employs or retains others to conduct lobbying activities on behalf of its membership, the principal is the coalition or association and not its individual members.

"Local government" means:

1. Any county, city, town, or other local or regional political subdivision;

2. Any school division;

3. Any organization or entity that exercises governmental powers that is established pursuant to an interstate compact; or

4. Any organization composed of members representing entities listed in subdivisions 1, 2, or 3 of this definition.

"Local government employee" means a public employee of a local government.

"Person" means an individual, proprietorship, firm, partnership, joint venture, joint stock company, syndicate, business trust, estate, company, corporation, association, club, committee, organization, or group of persons acting in concert.

"Procurement transaction" means all functions that pertain to obtaining all goods, services, or construction on behalf of an executive agency, including description of requirements, selection and solicitation of sources, preparation and award of contract, and all phases of contract administration where the stated or expected value of the contract is \$5 million or more.

"Secretary" means the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

"Value" means the actual cost or fair market value of an item or items, whichever is greater. If the fair market value cannot be determined, the actual amount paid for the item or items shall be given

consideration.

"Widely attended event" means an event at which at least 25 persons have been invited to attend or there is a reasonable expectation that at least 25 persons will attend the event and the event is open to individuals (i) ~~who share a common interest~~, (ii) who are members of a public, civic, charitable, or professional organization, (iii) ~~(ii)~~ who are from a particular industry or profession, or ~~(iv)~~ (iii) who represent persons interested in a particular issue.

§ 2.2-422. Registration requirements.

A. A lobbyist shall register with the Secretary of the Commonwealth prior to engaging in lobbying. A lobbyist who engages in lobbying entirely outside the capital city shall comply with this section by registering with the Secretary within fifteen days after first engaging in lobbying. Registration shall be required annually and expire May 1 of each year.

B. The chief administrative officer of each local government shall register with the Secretary of the Commonwealth and file a statement pursuant to § 2.2-423 if any local government employees will act as lobbyists on its behalf. No registration fee shall be required. Each local government shall file a consolidated report in accordance with the reporting requirements of § 2.2-426 and shall maintain locally a copy of the report that is available for inspection and copying during regular business hours.

C. All registrations required by this section shall be filed electronically in accordance with the standards approved by the Council.

§ 2.2-423. Contents of registration statement.

A. The registration statement shall be on a form provided by the Secretary of the Commonwealth and include the following information:

1. The name and business address and telephone number of the lobbyist;
2. The name and business address and telephone number of the person who will keep custody of the lobbyist's and the lobbyist's principal's accounts and records required to comply with this article, and the location and telephone number for the place where the accounts and records are kept;
3. The name and business address and telephone number of the lobbyist's principal;
4. The kind of business of the lobbyist's principal;
5. For each principal, the full name of the individual to whom the lobbyist reports;
6. For each principal, a statement whether the lobbyist is employed or retained and whether exclusively for the purpose of lobbying;
7. The position held by the lobbyist if he is a part-time or full-time employee of the principal;
8. ~~The full name and business address and telephone number of each lobbyist employed by or representing the lobbyist's principal;~~
9. An identification of the subject matter (with as much specificity as possible) with regard to which the lobbyist or lobbyist's principal will engage in lobbying; *and*
- ~~10. 9. The statement of the lobbyist, which shall be signed either originally or by electronic signature as authorized by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (§ 59.1-479 et seq.), that the information contained on the registration statement is true and correct; and 11. A statement by which a.~~

B. The lobbyist and the lobbyist's principal shall be notified at the time of the registration that the principal may elect to waive the principal signature requirement on disclosure filings submitted by its registered lobbyist after the filing of the registration statement. The waiver shall be on a form prescribed by the Council and may be filed electronically with the Council in accordance with the standards approved by it pursuant to § 30-356.

~~B.~~ C. Whenever any change, modification, or addition to his status as a lobbyist is made, *including the termination of his status as a lobbyist*, the lobbyist shall, within one week of such change, modification, or addition, furnish full information regarding the same to the Secretary of the Commonwealth on forms provided by the Secretary.

~~C.~~ D. The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall furnish a copy of this article to any individual offering to register as a lobbyist and shall mail by certified mail a copy of this article and a copy of the information furnished by the lobbyist to the person whom the lobbyist represents to be his principal.

~~D.~~ E. If the principal to whom the information is sent under subsection ~~C~~ D does not, within 10 days of such mailing, file an affidavit, signed by the person or duly authorized agent of the person, denying that the lobbyist appears on his behalf, such person shall be deemed to have appointed the Secretary of the Commonwealth his agent for service of process in any prosecution arising for violation of this article. If such affidavit is filed, the Secretary shall notify the attorney for the Commonwealth of the City of Richmond.

§ 2.2-426. Lobbyist reporting; penalty.

A. Each lobbyist shall file with the Council a separate annual report of expenditures, including gifts, for each principal for whom he lobbies by July 1 for the preceding 12-month period complete through the last day of April.

B. Each principal who expends more than \$500 to employ or compensate multiple lobbyists shall be responsible for filing a consolidated lobbyist report pursuant to this section in any case in which the lobbyists are each exempt under the provisions of subdivision 7 or 8 of § 2.2-420 from the reporting requirements of this section.

C. The report shall be on a form prescribed by the Council and shall be accompanied by instructions provided by the Council. All reports shall be submitted electronically and in accordance with the standards approved by the Council pursuant to the provisions of § 30-356.

D. A person who knowingly and intentionally makes a false statement of a material fact on the disclosure statement is guilty of a Class 5 felony.

E. The name of a legislative or executive official, or a member of his immediate family, attending any reportable entertainment event shall not be required to be disclosed by the principal if that legislative or executive official reimburses the principal for, or otherwise pays for, his attendance, or the attendance of a member of his immediate family, at the entertainment event. Reimbursement shall be calculated using the average value for each person attending the event.

F. Each lobbyist shall send to each legislative and executive official who is required to be identified by name on Schedule A or B of the Lobbyist's Disclosure Form a copy of Schedule A or B or a summary of the information pertaining to that official. Copies or summaries shall be provided to the official by ~~December 15~~ *January 10* for the preceding 12-month period complete through ~~November 30~~ *December 31*. *In addition, each lobbyist shall send to each legislator and executive official who is required to file a report of gifts accepted or received during a regular session of the General Assembly pursuant to § 2.2-3114.2 or 30-110.1 a summary of all gifts made by such lobbyist to each legislator or executive official or a member of his immediate family during the period beginning on January 1 complete through adjournment sine die of the regular session of the General Assembly. Summaries shall be provided to the legislator or executive official no later than three weeks after adjournment sine die. For purposes of this section, "adjournment sine die" means adjournment on the last legislative day of the regular session and does not include the reconvened session.*

§ 2.2-430. Termination.

A. A lobbyist or a lobbyist's principal may terminate the lobbyist's status as a lobbyist ~~registration~~ *for such principal at any time by filing a prior to the expiration of his registration. Upon termination, the lobbyist may file the report required under § 2.2-426 including information through the last day of lobbying activity. A termination at any time, but shall file the report no later than the deadline set forth in that section. Such report shall indicate that the lobbyist intends to use the report as the final accounting of lobbying activity and shall include information complete through the last day of lobbying activity and the effective date of the termination. The report shall be signed by the lobbyist's principal as otherwise required.*

B. A lobbyist's principal who terminates the services of a lobbyist prior to the expiration of the lobbyist's registration shall provide actual notice to the lobbyist. Such notice shall inform the lobbyist that he is required to file the report required under § 2.2-426 no later than the deadline set forth in that section and that the lobbyist's failure to file such report by the deadline shall result in the assessment of civil penalties against the lobbyist pursuant to § 2.2-431. The lobbyist's principal shall also notify the Secretary of the Commonwealth of the early termination in accordance with subsection B of § 2.2-423.

§ 2.2-431. Penalties; filing of substituted statement.

A. Every lobbyist failing to file the statement prescribed by § 2.2-426 within the time prescribed therein shall be assessed a civil penalty of \$50, and every individual failing to file the statement within 10 days after the time prescribed herein shall be assessed an additional civil penalty of \$50 per day from the eleventh day of such default until the statement is filed. The Council shall notify the Secretary of any lobbyist's failure to file the statement within the time prescribed, and the penalties shall be assessed and collected by the Secretary. The Attorney General shall assist the Secretary in collecting the penalties, upon request.

B. Every lobbyist's principal whose lobbyist fails to file the statement prescribed by § 2.2-426 shall be assessed a civil penalty of \$50, and shall be assessed an additional civil penalty of \$50 per day from the eleventh day of such default until the statement is filed. The Council shall notify the Secretary of any lobbyist's failure to file the statement within the time prescribed, and the penalties shall be assessed and collected by the Secretary. The Attorney General shall assist the Secretary in collecting the penalties, upon request.

