

# **New Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law**

## **52:13D-12. Legislative findings**

### **The Legislature finds and declares:**

(a) In our representative form of government, it is essential that the conduct of public officials and employees shall hold the respect and confidence of the people. Public officials must, therefore, avoid conduct which is in violation of their public trust or which creates a justifiable impression among the public that such trust is being violated.

(b) To ensure propriety and preserve public confidence, persons serving in government should have the benefit of specific standards to guide their conduct and of some disciplinary mechanism to ensure the uniform maintenance of those standards amongst them. Some standards of this type may be enacted as general statutory prohibitions or requirements; others, because of complexity and variety of circumstances, are best left to the governance of codes of ethics formulated to meet the specific needs and conditions of the several agencies of government. (c) It is also recognized that under a free government it is both necessary and desirable that all citizens, public officials included, should have certain specific interests in the decisions of government, and that the activities and conduct of public officials should not, therefore, be unduly circumscribed.

## **52:13D-13. Definitions**

As used in this act, and unless a different meaning clearly appears from the context, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- a. "State agency" means any of the principal departments in the Executive Branch of the State Government, and any division, board, bureau, office, commission, or other instrumentality within or created by such department, the Legislature of the State, and any office, board, bureau, or commission within or created by the Legislative Branch, and, to the extent consistent with law, any interstate agency to which New Jersey is a party and any independent State authority, commission, instrumentality, or agency. A county or municipality shall not be deemed an agency or instrumentality of the State.
- b. "State officer or employee" means any person, other than a special State officer or employee: (1) holding an office or employment in a State agency, excluding an interstate agency, other than a member of the Legislature; or (2) appointed as a New Jersey member to an interstate agency.
- c. "Member of the Legislature" means any person elected to serve in the General Assembly or the Senate.
- d. "Head of a State agency" means: (1) in the case of the Executive Branch of government,

except with respect to interstate agencies, the department head or, if the agency is not assigned to a department, the Governor; and (2) in the case of the Legislative Branch, the chief presiding officer of each House of the Legislature.

e. “Special State officer or employee” means: (1) any person holding an office or employment in a State agency, excluding an interstate agency, for which office or employment no compensation is authorized or provided by law, or no compensation other than a sum in reimbursement of expenses, whether payable per diem or per annum, is authorized or provided by law; (2) any person, not a member of the Legislature, holding a part-time elective or appointive office or employment in a State agency, excluding an interstate agency; or (3) any person appointed as a New Jersey member to an interstate agency the duties of which membership are not full-time.

f. “Person” means any natural person, association or corporation.

g. “Interest” means: (1) the ownership or control of more than 10 percent of the profits or assets of a firm, association, or partnership, or more than 10 percent of the stock in a corporation for profit other than a professional service corporation organized under the “Professional Service Corporation Act,” P.L.1969, c.232 (C.14A:17-1 et seq.); or (2) the ownership or control of more than one percent of the profits of a firm, association, or partnership, or more than one percent of the stock in any corporation, (a) which is the holder of, or an applicant for, a casino license or in any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, as defined by the “Casino Control Act,” P.L.1977, c.110 (C.5:12-1 et seq.), (b) which is the holder of, or an applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit issued pursuant to P.L.2009, c.307 (C.24:6I-1 et al.), or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, or (c) which is the holder of, or an applicant for, a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license issued pursuant to P.L.2021, c.16 (C.24:6I-31 et al.), or which is an entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto. The provisions of this act governing the conduct of individuals are applicable to shareholders, associates or professional employees of a professional service corporation regardless of the extent or amount of their shareholder interest in such a corporation.

h. “Cause, proceeding, application or other matter” means a specific cause, proceeding or matter and does not mean or include determinations of general applicability or the preparation or review of legislation which is no longer pending before the Legislature or the Governor.

i. “Member of the immediate family” of any person means the person’s spouse, domestic partner, civil union partner, child, parent, or sibling residing in the same household.

