



Wisconsin Ethics Commission

Campaign Finance | Lobbying | Ethics
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DATE: December 2, 2024
TO: Lobbyists and Lobbying Principals
FROM: Wisconsin Ethics Commission
SUBJECT: 2025–2026 Legislative Session Lobbying Registration

Lobbying Registration Renewal for the 2025–2026 Legislative Session is now open!

Lobbyist licenses, principal registrations, and lobbyist authorizations for the 2023–2024 Legislative Session expire on December 31, 2024. WIS. STAT. §§ [13.63\(1\)\(a\)](#), [13.64\(2\)](#). Lobbying activity for the 2025–2026 Legislative Session begins on January 1, 2025.

All registration and reporting is conducted online at <https://lobbying.wi.gov>. Please ensure that you have selected the 2025–2026 Legislative Session at the top of the page.

Lobbyists currently licensed and principals currently registered for the 2023–2024 Legislative Session will be able to renew their licenses and registrations by carrying over current information. Please be sure to review your license and registration information for accuracy.

Lobbyist Authorization and Duties

As part of the principal registration, you must authorize any lobbyists which will be engaging in lobbying on behalf of the principal. Please note that this is a separate process from granting user permissions. Failure to timely submit the authorization could result in settlement offers pursuant to [WIS. ADMIN. CODE ETH 26.03\(3a\)](#). To facilitate this process, we encourage lobbyists to apply for a lobbyist license prior to principal registration.

When authorizing a lobbyist for a principal, please choose the appropriate option for the lobbyist's duties. The principal must review the definition of lobbying and determine if the lobbyist's duties solely pertain to lobbying, or if the lobbyist's duties expand beyond lobbying.

“Lobbying” means the practice of attempting to influence legislative or administrative action by oral or written communication with any elective state official, agency official, or legislative employee, and includes time spent in preparation for such communication and appearances at public hearing or meetings or service on a committee in which such preparation or communication occurs. [WIS. STAT. § 13.62\(10\)](#).

In general, a lobbyist's duties on behalf of a principal are:

- Exclusively limited if they **solely** perform lobbying for the principal.

- Not exclusively limited if they have **any other duties** on behalf of the principal in addition to lobbying such as but not limited to:
 - Organizing volunteers or members of the public to contact their legislators via social media, public outreach, or facilitating a lobby day for volunteers and members of the public,
 - Providing legal counsel, or
 - Advising on campaign finance laws or fulfilling reporting obligations for a registered campaign finance committee or conduit.

For additional examples, see our formal opinion [2020 ETH 02 “Lobbying—Duties on Behalf of a Principal as Exclusive or Not Exclusive to Lobbying.”](#)

Payment of Lobbying Related Fees

The Ethics Commission allows fourteen calendar days from the date of application for lobbyist license, principal registration, and lobbyist authorization to pay relevant fees. Lobbying fees not received within fourteen calendar days are considered **late**. A notice will be sent via email if lobbying fees are not received within fourteen calendar days.

If fees are received between the day after notice is provided and 30 days thereafter, you will be given a formal warning. Fees received more than thirty days after notice is given will result in a settlement being offered which includes a monetary component. WIS. STAT. §§ [13.63\(1\)\(a\)](#), [13.64](#), [13.65](#), [13.75](#). Please see [WIS. ADMIN. CODE ETH 26.03\(4\)](#) for the settlement schedule.

Lobbyist licenses, principal registrations, and lobbyist authorizations **cannot** be approved until the Ethics Commission receives payment of all relevant fees. Please consider paying all fees immediately after application submission by paying electronically via bank account or credit/debit card. There is a small convenience fee for credit/debit card processing.

Resources

For assistance filing registration and license applications, please review the [Lobbying User’s Guide](#). We also have various opinions, guidelines, webinars, and other documents available on the resources page of our website: <https://ethics.wi.gov/Pages/Resources/ResourcesOverview.aspx>.

If you have questions regarding lobbying registration for the new session, please contact Ethics Commission Staff after reviewing the above resources.

Sincerely,

Wisconsin Ethics Commission Staff

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