C. No individual who has failed to file the statement required by § 2.2-426 or who has failed to pay all penalties assessed pursuant to this section, shall register or act as a lobbyist as long as he remains in default.

D. Whenever any lobbyist or lobbyist's principal is or will be in default under § 2.2-426, and the reasons for such default are or will be beyond ~~his~~ *the lobbyist's* control, ~~or the control of his the lobbyist's principal~~, or both, the Secretary may suspend the assessment of any penalty otherwise assessable and accept a substituted statement, upon the submission of sworn proofs that shall satisfy him that the default has been beyond the control of the lobbyist or ~~his the lobbyist's~~ principal, and that the substituted statement contains the most accurate and complete information available after the exercise of due diligence.

E. Penalties collected pursuant to this section shall be payable to the State Treasurer for deposit to the general fund and shall be used exclusively to fund the Council.

§ 2.2-3101. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Advisory agency" means any board, commission, committee or post which does not exercise any sovereign power or duty, but is appointed by a governmental agency or officer or is created by law for the purpose of making studies or recommendations, or advising or consulting with a governmental agency.

"Affiliated business entity relationship" means a relationship, other than a parent-subsidary relationship, that exists when (i) one business entity has a controlling ownership interest in the other business entity, (ii) a controlling owner in one entity is also a controlling owner in the other entity, or (iii) there is shared management or control between the business entities. Factors that may be considered in determining the existence of an affiliated business entity relationship include that the same person or substantially the same person owns or manages the two entities, there are common or commingled funds or assets, the business entities share the use of the same offices or employees, or otherwise share activities, resources or personnel on a regular basis, or there is otherwise a close working relationship between the entities.

"Business" means a corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, firm, enterprise, franchise, association, trust or foundation, or any other individual or entity carrying on a business or profession, whether or not for profit.

"Candidate" means a person who seeks or campaigns for an office of the Commonwealth or one of its governmental units in a general, primary, or special election and who is qualified to have his name placed on the ballot for the office. The candidate shall become subject to the provisions of this chapter upon the filing of a statement of qualification pursuant to § 24.2-501. The State Board of Elections or general registrar shall notify each such candidate of the provisions of this chapter. Notification made by the general registrar shall consist of information developed by the State Board of Elections.

"Contract" means any agreement to which a governmental agency is a party, or any agreement on behalf of a governmental agency that involves the payment of money appropriated by the General Assembly or a political subdivision, whether or not such agreement is executed in the name of the Commonwealth, or some political subdivision thereof. "Contract" includes a subcontract only when the contract of which it is a part is with the officer's or employee's own governmental agency.

"Council" means the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council established in § 30-355.

"Employee" means all persons employed by a governmental or advisory agency, unless otherwise limited by the context of its use.

"Financial institution" means any bank, trust company, savings institution, industrial loan association, consumer finance company, credit union, broker-dealer as defined in subsection A of § 13.1-501, or investment company or advisor registered under the federal Investment Advisors Act or Investment Company Act of 1940.

"Gift" means any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other item having monetary value. It includes services as well as gifts of transportation, local travel, lodgings and meals, whether provided in-kind, by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred. "Gift" does not include (i) any offer of a ticket, coupon, or other admission or pass unless the ticket, coupon, admission, or pass is used; (ii) honorary degrees; (iii) any athletic, merit, or need-based scholarship or any other financial aid awarded by a public or private school, institution of higher education, or other educational program pursuant to such school, institution, or program's financial aid standards and procedures applicable to the general public; (iv) a campaign contribution properly received and reported pursuant to Chapter 9.3 (§ 24.2-945 et seq.) of Title 24.2; (v) any gift related to the private profession or occupation or *volunteer service* of an officer or employee or of a member of his immediate family; (vi) food or beverages consumed while attending an event at which the filer is performing official duties related to his public service; (vii) food and beverages received at or registration or attendance fees waived for any event at which the filer is a featured speaker, presenter, or lecturer; (viii) unsolicited awards of appreciation or recognition in the form of a plaque, trophy, wall memento, or similar item that is given in recognition of public, civic, charitable, or professional service; (ix) a devise or inheritance; (x) travel disclosed pursuant to the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act (§ 24.2-945 et seq.); (xi) travel paid for or provided by the government of the United States, any of its territories, or any state or any political subdivision of such state; (xii) travel provided to facilitate attendance by a legislator at a regular or special session of the General Assembly, a meeting of a legislative committee or commission, or a national conference where attendance is approved by the House Committee on Rules or its Chairman or the Senate Committee on Rules or its Chairman; (xiii) travel related to an official meeting of, or *any meal provided for attendance at such meeting by*, the Commonwealth, its political subdivisions, or any board, commission, authority, or other entity, or any charitable organization established pursuant to § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code affiliated with such entity, to which such person has been appointed or elected or is a member by virtue of his office or employment; (xiv) gifts with a value of less than \$20; ~~or~~ (xv) *attendance at a reception or similar function where food, such as hors d'oeuvres, and beverages that can be conveniently consumed by a person while standing or walking are offered*; or (xvi) gifts from relatives or personal friends. For the

purpose of this definition, "relative" means the donee's spouse, child, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, or first cousin; a person to whom the donee is engaged to be married; the donee's or his spouse's parent, grandparent, grandchild, brother, sister, step-parent, step-grandparent, step-grandchild, step-brother, or step-sister; or the donee's brother's or sister's spouse *or the donee's son-in-law or daughter-in-law*. For the purpose of this definition, "personal friend" does not include any person that the filer knows or has reason to know is (a) a lobbyist registered pursuant to Article 3 (§ 2.2-418 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 2.2; (b) a lobbyist's principal as defined in § 2.2-419; (c) for an officer or employee of a local governmental or advisory agency, a person, organization, or business who is a party to or is seeking to become a party to a contract with the local agency of which he is an officer or an employee; or (d) for an officer or employee of a state governmental or advisory agency, a person, organization, or business who is a party to or is seeking to become a party to a contract with the Commonwealth. For purposes of this definition, "person, organization, or business" includes individuals who are officers, directors, or owners of or who have a controlling ownership interest in such organization or business.

"Governmental agency" means each component part of the legislative, executive or judicial branches of state and local government, including each office, department, authority, post, commission, committee, and each institution or board created by law to exercise some regulatory or sovereign power or duty as distinguished from purely advisory powers or duties. Corporations organized or controlled by the Virginia Retirement System are "governmental agencies" for purposes of this chapter.

"Immediate family" means (i) a spouse and (ii) any other person who resides in the same household as the officer or employee and who is a dependent of the officer or employee.

"Officer" means any person appointed or elected to any governmental or advisory agency including local school boards, whether or not he receives compensation or other emolument of office. Unless the context requires otherwise, "officer" includes members of the judiciary.

"Parent-subsidiary relationship" means a relationship that exists when one corporation directly or indirectly owns shares possessing more than 50 percent of the voting power of another corporation.

"Personal interest" means a financial benefit or liability accruing to an officer or employee or to a member of his immediate family. Such interest shall exist by reason of (i) ownership in a business if the ownership interest exceeds three percent of the total equity of the business; (ii) annual income that exceeds, or may reasonably be anticipated to exceed, \$5,000 from ownership in real or personal property or a business; (iii) salary, other compensation, fringe benefits, or benefits from the use of property, or any combination thereof, paid or provided by a business or governmental agency that exceeds, or may reasonably be anticipated to exceed, \$5,000 annually; (iv) ownership of real or personal property if the interest exceeds \$5,000 in value and excluding ownership in a business, income, or salary, other compensation, fringe benefits or benefits from the use of property; (v) personal liability incurred or assumed on behalf of a business if the liability exceeds three percent of the asset value of the business; or (vi) an option for ownership of a business or real or personal property if the ownership interest will consist of clause (i) or (iv) *above*.

"Personal interest in a contract" means a personal interest that an officer or employee has in a contract with a governmental agency, whether due to his being a party to the contract or due to a personal interest in a business that is a party to the contract.

"Personal interest in a transaction" means a personal interest of an officer or employee in any matter considered by his agency. Such personal interest exists when an officer or employee or a member of his immediate family has a personal interest in property or a business or governmental agency, or represents or provides services to any individual or business and such property, business or represented or served individual or business (i) is the subject of the transaction or (ii) may realize a reasonably foreseeable direct or indirect benefit or detriment as a result of the action of the agency considering the transaction. Notwithstanding the above, such personal interest in a transaction shall not be deemed to exist where (a) an elected member of a local governing body serves without remuneration as a member of the board of trustees of a not-for-profit entity and such elected member or member of his immediate family has no personal interest related to the not-for-profit entity or (b) an officer, employee, or elected member of a local governing body is appointed by such local governing body to serve on a governmental agency, or an officer, employee, or elected member of a separate local governmental agency formed by a local governing body is appointed to serve on a governmental agency, and the personal interest in the transaction of the governmental agency is the result of the salary, other compensation, fringe benefits, or benefits provided by the local governing body or the separate governmental agency to the officer, employee, elected member, or member of his immediate family.