**52:13D-14. State officer or employee or member of legislature; acceptance of thing of value to influence public duties**

No State officer or employee, special State officer or employee, or member of the Legislature shall accept from any person, whether directly or indirectly and whether by himself or through his spouse or any member of his family or through any partner or associate, any gift, favor, service, employment or offer of employment or any other thing of value which he knows or has reason to believe is offered to him with intent to influence him in the performance of his public duties and responsibilities. This section shall not apply to the acceptance of contributions to the campaign of an announced candidate for elective public office.

**52:13D-15. Representation, appearance or negotiation, directly or indirectly, for acquisition or sale of property by state**

No member of the Legislature or State officer or employee shall represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, or agree to represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, whether by himself or by or through any partnership, firm or corporation in which he has an interest or by any partner, officer or employee of any such partnership, firm or corporation any person or party other than the State in any negotiations for the acquisition or sale by the State or a State agency of any interest in real or tangible or intangible personal property, or in any proceedings relative to such acquisition or sale before a condemnation commission or court; provided, however, nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to prohibit any person from representing himself in negotiations or proceedings concerning his own interest in real property.

**52:13D-16. Certain representations, prohibited; exceptions**

a. No special State officer or employee, nor any partnership, firm or corporation in which he has an interest, nor any partner, officer or employee of any such partnership, firm or corporation, shall represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, or agree to represent, appear for or negotiate on behalf of, any person or party other than the State in connection with any cause, proceeding, application or other matter pending before the particular office, bureau, board, council, commission, authority, agency, fund or system in which such special State officer or employee holds office or employment.

b. No State officer or employee or member of the Legislature, nor any partnership, firm or corporation in which he has an interest, nor any partner, officer or employee of any such

partnership, firm or corporation, shall represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, or agree to represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, any person or party other than the State in connection with any cause, proceeding, application or other matter pending before any State agency. Nothing contained herein shall be deemed to prohibit any such partnership, firm or corporation from appearing on its own behalf. This subsection shall not be deemed to prohibit a member of the Legislature or an employee on the member's behalf from: (1) making an inquiry for information on behalf of a constituent, which may include ascertaining the status of a matter, identifying the statutes or regulations involved in a matter or inquiring how to expedite a matter; (2) assisting the constituent in bringing the merits of the constituent's position to the attention of a State agency; or (3) making a recommendation on a matter or indicating support for a constituent's position to a State agency if no fee, reward, employment, offer of employment, or other thing of value is promised to, given to or accepted by the member of the Legislature or an employee therefor, whether directly or indirectly, and the member or employee does not endeavor to use his official position to improperly influence any determination. As used in this subsection "constituent" shall mean any State resident or other person seeking legislative assistance. Nothing contained herein shall authorize contact with State agencies by members of the Legislature or their employees which is otherwise prohibited by the criminal law, this act or the Code of Ethics and nothing contained herein shall authorize contact with an administrative law judge or agency head during the hearing of a contested case.

c. Nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to prohibit any legislator, or any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee from representing, appearing for or negotiating on behalf of, or agreeing to represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, any person or party other than the State in connection with any proceeding:

- (1) Pending before any court of record of this State,
- (2) In regard to a claim for compensation arising under chapter 15 of Title 34 of the Revised Statutes (Workers' Compensation),
- (3) In connection with the determination or review of transfer inheritance or estate taxes,
- (4) In connection with the filing of corporate or other documents in the office of the Secretary of State,
- (5) Before the Division on Civil Rights or any successor thereof,
- (6) Before the New Jersey State Board of Mediation or any successor thereof,
- (7) Before the New Jersey Public Employment Relations Commission or any successor thereof,
- (8) Before the Unsatisfied Claim and Judgment Fund Board or any successor thereof solely for the purpose of filing a notice of intention pursuant to P.L.1952, c.174, s.5 (C.39:6-65), or
- (9) Before any State agency on behalf of a county, municipality or school district, or any

authority, agency or commission of any thereof except where the State is an adverse party in the proceeding and provided he is not holding any office or employment in the State agency in which any such proceeding is pending.

