



Wisconsin Ethics Commission

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Settlement Offer Schedule for Lobbying Law Violations

This document sets out authorized settlement offers for lobbying law violations, in lieu of pursuing court action. It includes recommended settlement amounts for specific situations. The Commission’s authority to make settlement offers is set out in Wis. Stat. § 19.49(1)(b). The Commission may specify penalties for certain offenses and may compromise and settle those matters without formal investigation per Wis. Stat. § 19.49(2)(b)10. If a lobbying principal or lobbyist chooses not to accept a settlement offer, the Commission may bring a civil action and seek the maximum forfeitures provided by law, including costs and attorneys’ fees. If there appears to be an intentional violation of law, the matter may be brought to the Commission for further action. The Commission’s primary interest is providing timely and accurate lobbying information to the public, and collection of civil penalties is secondary. The Commission adopted this schedule at its October 10, 2016 meeting.

1. Late filing of semi-annual lobbying report (\$13.68) – maximum penalty \$5,000.

| Days Late | First Offense | Second or Greater Offense |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| 2 business days | No penalty | Warning |
| 3-5 days | Warning | \$50 |
| 6-15 days | Warning | \$100 |
| 16-29 days | \$50 | \$250 |
| 30+ days | \$100 | \$500 |

2. Late reporting of the first communication on a lobbying matter.

| Late Reports | Percent of Total Effort | Forfeiture |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1st Occurrence of Late Reported Interest | < 10 percent | Warning |
| | >= 10 percent | \$25 Per Interest |
| 2 nd Occurrence of Late Reported Interest | < 10 percent | \$50 Per Interest |
| | >= 10 percent | \$100 Per Interest |
| 3 rd or Greater Occurrence of Late Reported Interest | Any | \$100 Per Interest |

Lobbying principals are required by WIS. STAT. §13.67(1) to report each legislative proposal, budget bill subject, or lobbying topic through the Eye On Lobbying website within 15 days of the first communication on that matter. WIS. STAT. §13.69(2m) outlines the penalties for late reporting of lobbying activity. The maximum penalty is up to \$25 for the first offense within a three-year period and up to \$100 for a second and subsequent offense within three years from the first violation.

Wisconsin Ethics Commissioners

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