"State and local government officers and employees" shall not include members of the General Assembly.

"State filer" means those officers and employees required to file a disclosure statement of their personal interests pursuant to subsection A or B of § 2.2-3114.

"Transaction" means any matter considered by any governmental or advisory agency, whether in a committee, subcommittee, or other entity of that agency or before the agency itself, on which official action is taken or contemplated.

§ 2.2-3103.1. Certain gifts prohibited.

A. For purposes of this section:

"Person, organization, or business" includes individuals who are officers, directors, or owners of or who have a controlling ownership interest in such organization or business.

"Widely attended event" means an event at which at least 25 persons have been invited to attend or there is a reasonable expectation that at least 25 persons will attend the event and the event is open to individuals (i) ~~who share a common interest~~, (ii) who are members of a public, civic, charitable, or professional organization, ~~(iii)~~ (ii) who are from a particular industry or profession, or ~~(iv)~~ (iii) who represent persons interested in a particular issue.

B. No officer or employee of a local governmental or advisory agency or candidate required to file the disclosure form prescribed in § 2.2-3117 or a member of his immediate family shall solicit, accept, or receive any single gift with a value in excess of \$100 or any combination of gifts with an aggregate value in excess of \$100 within any calendar year for himself or a member of his immediate family from any person that he or a member of his immediate family knows or has reason to know is (i) a lobbyist registered pursuant to Article 3 (§ 2.2-418 et seq.) of Chapter 4; (ii) a lobbyist's principal as defined in § 2.2-419; or (iii) a person, organization, or business who is or is seeking to become a party to a contract with the local agency of which he is an officer or an employee. Gifts with a value of less than \$20 are not subject to aggregation for purposes of this prohibition.

C. No officer or employee of a state governmental or advisory agency or candidate required to file the disclosure form prescribed in § 2.2-3117 or a member of his immediate family shall solicit, accept, or receive any single gift with a value in excess of \$100 or any combination of gifts with an aggregate value in excess of \$100 within any calendar year for himself or a member of his immediate family from any person that he or a member of his immediate family knows or has reason to know is (i) a lobbyist registered pursuant to Article 3 (§ 2.2-418 et seq.) of Chapter 4; (ii) a lobbyist's principal as defined in § 2.2-419; or (iii) a person, organization, or business who is or is seeking to become a party to a contract with the state governmental or advisory agency of which he is an officer or an employee or over which he has the authority to direct such agency's activities. Gifts with a value of less than \$20 are not subject to aggregation for purposes of this prohibition.

D. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections B and C, such officer, employee, or candidate or a member of his immediate family may accept or receive a gift of food and beverages, entertainment, or the cost of admission with a value in excess of \$100 when such gift is accepted or received while in attendance at a widely attended event and is associated with the event. Such gifts shall be reported on the disclosure form prescribed in § 2.2-3117.

E. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections B and C, such officer or employee or a member of his immediate family may accept or receive a gift from a foreign dignitary with a value exceeding \$100 for which the fair market value or a gift of greater or equal value has not been provided or exchanged. Such gift shall be accepted on behalf of the Commonwealth or a locality and archived in accordance with guidelines established by the Library of Virginia. Such gift shall be disclosed as having been accepted on behalf of the Commonwealth or a locality, but the value of such gift shall not be required to be disclosed.

F. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections B and C, such officer, employee, or candidate or a member of his immediate family may accept or receive certain gifts with a value in excess of \$100 from a person listed in subsection B or C if such gift was provided to such officer, employee, or candidate or a member of his immediate family on the basis of a personal friendship. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person listed in subsection B or C may be a personal friend of such officer, employee, or candidate or his immediate family for purposes of this subsection. In determining whether a person listed in subsection B or C is a personal friend, the following factors shall be considered: (i) the circumstances under which the gift was offered; (ii) the history of the relationship between the person and the donor, including the nature and length of the friendship and any previous exchange of gifts between them; (iii) to the extent known to the person, whether the donor personally paid for the gift or sought a tax deduction or business reimbursement for the gift; and (iv) whether the donor has given the same or similar gifts to other persons required to file the disclosure form prescribed in § 2.2-3117 or 30-111.

G. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections B and C, such officer, employee, or candidate or a member of his immediate family may accept or receive gifts of travel, including travel-related transportation, lodging, hospitality, food or beverages, or other thing of value, with a value in excess of \$100 that is paid for or provided by a person listed in subsection B or C when the officer, employee, or candidate has submitted a request for approval of such travel to the Council and has received the approval of the Council pursuant to § 30-356.1. Such gifts shall be reported on the disclosure form prescribed in § 2.2-3117.

H. During the pendency of a civil action in any state or federal court to which the Commonwealth is a party, the Governor or the Attorney General or any employee of the Governor or the Attorney General who is subject to the provisions of this chapter shall not solicit, accept, or receive any gift from any person that he knows or has reason to know is a person, organization, or business that is a party to such civil action. A person, organization, or business that is a party to such civil action shall not knowingly

give any gift to the Governor or the Attorney General or any of their employees who are subject to the provisions of this chapter.

I. The \$100 limitation imposed in accordance with this section shall be adjusted by the Council every five years, as of January 1 of that year, in an amount equal to the annual increases for that five-year period in the United States Average Consumer Price Index for all items, all urban consumers (CPI-U), as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

J. The provisions of this section shall not apply to any justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia, judge of the Court of Appeals of Virginia, judge of any circuit court, or judge or substitute judge of any district court. However, nothing in this subsection shall be construed to authorize the acceptance of any gift if such acceptance would constitute a violation of the Canons of Judicial Conduct for the State of Virginia.

§ 2.2-3110. Further exceptions.

A. The provisions of Article 3 (§ 2.2-3106 et seq.) shall not apply to:

1. The sale, lease or exchange of real property between an officer or employee and a governmental agency, provided the officer or employee does not participate in any way as such officer or employee in such sale, lease or exchange, and this fact is set forth as a matter of public record by the governing body of the governmental agency or by the administrative head thereof;

2. The publication of official notices;

3. Contracts between the government or school board of a ~~town or~~ county, city, or town with a population of less than 10,000 and an officer or employee of that ~~town or~~ county, city, or town government or school board when the total of such contracts between the ~~town or~~ city government or school board and the officer or employee of that ~~town or~~ city government or school board or a business controlled by him does not exceed ~~\$10,000~~ \$5,000 per year or such amount exceeds ~~\$10,000~~ \$5,000 and is less than \$25,000 but results from contracts arising from awards made on a sealed bid basis, and such officer or employee has made disclosure as provided for in § 2.2-3115;

4. An officer or employee whose sole personal interest in a contract with the governmental agency is by reason of income from the contracting firm or governmental agency in excess of ~~\$10,000~~ \$5,000 per year, provided the officer or employee or a member of his immediate family does not participate and has no authority to participate in the procurement or letting of such contract on behalf of the contracting firm and the officer or employee either does not have authority to participate in the procurement or letting of the contract on behalf of his governmental agency or he disqualifies himself as a matter of public record and does not participate on behalf of his governmental agency in negotiating the contract or in approving the contract;

5. When the governmental agency is a public institution of higher education, an officer or employee whose personal interest in a contract with the institution is by reason of an ownership in the contracting firm in excess of three percent of the contracting firm's equity or such ownership interest and income from the contracting firm is in excess of ~~\$10,000~~ \$5,000 per year, provided that (i) the officer or employee's ownership interest, or ownership and income interest, and that of any immediate family member in the contracting firm is disclosed in writing to the president of the institution, which writing certifies that the officer or employee has not and will not participate in the contract negotiations on behalf of the contracting firm or the institution, (ii) the president of the institution makes a written finding as a matter of public record that the contract is in the best interests of the institution, (iii) the officer or employee either does not have authority to participate in the procurement or letting of the contract on behalf of the institution or disqualifies himself as a matter of public record, and (iv) does not participate on behalf of the institution in negotiating the contract or approving the contract;

6. Except when the governmental agency is the Virginia Retirement System, contracts between an officer's or employee's governmental agency and a public service corporation, financial institution, or company furnishing public utilities in which the officer or employee has a personal interest, provided the officer or employee disqualifies himself as a matter of public record and does not participate on behalf of his governmental agency in negotiating the contract or in approving the contract;

7. Contracts for the purchase of goods or services when the contract does not exceed \$500;

8. Grants or other payment under any program wherein uniform rates for, or the amounts paid to, all qualified applicants are established solely by the administering governmental agency;

9. An officer or employee whose sole personal interest in a contract with his own governmental agency is by reason of his marriage to his spouse who is employed by the same agency, if the spouse was employed by such agency for five or more years prior to marrying such officer or employee; or

10. Contracts entered into by an officer or employee of a soil and water conservation district created pursuant to Article 3 (§ 10.1-506 et seq.) of Chapter 5 of Title 10.1 to participate in the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program (the Program) established in accordance with § 10.1-546.1. This subdivision shall not apply to subcontracts or other agreements entered into by an officer or employee of a soil and water conservation district to provide services for implementation of a cost-share contract established under the Program.