## **52:13D-17. Post-employment restrictions**

No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee, subsequent to the termination of his office or employment in any State agency, shall represent, appear for, negotiate on behalf of, or provide information not generally available to members of the public or services to, or agree to represent, appear for, negotiate on behalf of, or provide information not generally available to members of the public or services to, whether by himself or through any partnership, firm or corporation in which he has an interest or through any partner, officer or employee thereof, any person or party other than the State in connection with any cause, proceeding, application or other matter with respect to which such State officer or employee or special State officer or employee shall have made any investigation, rendered any ruling, given any opinion, or been otherwise substantially and directly involved at any time during the course of his office or employment. Any person who willfully violates the provisions of this section is a disorderly person, and shall be subject to a fine not to exceed \$1,000 or imprisonment not to exceed six months, or both.

In addition, for violations occurring after the effective date of P.L.2005, c.382, any former State officer or employee or former special State officer or employee of a State agency in the Executive Branch found by the State Ethics Commission to have violated any of the provisions of this section shall be assessed a civil penalty of not less than \$500 nor more than \$10,000, which penalty may be collected in a summary proceeding pursuant to the "Penalty Enforcement Law of 1999," P.L. 1999, c.274 (C.2A:58-10 et seq.).

### **52:13D-17.1. Repealed by L. 1981, c. 142, § 7, eff. May 14, 1981.**

### **52:13D-17.2. Definitions; violations; penalties**

a. As used in this section "person" means:

(1)

(a) with respect to casino activity, activity related to medical cannabis authorized pursuant to P.L.2009, c.307 (C.24:6I-1 et al.), and activity related to personal use cannabis authorized pursuant to P.L.2021, c.16 (C.24:6I-31 et al.): the Governor; the President of the Senate; the Speaker of the General Assembly; any full-time member of the Judiciary; any full-time professional employee of the Office of the Governor; the head of a principal department; the assistant or deputy heads of a principal department, including all

assistant and deputy commissioners; the head of any division of a principal department;

(b) with respect to casino activity: any State officer or employee subject to financial disclosure by law or executive order and any other State officer or employee with responsibility for matters affecting casino activity; any special State officer or employee with responsibility for matters affecting casino activity; any member of the Legislature; any full-time professional employee of the Legislature; members of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority; or

(c) with respect to activity related to medical cannabis authorized pursuant to P.L.2009, c.307 (C.24:6I-1 et al.) and activity related to personal use cannabis authorized pursuant to P.L.2021, c.16 (C.24:6I-31 et al.): any State officer or employee subject to financial disclosure by law or executive order and any other State officer or employee with responsibility for matters affecting medical cannabis activity or personal use cannabis activity; any special State officer or employee with responsibility for matters affecting medical cannabis activity or personal use cannabis activity; members of the Cannabis Regulatory Commission; or

(2)

(a) any member of the governing body, or the municipal judge or the municipal attorney of a municipality wherein a casino is located; any member of or attorney for the planning board or zoning board of adjustment of a municipality wherein a casino is located, or any professional planner, or consultant regularly employed or retained by such planning board or zoning board of adjustment; or

(b) any member of the governing body or the municipal judge of a municipality, any member of the planning board or zoning board of adjustment, or any professional planner, or consultant regularly employed or retained by such planning board or zoning board of adjustment, of a municipality wherein a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant issued a permit pursuant to P.L.2009, c.307 (C.24:6I-1 et al.), or wherein a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service issued a license pursuant to P.L.2021, c.16

(C.24:6I-31 et al.), is located.

b.

(1) No State officer or employee, nor any person, nor any member of the immediate family of any State officer or employee, or person, nor any partnership, firm, or corporation with which any such State officer or employee or person is associated or in which he has an interest, nor any partner, officer, director, or employee while he is associated with such partnership, firm, or corporation, shall hold, directly or indirectly, an interest in, or hold employment with, or represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, any holder of, or applicant for, a casino license, or any holding or intermediary company with respect

thereto, in connection with any cause, application, or matter, except as provided in section 3 of P.L.2009, c.26 (C.52:13D-17.3), and except that (a) a State officer or employee other than a State officer or employee included in the definition of person, and (b) a member of the immediate family of a State officer or employee, or of a person, may hold employment with the holder of, or applicant for, a casino license if, in the judgment of the State Ethics Commission, the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards, or the Supreme Court, as appropriate, such employment will not interfere with the responsibilities of the State officer or employee, or person, and will not create a conflict of interest, or reasonable risk of the public perception of a conflict of interest, on the part of the State officer or employee, or person. No special State officer or employee without responsibility for matters affecting casino activity, excluding those serving in the Departments of Education, Health, and Human Services and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, shall hold, directly or indirectly, an interest in, or represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, any holder of, or applicant for, a casino license, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, in connection with any cause, application, or matter. However, a special State officer or employee without responsibility for matters affecting casino activity may hold employment directly with any holder of or applicant for a casino license or any holding or intermediary company thereof and if so employed may hold, directly or indirectly, an interest in, or represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, that employer, except as otherwise prohibited by law.

