

Nonprofit Lobbyist Guidelines

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In order to achieve effective government Nonprofit organizations advocate the greatest possible participation of those being governed. At the federal, state and local level, such participation focuses on the legislative and executive branches where nonprofits and citizen activists drawn from every major discipline represent literally every segment of society and every sector of the economy.

Nonprofit organizations further believe that the heavy responsibility of the nonprofit lobbyist, functioning in the eye of public opinion, requires standards of ethical behavior beyond those generally accepted by free and moral society.

Nonprofit organizations offer the following guidelines which we urge be observed by our members and all those whose professional objectives are to influence national, state and local public policy decisions:

- 1. The nonprofit lobbyist accepts the fact that it is the system of representative government we enjoy that makes possible the practices of lobbying while keeping the interests of the employer or client in a position of primacy will temper the advocacy role with proper consideration for the general public interest.*
- 2. The nonprofit lobbyist will protect confidences, not only those of the employers or client but also those of elected and appointed officials of government and professional colleagues.*
- 3. The nonprofit lobbyist will always deal in accurate, current and factual information, whether it is being reported to the employer or client, government officials, the media or professional colleagues. Truthfulness and honesty are guiding principles in the presentation of information of others and the nonprofit lobbyist will not engage in misrepresentation of any nature.*
- 4. The nonprofit lobbyist will acquire appropriate knowledge of all points of view on relevant public policy issues.*
- 5. The nonprofit lobbyist will avoid conflicts of interest, not only conflicts with the interests of the employer or client, but also those of colleagues pursuing the same or similar objectives, and where conflict is unavoidable will communicate the facts fully and freely to those affected.*
- 6. The nonprofit lobbyist will comply with the laws and regulations governing lobbying as well as the standards of conducting and applying to officials and staff of the Pennsylvania General Assembly and the Executive Branch, and will strive to go one step further and function in a matter that goes beyond these official enactments and promulgations, always adhering to the highest standard of ethical behavior.*
- 7. The professional conduct of the nonprofit lobbyist should not bring discredit to the profession, government or individual colleagues.*
- 8. A priority goal of the nonprofit lobbyist should be to increase public understanding of the process and this objective should be pursued in every possible way-public appearances, media contacts, articles in nonprofit and other publications, and contacts in the normal course of everyday life.*
- 9. The nonprofit lobbyist should constantly strive to upgrade the necessary skills by every means available, continuing formal education, attendance at meetings and seminars, and participation in groups with like-minded colleagues.*