B. Neither the provisions of this chapter nor, unless expressly provided otherwise, any amendments

thereto shall apply to those employment contracts or renewals thereof or to any other contracts entered into prior to August 1, 1987, which were in compliance with either the former Virginia Conflict of Interests Act, Chapter 22 (§ 2.1-347 et seq.) or the former Comprehensive Conflict of Interests Act, Chapter 40 (§ 2.1-599 et seq.) of Title 2.1 at the time of their formation and thereafter. Those contracts shall continue to be governed by the provisions of the appropriate prior Act. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (f) (4) of *former* § 2.1-348 of Title 2.1 in effect prior to July 1, 1983, the employment by the same governmental agency of an officer or employee and spouse or any other relative residing in the same household shall not be deemed to create a material financial interest except when one of such persons is employed in a direct supervisory or administrative position, or both, with respect to such spouse or other relative residing in his household and the annual salary of such subordinate is \$35,000 or more.

§ 2.2-3112. Prohibited conduct concerning personal interest in a transaction; exceptions.

A. Each officer and employee of any state or local governmental or advisory agency who has a personal interest in a transaction:

~~1. Shall~~ shall disqualify himself from participating in the transaction if (i) the transaction has application solely to property or a business or governmental agency in which he has a personal interest or a business that has a parent-subsidary or affiliated business entity relationship with the business in which he has a personal interest or (ii) he is unable to participate pursuant to subdivision B 1, 2, or 3 ~~or~~ 4. Any disqualification under the provisions of this ~~subdivision~~ subsection shall be recorded in the public records of the officer's or employee's governmental or advisory agency. The officer or employee shall disclose his personal interest as required by subsection E of § 2.2-3114 or subsection F of § 2.2-3115 and shall not vote or in any manner act on behalf of his agency in the transaction. The officer or employee shall be prohibited from (i) attending any portion of a closed meeting authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.) when the matter in which he has a personal interest is discussed and (ii) discussing the matter in which he has a personal interest with other governmental officers or employees at any time.

B. An officer or employee of any state or local government or advisory agency who has a personal interest in a transaction may participate in the transaction:

~~2. May participate in the transaction if~~ 1. If he is a member of a business, profession, occupation, or group of three or more persons the members of which are affected by the transaction, and he complies with the declaration requirements of subsection F of § 2.2-3114 or subsection H of § 2.2-3115;

~~3. May participate in the transaction when~~ 2. When a party to the transaction is a client of his firm if he does not personally represent or provide services to such client and he complies with the declaration requirements of subsection G of § 2.2-3114 or subsection I of § 2.2-3115; or

~~4. May participate in the transaction if~~ 3. If it affects the public generally, even though his personal interest, as a member of the public, may also be affected by that transaction.

~~B. C.~~ Disqualification under the provisions of this section shall not prevent any employee having a personal interest in a transaction in which his agency is involved from representing himself or a member of his immediate family in such transaction provided he does not receive compensation for such representation and provided he complies with the disqualification and relevant disclosure requirements of this chapter.

~~C. D.~~ Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if disqualifications of officers or employees in accordance with this section leave less than the number required by law to act, the remaining member or members shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business and have authority to act for the agency by majority vote, unless a unanimous vote of all members is required by law, in which case authority to act shall require a unanimous vote of remaining members. Notwithstanding any provisions of this chapter to the contrary, members of a local governing body whose sole interest in any proposed sale, contract of sale, exchange, lease or conveyance is by virtue of their employment by a business involved in a proposed sale, contract of sale, exchange, lease or conveyance, and where such member's or members' vote is essential to a constitutional majority required pursuant to Article VII, Section 9 of the Constitution of Virginia and § 15.2-2100, such member or members of the local governing body may vote and participate in the deliberations of the governing body concerning whether to approve, enter into or execute such sale, contract of sale, exchange, lease or conveyance. Official action taken under circumstances that violate this section may be rescinded by the agency on such terms as the interests of the agency and innocent third parties require.

~~D. E.~~ The provisions of subsection A shall not prevent an officer or employee from participating in a transaction merely because such officer or employee is a party in a legal proceeding of a civil nature concerning such transaction.

~~E. F.~~ The provisions of subsection A shall not prevent an employee from participating in a transaction regarding textbooks or other educational material for students at state institutions of higher education, when those textbooks or materials have been authored or otherwise created by the employee.

G. The provisions of this section shall not prevent any justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia, judge of the Court of Appeals of Virginia, judge of any circuit court, judge or substitute judge of any district court, member of the State Corporation Commission, or member of the Virginia Workers'

Compensation Commission from participating in a transaction where such individual's participation involves the performance of adjudicative responsibilities as set forth in Canon 3 of the Canons of Judicial Conduct for the State of Virginia. However, nothing in this subsection shall be construed to authorize such individual's participation in a transaction if such participation would constitute a violation of the Canons of Judicial Conduct for the State of Virginia.

§ 2.2-3114. Disclosure by state officers and employees.

A. ~~The~~ *In accordance with the requirements set forth in § 2.2-3118.2, the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Justices of the Supreme Court, judges of the Court of Appeals, judges of any circuit court, judges and substitute judges of any district court, members of the State Corporation Commission, members of the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission, members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, members of the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Retirement System, members of the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, and members of the Virginia Lottery Board and other persons occupying such offices or positions of trust or employment in state government, including members of the governing bodies of authorities, as may be designated by the Governor, or officers or employees of the legislative branch, as may be designated by the Joint Rules Committee of the General Assembly, shall file with the Council, as a condition to assuming office or employment, a disclosure statement of their personal interests and such other information as is required on the form prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 2.2-3117 and thereafter shall file such a statement annually on or before January 15. When the filing deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the disclosure statement shall be filed on the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday February 1.*

B. ~~Nonsalaried~~ *In accordance with the requirements set forth in § 2.2-3118.2, nonsalaried citizen members of all policy and supervisory boards, commissions and councils in the executive branch of state government, other than the Commonwealth Transportation Board, members of the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Retirement System, and the Virginia Lottery Board, shall file with the Council, as a condition to assuming office, a disclosure form of their personal interests and such other information as is required on the form prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 2.2-3118 and thereafter shall file such form annually on or before January 15. When the filing deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the disclosure statement shall be filed on the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday February 1.* Nonsalaried citizen members of other boards, commissions and councils, including advisory boards and authorities, may be required to file a disclosure form if so designated by the Governor, in which case the form shall be that prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 2.2-3118.

C. The disclosure forms required by subsections A and B shall be made available by the Council at least 30 days prior to the filing deadline. Disclosure forms shall be filed electronically with the Council in accordance with the standards approved by it pursuant to § 30-356. All forms shall be maintained as public records for five years in the office of the Council. Such forms shall be made public no later than six weeks after *the filing deadline*.

D. Candidates for the offices of Governor, Lieutenant Governor or Attorney General shall file a disclosure statement of their personal interests as required by § 24.2-502.

E. Any officer or employee of state government who has a personal interest in any transaction before the governmental or advisory agency of which he is an officer or employee and who is disqualified from participating in that transaction pursuant to ~~subdivision~~ *subsection A 4* of § 2.2-3112, or otherwise elects to disqualify himself, shall forthwith make disclosure of the existence of his interest, including the full name and address of the business and the address or parcel number for the real estate if the interest involves a business or real estate, and his disclosure shall also be reflected in the public records of the agency for five years in the office of the administrative head of the officer's or employee's governmental agency or advisory agency or, if the agency has a clerk, in the clerk's office.