(2) No State officer or employee, nor any person, nor any member of the immediate family of any State officer or employee, or person, nor any partnership, firm, or corporation with which any such State officer or employee or person is associated or in which he has an interest, nor any partner, officer, director, or employee while he is associated with such partnership, firm, or corporation, shall hold, directly or indirectly, an interest in, or hold employment with, or represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, or derive any remuneration, payment, benefit, or any other thing of value for any services, including but not limited to consulting or similar services, from any holder of, or applicant for, a license, permit, or other approval to conduct Internet gaming, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, or any Internet gaming affiliate of any holder of, or applicant for, a casino license, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, or any business, association, enterprise, or other entity that is organized, in whole or in part, for the purpose of promoting, advocating for, or advancing the interests of the Internet gaming industry generally or any Internet gaming-related business or businesses in connection with any cause, application, or matter, except as provided in section 3 of P.L.2009, c.26 (C.52:13D-17.3), and except that (a) a State officer or employee other than a State officer or employee included in the definition of person, and (b) a member of the immediate family of a State officer or employee, or of a person, may hold employment with the holder of, or

applicant for, a license, permit, or other approval to conduct Internet gaming, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, or any Internet gaming affiliate of any holder of, or applicant for, a casino license, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto if, in the judgment of the State Ethics Commission, the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards, or the Supreme Court, as appropriate, such employment will not interfere with the responsibilities of the State officer or employee, or person, and will not create a conflict of interest, or reasonable risk of the public perception of a conflict of interest, on the part of the State officer or employee, or person.

(3) No State officer or employee, nor any person, nor any member of the immediate family of any State officer or employee, or person, nor any partnership, firm, or corporation with which any such State officer or employee or person is associated or in which he has an interest, nor any partner, officer, director, or employee while he is associated with such partnership, firm, or corporation, shall hold, directly or indirectly, an interest in, or hold employment with, or represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, any holder of, or applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit issued pursuant to P.L.2009, c.307 (C.24:6I-1 et al.) or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license issued pursuant to P.L.2021, c.16 (C.24:6I-31 et al.), or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, in connection with any cause, application, or matter, except as provided in section 3 of P.L.2009, c.26 (C.52:13D-17.3), and except that (a) a State officer or employee other than a State officer or employee included in the definition of person, and (b) a member of the immediate family of a State officer or employee, or of a person, may hold employment with the holder of, or applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service, if, in the judgment of the State Ethics Commission, the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards, or the Supreme Court, as appropriate, such employment will not interfere with the responsibilities of the State officer or employee, or person, and will not create a conflict of interest, or reasonable risk of the public perception of a conflict of interest, on the part of



the State officer or employee, or person. No special State officer or employee without responsibility for matters affecting medical cannabis activity or personal use cannabis activity, excluding those serving in the Departments of Education, Health, and Human Services and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, shall hold, directly or indirectly, an interest in, or represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, any holder of, or applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, in connection with any cause, application, or matter. However, a special State officer or employee without responsibility for matters affecting medical cannabis activity or personal use cannabis activity may hold employment directly with any holder of or applicant for a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit, or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or any holding or intermediary company thereof, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, and if so employed may hold, directly or indirectly, an interest in, or represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, that employer, except as otherwise prohibited by law.

c.