F. An officer or employee of state government who is required to declare his interest pursuant to ~~subdivision A 2 B 1~~ of § 2.2-3112, shall declare his interest by stating (i) the transaction involved, (ii) the nature of the officer's or employee's personal interest affected by the transaction, (iii) that he is a member of a business, profession, occupation, or group the members of which are affected by the transaction, and (iv) that he is able to participate in the transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest. The officer or employee shall either make his declaration orally to be recorded in written minutes for his agency or file a signed written declaration with the clerk or administrative head of his governmental or advisory agency, as appropriate, who shall, in either case, retain and make available for public inspection such declaration for a period of five years from the date of recording or receipt. If reasonable time is not available to comply with the provisions of this subsection prior to participation in the transaction, the officer or employee shall prepare and file the required declaration by the end of the next business day.

G. An officer or employee of state government who is required to declare his interest pursuant to ~~subdivision A 3 B 2~~ of § 2.2-3112, shall declare his interest by stating (i) the transaction involved, (ii) that a party to the transaction is a client of his firm, (iii) that he does not personally represent or provide services to the client, and (iv) that he is able to participate in the transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest. The officer or employee shall either make his declaration orally to be recorded in

written minutes for his agency or file a signed written declaration with the clerk or administrative head of his governmental or advisory agency, as appropriate, who shall, in either case, retain and make available for public inspection such declaration for a period of five years from the date of recording or receipt. If reasonable time is not available to comply with the provisions of this subsection prior to participation in the transaction, the officer or employee shall prepare and file the required declaration by the end of the next business day.

H. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, chairs of departments at a public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth shall not be required to file the disclosure form prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 2.2-3117 or 2.2-3118.

§ 2.2-3115. Disclosure by local government officers and employees.

A. ~~The~~ *In accordance with the requirements set forth in § 2.2-3118.2, the members of every governing body and school board of each county and city and of towns with populations in excess of 3,500 shall file, as a condition to assuming office or employment, a disclosure statement of their personal interests and other information as is required on the form prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 2.2-3117 and thereafter shall file such a statement annually on or before January 15 February 1.*

~~The~~ *In accordance with the requirements set forth in § 2.2-3118.2, the members of the governing body of any authority established in any county or city, or part or combination thereof, and having the power to issue bonds or expend funds in excess of \$10,000 in any fiscal year, shall file, as a condition to assuming office, a disclosure statement of their personal interests and other information as is required on the form prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 2.2-3118 and thereafter shall file such a statement annually on or before January 15 February 1, unless the governing body of the jurisdiction that appoints the members requires that the members file the form set forth in § 2.2-3117.*

~~Persons~~ *In accordance with the requirements set forth in § 2.2-3118.2, persons occupying such positions of trust appointed by governing bodies and persons occupying such positions of employment with governing bodies as may be designated to file by ordinance of the governing body shall file, as a condition to assuming office or employment, a disclosure statement of their personal interests and other information as is required on the form prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 2.2-3117 and thereafter shall file such a statement annually on or before January 15 February 1.*

~~Persons~~ *In accordance with the requirements set forth in § 2.2-3118.2, persons occupying such positions of trust appointed by school boards and persons occupying such positions of employment with school boards as may be designated to file by an adopted policy of the school board shall file, as a condition to assuming office or employment, a disclosure statement of their personal interests and other information as is required on the form prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 2.2-3117 and thereafter shall file such a statement annually on or before January 15 February 1.*

B. ~~Nonsalaried~~ *In accordance with the requirements set forth in § 2.2-3118.2, nonsalaried citizen members of local boards, commissions and councils as may be designated by the governing body shall file, as a condition to assuming office, a disclosure form of their personal interests and such other information as is required on the form prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 2.2-3118 and thereafter shall file such form annually on or before January 15 February 1.*

C. No person shall be mandated to file any disclosure not otherwise required by this article.

D. The disclosure forms required by subsections A and B shall be made available by the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council at least 30 days prior to the filing deadline, and the clerks of the governing body and school board shall distribute the forms to designated individuals at least 20 days prior to the filing deadline. Forms shall be filed and maintained as public records for five years in the office of the clerk of the respective governing body or school board. Forms filed by members of governing bodies of authorities shall be filed and maintained as public records for five years in the office of the clerk of the governing body of the county or city. Such forms shall be made public no later than six weeks after *the filing deadline*.

E. Candidates for membership in the governing body or school board of any county, city or town with a population of more than 3,500 persons shall file a disclosure statement of their personal interests as required by § 24.2-502.

F. Any officer or employee of local government who has a personal interest in any transaction before the governmental or advisory agency of which he is an officer or employee and who is disqualified from participating in that transaction pursuant to ~~subdivision~~ *subsection A 4* of § 2.2-3112 or otherwise elects to disqualify himself, shall forthwith make disclosure of the existence of his interest, including the full name and address of the business and the address or parcel number for the real estate if the interest involves a business or real estate, and his disclosure shall be reflected in the public records of the agency for five years in the office of the administrative head of the officer's or employee's governmental or advisory agency.

G. In addition to any disclosure required by subsections A and B, in each county and city and in towns with populations in excess of 3,500, members of planning commissions, boards of zoning appeals, real estate assessors, and all county, city and town managers or executive officers shall make annual disclosures of all their interests in real estate located in the county, city or town in which they are elected, appointed, or employed. Such disclosure shall include any business in which such persons own

an interest, or from which income is received, if the primary purpose of the business is to own, develop or derive compensation through the sale, exchange or development of real estate in the county, city or town. ~~Such~~ *In accordance with the requirements set forth in § 2.2-3118.2, such disclosure shall be filed as a condition to assuming office or employment, and thereafter shall be filed annually with the clerk of the governing body of such county, city, or town on or before ~~January 15~~ February 1. Such disclosures shall be filed and maintained as public records for five years. Such forms shall be made public no later than six weeks after the filing deadline. Forms for the filing of such reports shall be made available by the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council to the clerk of each governing body.*

H. An officer or employee of local government who is required to declare his interest pursuant to subdivision A 2 B 1 of § 2.2-3112 shall declare his interest by stating (i) the transaction involved, (ii) the nature of the officer's or employee's personal interest affected by the transaction, (iii) that he is a member of a business, profession, occupation, or group the members of which are affected by the transaction, and (iv) that he is able to participate in the transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest. The officer or employee shall either make his declaration orally to be recorded in written minutes for his agency or file a signed written declaration with the clerk or administrative head of his governmental or advisory agency, as appropriate, who shall, in either case, retain and make available for public inspection such declaration for a period of five years from the date of recording or receipt. If reasonable time is not available to comply with the provisions of this subsection prior to participation in the transaction, the officer or employee shall prepare and file the required declaration by the end of the next business day. The officer or employee shall also orally disclose the existence of the interest during each meeting of the governmental or advisory agency at which the transaction is discussed and such disclosure shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

I. An officer or employee of local government who is required to declare his interest pursuant to subdivision A 3 B 2 of § 2.2-3112, shall declare his interest by stating (i) the transaction involved, (ii) that a party to the transaction is a client of his firm, (iii) that he does not personally represent or provide services to the client, and (iv) that he is able to participate in the transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest. The officer or employee shall either make his declaration orally to be recorded in written minutes for his agency or file a signed written declaration with the clerk or administrative head of his governmental or advisory agency, as appropriate, who shall, in either case, retain and make available for public inspection such declaration for a period of five years from the date of recording or receipt. If reasonable time is not available to comply with the provisions of this subsection prior to participation in the transaction, the officer or employee shall prepare and file the required declaration by the end of the next business day.

J. *The clerk of the governing body or school board that releases any form to the public pursuant to this section shall redact from the form any residential address, personal telephone number, or signature contained on such form; however, any form filed pursuant to subsection G shall not have any residential addresses redacted.*

§ 2.2-3116. Disclosure by certain constitutional officers.

For the purposes of this chapter, holders of the constitutional offices of treasurer, sheriff, attorney for the Commonwealth, clerk of the circuit court, and commissioner of the revenue of each county and city shall be required to file with the Council, as a condition to assuming office, the Statement of Economic Interests prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 2.2-3117. These officers shall file statements annually on or before ~~January 15~~ February 1. Candidates shall file statements as required by § 24.2-502. Statements shall be filed electronically with the Council in accordance with the standards approved by it pursuant to § 30-356. These officers shall be subject to the prohibition on certain gifts set forth in subsection B of § 2.2-3103.1.

§ 2.2-3118.2. Disclosure form; filing requirements.

A. An officer or employee required to file an annual disclosure on or before February 1 pursuant to this article shall disclose his personal interests and other information as required on the form prescribed by the Council for the preceding calendar year complete through December 31. An officer or employee required to file a disclosure as a condition to assuming office or employment shall file such disclosure on or before the day such office or position of employment is assumed and disclose his personal interests and other information as required on the form prescribed by the Council for the preceding 12-month period complete through the last day of the month immediately preceding the month in which the office or position of employment is assumed; however, any officer or employee who assumes office or a position of employment in January shall be required to only file an annual disclosure on or before February 1 for the preceding calendar year complete through December 31.

B. When the deadline for filing any disclosure pursuant to this article falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the deadline for filing shall be the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

§ 2.2-3121. Advisory opinions.

A. A state officer or employee shall not be prosecuted for a knowing violation of this chapter if the alleged violation resulted from his good faith reliance on a written opinion of the Attorney General or a formal opinion or written informal advice of the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory

Council made in response to his written request for such opinion *or advice* and the opinion *or advice* was made after a full disclosure of the facts regardless of whether such opinion *or advice* is later withdrawn provided the alleged violation occurred prior to the withdrawal of the opinion *or advice*.

B. A local officer or employee shall not be prosecuted for a knowing violation of this chapter if the alleged violation resulted from his good faith reliance on a written opinion of the attorney for the Commonwealth or *a formal opinion or written informal advice of the Council* made in response to his written request for such opinion *or advice* and the opinion *or advice* was made after a full disclosure of the facts regardless of whether such opinion *or advice* is later withdrawn, provided that the alleged violation occurred prior to the withdrawal of the opinion *or advice*. The written opinion *of the attorney for the Commonwealth* shall be a public record and shall be released upon request.

C. If any officer or employee serving at the local level of government is charged with a knowing violation of this chapter, and the alleged violation resulted from his reliance upon a written opinion of his county, city, or town attorney, made after a full disclosure of the facts, that such action was not in violation of this chapter, then the officer or employee shall have the right to introduce a copy of the opinion at his trial as evidence that he did not knowingly violate this chapter.

§ 2.2-4369. Proscribed participation by public employees in procurement transactions.

Except as may be specifically allowed by subdivisions A B 1, 2, and 3 and 4 of § 2.2-3112, no public employee having official responsibility for a procurement transaction shall participate in that transaction on behalf of the public body when the employee knows that:

1. The employee is contemporaneously employed by a bidder, offeror or contractor involved in the procurement transaction;

2. The employee, the employee's partner, or any member of the employee's immediate family holds a position with a bidder, offeror or contractor such as an officer, director, trustee, partner or the like, or is employed in a capacity involving personal and substantial participation in the procurement transaction, or owns or controls an interest of more than five percent;

3. The employee, the employee's partner, or any member of the employee's immediate family has a pecuniary interest arising from the procurement transaction; or

4. The employee, the employee's partner, or any member of the employee's immediate family is negotiating, or has an arrangement concerning, prospective employment with a bidder, offeror or contractor.

§ 24.2-502. Statement of economic interests as requirement of candidacy.

It shall be a requirement of candidacy that a written statement of economic interests shall be filed by (i) a candidate for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General, *and a candidate for the Senate or House of Delegates, and a candidate for a constitutional office with the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council and State Board,* (ii) *a candidate for a constitutional office with the general registrar for the county or city,* and (iii) a candidate for member of the governing body or elected school board of any county, city, or town with a population in excess of 3,500 persons with the general registrar for the county or city. The statement of economic interests shall be that specified in § 30-111 for candidates for the General Assembly and in § 2.2-3117 for all other candidates. The foregoing requirement shall not apply to a candidate for reelection to the same office who has met the requirement of annually filing a statement pursuant to § 2.2-3114, 2.2-3115, 2.2-3116, or 30-110.

~~The Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council shall transmit to the State Board, immediately after the filing deadline, a list of the candidates who have filed initial or annual statements of economic interests.~~ The general registrar, the clerk of the local governing body, or the clerk of the school board, as appropriate, shall transmit to the local electoral board, immediately after the filing deadline, a list of the candidates who have filed initial or annual statements of economic interests.

§ 30-101. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Advisory agency" means any board, commission, committee or post which does not exercise any sovereign power or duty, but is appointed by a governmental agency or officer or is created by law for the purpose of making studies or recommendations, or advising or consulting with a governmental agency.

"Business" means a corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, firm, enterprise, franchise, association, trust or foundation, or any other individual or entity carrying on a business or profession, whether or not for profit.

"Candidate" means a person who seeks or campaigns for election to the General Assembly in a general, primary, or special election and who is qualified to have his name placed on the ballot for the office. The candidate shall become subject to the provisions of this section upon the filing of a statement of qualification pursuant to § 24.2-501. The State Board of Elections shall notify each such candidate of the provisions of this chapter.

"Contract" means any agreement to which a governmental agency is a party, or any agreement on behalf of a governmental agency that involves the payment of money appropriated by the General Assembly or a political subdivision, whether or not such agreement is executed in the name of the Commonwealth, or some political subdivision thereof. "Contract" includes a subcontract only when the

contract of which it is a part is with the legislator's own governmental agency.

"Council" means the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council established in § 30-355.

"Financial institution" means any bank, trust company, savings institution, industrial loan association, consumer finance company, credit union, broker-dealer as defined in subsection A of § 13.1-501, or investment company or advisor registered under the federal Investment Advisors Act or Investment Company Act of 1940.

"Gift" means any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other item having monetary value. It includes services as well as gifts of transportation, lodgings and meals, whether provided in-kind, by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred. "Gift" does not include (i) any offer of a ticket, coupon, or other admission or pass unless the ticket, coupon, admission, or pass is used; (ii) honorary degrees; (iii) any athletic, merit, or need-based scholarship or any other financial aid awarded by a public or private school, institution of higher education, or other educational program pursuant to such school, institution, or program's financial aid standards and procedures applicable to the general public; (iv) a campaign contribution properly received and reported pursuant to Chapter 9.3 (§ 24.2-945 et seq.) of Title 24.2; (v) any gift related to the private profession or occupation *or volunteer service* of a legislator or of a member of his immediate family; (vi) food or beverages consumed while attending an event at which the filer is performing official duties related to his public service; (vii) food and beverages received at or registration or attendance fees waived for any event at which the filer is a featured speaker, presenter, or lecturer; (viii) unsolicited awards of appreciation or recognition in the form of a plaque, trophy, wall memento, or similar item that is given in recognition of public, civic, charitable, or professional service; (ix) a devise or inheritance; (x) travel disclosed pursuant to the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act (§ 24.2-945 et seq.); (xi) travel paid for or provided by the government of the United States, any of its territories, or any state or any political subdivision of such state; (xii) travel provided to facilitate attendance by a legislator at a regular or special session of the General Assembly, a meeting of a legislative committee or commission, or a national conference where attendance is approved by the House Committee on Rules or its Chairman or the Senate Committee on Rules or its Chairman; (xiii) travel related to an official meeting of, *or any meal provided for attendance at such meeting by*, the Commonwealth, its political subdivisions, or any board, commission, authority, or other entity, or any charitable organization established pursuant to § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code affiliated with such entity, to which such person has been appointed or elected or is a member by virtue of his office or employment; (xiv) gifts with a value of less than \$20; ~~or~~ (xv) *attendance at a reception or similar function where food, such as hors d'oeuvres, and beverages that can be conveniently consumed by a person while standing or walking are offered; or* (xvi) gifts from relatives or personal friends. For the purpose of this definition, "relative" means the donee's spouse, child, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, or first cousin; a person to whom the donee is engaged to be married; the donee's or his spouse's parent, grandparent, grandchild, brother, sister, step-parent, step-grandparent, step-grandchild, step-brother, or step-sister; or the donee's brother's or sister's spouse *or the donee's son-in-law or daughter-in-law*. For the purpose of this definition, "personal friend" does not include any person that the filer knows or has reason to know is (a) a lobbyist registered pursuant to Article 3 (§ 2.2-418 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 2.2 or (b) a lobbyist's principal as defined in § 2.2-419.

"Governmental agency" means each component part of the legislative, executive or judicial branches of state and local government, including each office, department, authority, post, commission, committee, and each institution or board created by law to exercise some regulatory or sovereign power or duty as distinguished from purely advisory powers or duties.

"Immediate family" means (i) a spouse and (ii) any other person who resides in the same household as the legislator and who is a dependent of the legislator.

"Legislator" means a member of the General Assembly.

"Personal interest" means a financial benefit or liability accruing to a legislator or to a member of his immediate family. Such interest shall exist by reason of (i) ownership in a business if the ownership interest exceeds three percent of the total equity of the business; (ii) annual income that exceeds, or may reasonably be anticipated to exceed, \$5,000 from ownership in real or personal property or a business; (iii) salary, other compensation, fringe benefits, or benefits from the use of property, or any combination thereof, paid or provided by a business or governmental agency that exceeds, or may reasonably be anticipated to exceed, \$5,000 annually; (iv) ownership of real or personal property if the interest exceeds \$5,000 in value and excluding ownership in a business, income, or salary, other compensation, fringe benefits or benefits from the use of property; (v) personal liability incurred or assumed on behalf of a business if the liability exceeds three percent of the asset value of the business; or (vi) an option for ownership of a business or real or personal property if the ownership interest will consist of clause (i) or (iv).