(1) No person or any member of his immediate family, nor any partnership, firm, or corporation with which such person is associated or in which he has an interest, nor any partner, officer, director, or employee while he is associated with such partnership, firm or corporation, shall, within two years next subsequent to the termination of the office or employment of such person, hold, directly or indirectly, an interest in, or hold employment with, or represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, any holder of, or applicant for, a casino license in connection with any cause, application or matter, or any holding or intermediary company with respect to such holder of, or applicant for, a casino license in connection with any phase of casino development, permitting, licensure, or any other matter whatsoever related to casino activity, except as provided in section 3 of P.L.2009, c.26 (C.52:13D-17.3), and except that:

(a) a member of the immediate family of a person may hold employment with the holder of, or applicant for, a casino license if, in the judgment of the State Ethics Commission, the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards, or the Supreme Court, as appropriate, such employment will not interfere with the responsibilities of the person and will not create a conflict of interest, or reasonable risk of the public perception of a conflict of interest, on the part of the person;

(b) an employee who is terminated as a result of a reduction in the workforce at the agency where employed, other than an employee who held a policy-making management position at any time during the five years prior to termination of employment, may, at any time prior to the end of the two-year period, accept employment with the holder of, or applicant for, a casino license if, in the judgment of the State Ethics Commission, the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards, or the Supreme Court, as appropriate, such employment will not create a conflict of interest, or reasonable risk of the public perception of a conflict of interest, on the part of the employee. In no case shall the restrictions of this subsection apply to a secretarial or clerical employee. Nothing herein contained shall alter or amend the post-employment restrictions applicable to members and employees of the Casino Control Commission and employees and agents of the Division of Gaming Enforcement pursuant to paragraph (2) of subsection e. of section 59 and section 60 of P.L. 1977, c. 110 (C.5:12-59 and C.5:12-60); and

(c) any partnership, firm, or corporation engaged in the practice of law or in providing any other professional services with which any person included in subparagraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph (1) of subsection a. of this section, or a member of the immediate family of that person, is associated, and any partner, officer, director, or employee thereof, other than that person, or immediate family member, may represent, appear for or negotiate on behalf of any holder of, or applicant for, a casino license in connection with any cause, application or matter or any holding company or intermediary company with respect to such holder of, or applicant for, a casino license in connection with any phase of casino development, permitting, licensure or any other matter whatsoever related to casino activity, and that person or immediate family member shall not be barred from association with such partnership, firm or corporation, if for a period of two years next subsequent to the termination of the person's office or employment, the person or immediate family member (i) is screened from personal participation in any such representation, appearance or negotiation; and (ii) is associated with the partnership, firm or corporation in a position which does not entail any equity interest in the partnership, firm or corporation. The exception provided in this subparagraph shall not apply to a former Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, member of the Legislature, person included in subparagraph (a) of paragraph (2) of subsection a. of this section, or to the members of their immediate families.

(2) No person or any member of the person's immediate family, nor any partnership, firm, or corporation with which such person is associated or in which the person has an interest, nor any partner, officer, director, or employee while the person is associated with such partnership, firm, or corporation, shall, within two years next subsequent to the termination of the office or employment of such person, hold, directly or indirectly, an interest in, or hold employment with, or represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of, any holder of, or applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit issued pursuant to P.L.2009, c.307 (C.24:6I-1 et al.) or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license issued pursuant to P.L.2021, c.16 (C.24:6I-31 et al.) or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service in connection with any cause, application, or matter, or any holding or intermediary company with respect to such holder of, or applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service in connection with any phase of development, permitting, licensure, or any other matter whatsoever related to medical cannabis activity or personal use cannabis activity, except as provided in section 3 of P.L.2009, c.26 (C.52:13D-17.3), and except that:

(a) a member of the immediate family of a person may hold employment with the holder of, or applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit issued pursuant to P.L.2009, c.307 (C.24:6I-1 et al.) or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license issued pursuant to P.L.2021, c.16 (C.24:6I-31 et al.) or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service if, in the judgment of the State Ethics Commission, the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards, or the Supreme Court, as appropriate, such employment will not interfere with the responsibilities of the person and will not create a conflict of interest, or reasonable risk of the public perception of a conflict of interest, on the part of the person;