"Personal interest in a contract" means a personal interest that a legislator has in a contract with a governmental agency, whether due to his being a party to the contract or due to a personal interest in a business that is a party to the contract.

"Personal interest in a transaction" means a personal interest of a legislator in any matter considered by the General Assembly. Such personal interest exists when ~~an officer or employee~~ *a legislator* or a member of his immediate family has a personal interest in property or a business, or represents or provides services to any individual or business and such property, business or represented or served individual or business (i) is the subject of the transaction or (ii) may realize a reasonably foreseeable direct or indirect benefit or detriment as a result of the action of the agency considering the transaction. A "personal interest in a transaction" exists only if the legislator or member of his immediate family or an individual or business represented or served by the legislator is affected in a way that is substantially different from the general public or from persons comprising a profession, occupation, trade, business or other comparable and generally recognizable class or group of which he or the individual or business he represents or serves is a member.

"Transaction" means any matter considered by the General Assembly, whether in a committee, subcommittee, or other entity of the General Assembly or before the General Assembly itself, on which official action is taken or contemplated.

§ 30-103.1. Certain gifts prohibited.

A. For purposes of this section:

"Widely attended event" means an event at which at least 25 persons have been invited to attend or there is a reasonable expectation that at least 25 persons will attend the event and the event is open to individuals (i) ~~who share a common interest,~~ (ii) who are members of a public, civic, charitable, or professional organization, ~~(iii)~~ (ii) who are from a particular industry or profession, or ~~(iv)~~ (iii) who represent persons interested in a particular issue.

B. No legislator or candidate for the General Assembly required to file the disclosure form prescribed in § 30-111 or a member of his immediate family shall solicit, accept, or receive any single gift for himself or a member of his immediate family with a value in excess of \$100 or any combination of gifts with an aggregate value in excess of \$100 within any calendar year for himself or a member of his immediate family from any person that he or a member of his immediate family knows or has reason to know is (i) a lobbyist registered pursuant to Article 3 (§ 2.2-418 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 2.2 or (ii) a lobbyist's principal as defined in § 2.2-419. Gifts with a value of less than \$20 are not subject to aggregation for purposes of this prohibition.

C. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection B, a legislator or candidate or a member of his immediate family may accept or receive a gift of food and beverages, entertainment, or the cost of admission with a value in excess in \$100 when such gift is accepted or received while in attendance at a widely attended event and is associated with the event. Such gifts shall be reported on the disclosure form prescribed in § 30-111.

D. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection B, a legislator or a member of his immediate family may accept or receive a gift from a foreign dignitary with a value exceeding \$100 for which the fair market value or a gift of greater or equal value has not been provided or exchanged. Such gift shall be accepted on behalf of the Commonwealth and archived in accordance with guidelines established by the Library of Virginia. Such gift shall be disclosed as having been accepted on behalf of the Commonwealth, but the value of such gift shall not be required to be disclosed.

E. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection B, a legislator or candidate or a member of his immediate family may accept or receive certain gifts with a value in excess of \$100 from a person listed in subsection B if such gift was provided to the legislator or candidate or a member of his immediate family on the basis of a personal friendship. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person listed in subsection B may be a personal friend of the legislator or candidate or his immediate family for purposes of this subsection. In determining whether a person listed in subsection B is a personal friend, the following factors shall be considered: (i) the circumstances under which the gift was offered; (ii) the history of the relationship between the person and the donor, including the nature and length of the friendship and any previous exchange of gifts between them; (iii) to the extent known to the person, whether the donor personally paid for the gift or sought a tax deduction or business reimbursement for the gift; and (iv) whether the donor has given the same or similar gifts to other persons required to file the disclosure form prescribed in § 2.2-3117 or 30-111.

F. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection B, a legislator or candidate or a member of his immediate family may accept or receive gifts of travel, including travel-related transportation, lodging, hospitality, food or beverages, or other thing of value, with a value in excess of \$100 that is paid for or provided by a person listed in subsection B when the legislator or candidate has submitted a request for approval of such travel to the Council and has received the approval of the Council pursuant to § 30-356.1. Such gifts shall be reported on the disclosure form prescribed in § 30-111.

G. The \$100 limitation imposed in accordance with this section shall be adjusted by the Council every five years, as of January 1 of that year, in an amount equal to the annual increases for that five-year period in the United States Average Consumer Price Index for all items, all urban consumers (CPI-U), as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

§ 30-105. Prohibited contracts by legislators.

A. No legislator shall have a personal interest in a contract with the legislative branch of state government.

B. No legislator shall have a personal interest in a contract with any governmental agency of the executive or judicial branches of state government, other than in a contract of regular employment, unless such contract is awarded as a result of competitive sealed bidding or competitive negotiation as set forth in § 2.2-4302.1 or 2.2-4302.2 *or is exempted from competitive sealed bidding or competitive negotiation pursuant to § 2.2-4344.*

C. No legislator shall have a personal interest in a contract with any governmental agency of local government, other than in a contract of regular employment, unless such contract is (i) awarded as a result of competitive sealed bidding or competitive negotiation as set forth in § 2.2-4302.1 or 2.2-4302.2 or is awarded as a result of a procedure embodying competitive principles as authorized by subdivision A 10 or A 11 of § 2.2-4343; ~~or~~; (ii) *is exempted from competitive sealed bidding, competitive negotiation, or a procedure embodying competitive principles pursuant to § 2.2-4344;* or (iii) awarded after a finding, in writing, by the administrative head of the local governmental agency that competitive bidding or negotiation is contrary to the best interest of the public.

D. The provisions of this section shall not apply to contracts for the sale by a governmental agency of services or goods at uniform prices available to the general public.

E. The provisions of this section shall not apply to a legislator's personal interest in a contract between a public institution of higher education in Virginia and a publisher or wholesaler of textbooks or other educational materials for students, which accrues to him solely because he has authored or otherwise created such textbooks or materials.

§ 30-106. Further exceptions.

A. The provisions of § 30-105 shall not apply to:

1. The sale, lease or exchange of real property between a legislator and a governmental agency, provided the legislator does not participate in any way as a legislator in such sale, lease or exchange, and this fact is set forth as a matter of public record by the governing body of the governmental agency or by the administrative head thereof. The legislator shall disclose any lease with a state governmental agency in his statement of economic interests as provided in § 30-111;

2. The publication of official notices;

3. A legislator whose sole personal interest in a contract with an agency of the legislative branch is by reason of income from the contracting firm or General Assembly in excess of ~~\$10,000~~ \$5,000 per year, provided the legislator or member of his immediate family does not participate and has no authority to participate in the procurement or letting of the contract on behalf of the contracting firm and the legislator either does not have authority to participate in the procurement or letting of the contract on behalf of the agency or he disqualifies himself as a matter of public record and does not participate on behalf of the agency in negotiating the contract or in approving the contract;

4. Contracts between a legislator's governmental agency and a public service corporation, financial institution, or company furnishing public utilities in which the legislator has a personal interest, provided he disqualifies himself as a matter of public record and does not participate on behalf of the agency in negotiating the contract or in approving the contract;

5. Contracts for the purchase of goods or services when the contract does not exceed \$500; or

6. Grants or other payments under any program wherein uniform rates for, or the amounts paid to, all qualified applicants are established solely by the administering governmental agency.

B. Neither the provisions of this chapter nor, unless expressly provided otherwise, any amendments thereto shall apply to those employment contracts or renewals thereof or to any other contracts entered into prior to August 1, 1987, which were in compliance with either the former Virginia Conflict of Interests Act, Chapter 22 (§ 2.1-347 et seq.) or the former Comprehensive Conflict of Interests Act, Chapter 40 (§ 2.1-599 et seq.) of Title 2.1 at the time of their formation and thereafter. Those contracts shall continue to be governed by the provisions of the appropriate prior Act. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (f) (4) of former § 2.1-348 of Chapter 22 of Title 2.1 in effect prior to July 1, 1983, the employment by the same governmental agency of a legislator and spouse or any other relative residing in the same household shall not be deemed to create a material financial interest except when one of such persons is employed in a direct supervisory or administrative position, or both, with respect to such spouse or other relative residing in his household, and the annual salary of such subordinate is \$15,000 or more.

§ 30-110. Disclosure.

A. ~~Every~~ In accordance with the requirements set forth in § 30-111.1, every legislator and legislator-elect shall file, as a condition to assuming office, a disclosure statement of his personal interests and such other information as is required on the form prescribed by the Council pursuant to § 30-111 and thereafter shall file such a statement annually on or before ~~January 15. When the filing deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the disclosure statement shall be filed on the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday~~ February 1. Disclosure forms shall be made available by the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council at least 30 days prior to the filing deadline. Disclosure forms shall be filed electronically with the Virginia Conflict of Interest and

Ethics Advisory Council in accordance with the standards approved by it pursuant to § 30-356. The disclosure forms of the members of the General Assembly shall be maintained as public records for five years in the office of the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council. Such forms shall be made public no later than six weeks after *the filing deadline*.

B. Candidates for the General Assembly shall file a disclosure statement of their personal interests as required by §§ 24.2-500 through 24.2-503.

C. Any legislator who has a personal interest in any transaction pending before the General Assembly and who is disqualified from participating in that transaction pursuant to § 30-108 and the rules of his house shall disclose his interest in accordance with the applicable rule of his house.

§ 30-111.1. Disclosure form; filing requirements.

A. A legislator or legislator-elect required to file an annual disclosure on or before February 1 pursuant to this article shall disclose his personal interests and other information as required on the form prescribed by the Council for the preceding calendar year complete through December 31. A legislator or legislator-elect required to file a disclosure as a condition to assuming office shall file such disclosure on or before the day such office is assumed and disclose his personal interests and other information as required on the form prescribed by the Council for the preceding 12-month period complete through the last day of the month immediately preceding the month in which the office is assumed; however, any legislator or legislator-elect who assumes office in January shall be required to only file an annual disclosure on or before February 1 for the preceding calendar year complete through December 31.

B. When the deadline for filing any disclosure pursuant to this article falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the deadline for filing shall be the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

§ 30-124. Advisory opinions.

A legislator shall not be prosecuted or disciplined for a violation of this chapter if his alleged violation resulted from his good faith reliance on a written opinion of a committee on standards of conduct established pursuant to § 30-120, an opinion of the Attorney General as provided in § 30-122, or a formal opinion or written informal advice of the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council established pursuant to § 30-355, and the opinion or advice was made after his full disclosure of the facts regardless of whether such opinion or advice is later withdrawn provided the alleged violation occurred prior to the withdrawal of the opinion or advice.

§ 30-129.1. Orientation sessions on ethics and conflicts of interests.

The Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council shall conduct an orientation session (i) for new and returning General Assembly members preceding each even-numbered year regular session and (ii) for any new General Assembly member who is elected in a special election and whose term commences after the date of the orientation session provided for in clause (i) and at least six months before the date of the next such orientation session within three months of his election. Attendance at the full orientation session shall be mandatory for newly elected members. Attendance at a refresher session lasting at least two hours shall be mandatory for returning members and may be accomplished by online participation. There shall be no penalty for the failure of a member to attend the full or refresher orientation session, but the member must disclose his attendance pursuant to § 30-111.

§ 30-356. Powers and duties of the Council.

The Council shall:

1. Prescribe the forms required for complying with the disclosure requirements of Article 3 and the Acts. These forms shall be the only forms used to comply with the provisions of Article 3 or the Acts. The Council shall make available the disclosure forms and shall provide guidance and other instructions to assist in the completion of the forms;

2. Review all disclosure forms filed by lobbyists pursuant to Article 3 and by state government officers and employees and legislators pursuant to the Acts. The Council may review disclosure forms for completeness, including reviewing the information contained on the face of the form to determine if the disclosure form has been fully completed and comparing the disclosures contained in any disclosure form filed by a lobbyist pursuant to § 2.2-426 with other disclosure forms filed with the Council, and requesting any amendments to ensure the completeness of and correction of errors in the forms, if necessary. If a disclosure form is found to have not been filed or to have been incomplete as filed, the Council shall notify the filer in writing and direct the filer to file a completed disclosure form within a prescribed period of time, and such notification shall be confidential and is excluded from the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.);

3. Require all disclosure forms and lobbyist registration statements that are required to be filed with the Council to be filed electronically in accordance with the standards approved by the Council. The Council shall provide software or electronic access for filing the required disclosure forms to all filers and registration statements without charge to all individuals required to file with the Council. The Council shall prescribe the method of execution and certification of electronically filed forms, including the use of an electronic signature as authorized by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (§ 59.1-479 et seq.). The Council may grant extensions as provided in § 30-356.2 and may authorize a designee to

grant such extensions;

4. Accept and review any statement received from a filer disputing the receipt by such filer of a gift that has been disclosed on the form filed by a lobbyist pursuant to Article 3;

5. Beginning July 1, 2016, establish and maintain a searchable electronic database comprising *those* disclosure forms *that are* filed with the Council pursuant to §§ 2.2-426, 2.2-3117, 2.2-3118, and 30-111. Such database shall be available to the public through the Council's official website;

6. Furnish, upon request, formal advisory opinions or guidelines and other appropriate information, including informal advice, regarding ethics, conflicts issues arising under Article 3 or the Acts, or a person's duties under Article 3 or the Acts to any person covered by Article 3 or the Acts or to any agency of state or local government, in an expeditious manner. The Council may authorize a designee to furnish formal opinions or informal advice. Formal advisory opinions are public record and shall be published on the Council's website; however, no formal advisory opinion furnished by a designee of the Council shall be available to the public or published until such opinion has been approved by the Council. Published formal advisory opinions may have such deletions and changes as may be necessary to protect the identity of the person involved or other persons supplying information. Informal advice given by the Council or the Council's designee is confidential and is excluded from the mandatory disclosure provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.); *however, if the recipient invokes the immunity provisions of § 2.2-3121 or 30-124, the record of the request and the informal advice given shall be deemed to be a public record and shall be released upon request.* Other records relating to formal advisory opinions or informal advice, including records of requests, notes, correspondence, and draft versions of such opinions or advice, shall also be confidential and excluded from the mandatory disclosure provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act;

7. Conduct training seminars and educational programs for lobbyists, state and local government officers and employees, legislators, and other interested persons on the requirements of Article 3 and the Acts and provide ethics orientation sessions for legislators in compliance with Article 6 (§ 30-129.1 et seq.) of Chapter 13;

8. Approve orientation courses conducted pursuant to § 2.2-3128 and, upon request, review the educational materials and approve any training or course on the requirements of Article 3 and the Acts conducted for state and local government officers and employees;

9. Publish such educational materials as it deems appropriate on the provisions of Article 3 and the Acts;

10. Review actions taken in the General Assembly with respect to the discipline of its members for the purpose of offering nonbinding advice;

11. Request from any agency of state or local government such assistance, services, and information as will enable the Council to effectively carry out its responsibilities. Information provided to the Council by an agency of state or local government shall not be released to any other party unless authorized by such agency;

12. Redact from any document or form that is to be made available to the public any residential address, personal telephone number, or signature contained on that document or form; and

13. Report on or before December 1 of each year on its activities and findings regarding Article 3 and the Acts, including recommendations for changes in the laws, to the General Assembly and the Governor. The annual report shall be submitted by the chairman as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be published as a state document.

§ 30-356.2. Right to grant extensions in special circumstances; civil penalty.

A. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any person required to file the disclosure form prescribed in Article 3 or the Acts shall be entitled to an extension where good cause for granting such an extension has been shown, as determined by the Council. Good cause shall include:

1. The death of a relative of the filer, as relative is defined in the definition of "gift" in Article 3 or the Acts.

2. A state of emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to Chapter 3.2 (§ 44-146.13 et seq.) of Title 44 or declared by the President of the United States or the governor of another state pursuant to law and confirmed by the Governor by an executive order, and such an emergency interferes with the timely filing of disclosure forms. The extension shall be granted only for those filers in areas affected by such emergency.

3. The filer is a member of a uniformed service of the United States and is on active duty on the date of the filing deadline.

4. A failure of the electronic filing system and the failure of such system prevents the timely filing of disclosure forms.

B. For any person who is unable to timely file the disclosure form prescribed in the Acts due to the disclosure form not being made available to him until after the deadline has passed, the Council shall grant such person a five-day extension upon request. The head of the agency for which the person works or the clerk of the school board or governing body of the locality that was responsible for providing the disclosure form to such person shall be assessed a civil penalty in the amount equal to

\$250, to be collected in accordance with the procedure set forth in subsection B of § 2.2-3124. If the disclosure form is provided to the person within three days prior to the filing deadline, the Council shall grant such person a three-day extension upon request and no civil penalties shall be assessed against the head of such person's agency or the clerk.

2. That an emergency exists and the provisions amending §§ 2.2-426 and 24.2-502 of the Code of Virginia are in force from the passage of this act and that the remaining provisions of this act shall become effective in due course.