(b) an employee who is terminated as a result of a reduction in the workforce at the agency where employed, other than an employee who held a policy-making management position at any time during the five years prior to termination of employment, may, at any time prior to the end of the two-year period, accept employment with the holder of, or applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service if, in the judgment of the State Ethics Commission, the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards, or the Supreme Court, as appropriate, such employment will not create a conflict of interest, or reasonable risk of the public perception of a conflict of interest, on the part of the employee. In no case shall the restrictions of this subsection apply to a secretarial or clerical employee. Nothing herein contained shall alter or amend the post-service or post-employment restrictions applicable to members and employees of the Cannabis Regulatory Commission pursuant to paragraph (2) of subsection c. of section 34 and section 35 of P.L.2019, c.153 (C.24:6I-27 and C.24:6I-28); and

(c) any partnership, firm, or corporation engaged in the practice of law or in providing any other professional services with which any person included in subparagraphs (a) and (c) of paragraph (1) of subsection a. of this section, or a member of the immediate family of that person, is associated, and any partner, officer, director, or employee thereof, other than that person, or immediate family member, may represent, appear for, or negotiate on behalf of any holder of, or applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service in connection with any cause, application, or matter or any holding company or intermediary company with respect to such holder of, or applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work

for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service in connection with any phase of development, permitting, licensing, or any other matter whatsoever related to medical cannabis activity or personal use cannabis activity, and that person or immediate family member shall not be barred from association with such partnership, firm, or corporation, if for a period of two years next subsequent to the termination of the person's office or employment, the person or immediate family member (i) is screened from personal participation in any such representation, appearance or negotiation; and (ii) is associated with the partnership, firm, or corporation in a position which does not entail any equity interest in the partnership, firm, or corporation. The exception provided in this subparagraph shall not apply to a former Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the General Assembly, to a person included in subparagraph (b) of paragraph (2) of subsection a. of this section, or to the members of their immediate families.

d. This section shall not apply to the spouse of a State officer or employee, which State officer or employee is without responsibility for matters affecting casino, medical cannabis, or personal use cannabis activity, who becomes the spouse subsequent to the State officer's or employee's appointment or employment as a State officer or employee and who is not individually or directly employed by a holder of, or applicant for, a casino license, medical cannabis permit, personal use cannabis license, or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service, or any holding or intermediary company thereof.

e. The Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards and the State Ethics Commission, as appropriate, shall forthwith determine and publish, and periodically update, a list of those positions in State government with responsibility for matters affecting casino, medical cannabis activity, or personal use cannabis activity.

f.

(1) No person shall solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, any complimentary service or discount from any casino applicant or licensee which he knows or has reason to know is other than a service or discount that is offered to members of the general public in like circumstance.

(2) No person shall solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, any complimentary service or discount from any holder of, or applicant for, a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit issued pursuant to P.L.2009, c.307 (C.24:6I-1 et al.) or any entity that employs any certified medical cannabis handler to perform transfers or deliveries of medical cannabis, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license issued pursuant to P.L.2021, c.16

(C.24:6I-31 et al.) or any entity that employs or uses a certified personal use cannabis handler to perform work for or on behalf of a licensed cannabis establishment, distributor, or delivery service which the person knows or has reason to know is other than a service or discount that is offered to members of the general public in like circumstance.

g.

(1) No person shall influence, or attempt to influence, by use of his official authority, the decision of the Casino Control Commission or the investigation of the Division of Gaming Enforcement in any application for casino licensure or in any proceeding to enforce the provisions of this act or the regulations of the commission. Any such attempt shall be promptly reported to the Attorney General; provided, however, that nothing in this section shall be deemed to proscribe a request for information by any person concerning the status of any application for licensure or any proceeding to enforce the provisions of this act or the regulations of the commission.

(2) No person shall influence, or attempt to influence, by use of the person's official authority, the decision of the Cannabis Regulatory Commission in any application for a medical cannabis cultivator, medical cannabis manufacturer, medical cannabis dispensary, or clinical registrant permit, or a cannabis cultivator, cannabis manufacturer, cannabis wholesaler, cannabis distributor, cannabis retailer, or cannabis delivery service license, or in any proceeding to enforce the provisions of P.L.1981, c.142 (C.52:13D-17.2 et al.), P.L.2009, c.307

(C.24:6I-1 et al.), P.L.2021, c.16 (C.24:6I-31 et al.), or the regulations of the Cannabis Regulatory Commission. Any such attempt shall be promptly reported to the Attorney General; provided, however, that nothing in this section shall be deemed to proscribe a request for information by any person concerning the status of any permit or license application, or any proceeding to enforce the provisions of P.L.1981, c.142 (C.52:13D-17.2 et al.), P.L.2009, c.307 (C.24:6I-1 et al.), P.L.2021, c.16 (C.24:6I-31 et al.), or the regulations of the Cannabis Regulatory Commission.

h. Any person who willfully violates the provisions of this section is a disorderly person and shall be subject to a fine not to exceed \$1,000, or imprisonment not to exceed six months, or both.

In addition, for violations of subsection c. of this section occurring after the effective date [March 15, 2006] of P.L.2005, c.382, a civil penalty of not less than \$500 nor more than \$10,000 shall be imposed upon a former State officer or employee or former special State officer or employee of a State agency in the Executive Branch upon a finding of a violation by the State Ethics Commission, which penalty may be collected in a summary proceeding pursuant to the "Penalty Enforcement Law of 1999," P.L.1999, c.274 (C.2A:58-10 et seq.).

### **52:13D-17.3. Employment with casino permitted for certain members of municipal**

### **governing body; guidance offered**

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 4 of P.L.1981, c.142 (C.52:13D-17.2), a member of the governing body of a municipality wherein a casino is located, other than the mayor, and a member of the immediate family thereof, may hold employment with the holder of, or applicant for, a casino license, or any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, while serving in that elective office and thereafter, if that member of the governing body, or member of the immediate family thereof, held that specific employment when that member of the governing body took office. Notwithstanding any provision of the "Local Government Ethics Law," P.L.1991, c.29 (C.40A:9-22.1 et seq.) to the contrary, such a member or member-elect of the governing body shall request the Local Finance Board in the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs to provide guidance in the form of a written advisory opinion, pursuant to the "Local Government Ethics Law," regarding any potential conflict of interest that may arise as a result of the employment described herein while serving on the governing body. Any advisory opinion issued under the "Local Government Ethics Law" for this purpose shall be a government record, as defined in section 1 of P.L.1995, c.23 (C.47:1A-1.1), that is accessible to the public and shall not be confidential. The Local Finance Board may adopt, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), any rules and regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this section.

### **52:13D-18. Vote, other action by legislator or immediate family member with personal interest; prohibition**

- a. No member of the Legislature shall participate by voting or any other action, on the floor of the General Assembly or the Senate, or in committee or elsewhere, in the enactment or defeat of legislation in which he has a personal interest.
- b. A member of the Legislature shall be deemed to have a personal interest in any legislation within the meaning of this section if, by reason of his participation in the enactment or defeat of any legislation, he has reason to believe that he, or a member of his immediate family, will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss. No member of the Legislature shall be deemed to have a personal interest in any legislation within the meaning of this section if, by reason of his participation in the enactment or defeat of any legislation, no benefit or detriment could reasonably be expected to accrue to him, or a member of his immediate family, as a member of a business, profession, occupation or group, to any greater extent than any such benefit or detriment could reasonably be expected to accrue to any other member of such business, profession, occupation or group.

## **52:13D-19. Contracts of State agencies**

a. No member of the Legislature or State officer or employee shall knowingly himself, or by his partners or through any corporation which he controls or in which he owns or controls more than 1% of the stock, or by any other person for his use or benefit or on his account, undertake or execute, in whole or in part, any contract, agreement, sale or purchase of the value of \$25.00 or more, made, entered into, awarded or granted by any State agency, except as provided in subsection b. of this section. No special State officer or employee having any duties or responsibilities in connection with the purchase or acquisition of property or services by the State agency where he is employed or an officer shall knowingly himself, by his partners or through any corporation which he controls or in which he owns or controls more than 1% of the stock, or by any other person for his use or benefit or on his account, undertake or execute, in whole or in part, any contract, agreement, sale or purchase of the value of \$25.00 or more, made, entered into, awarded or granted by that State agency, except as provided in subsection b. of this section. The restriction contained in this subsection shall apply to the contracts of interstate agencies to the extent consistent with law only if the contract, agreement, sale or purchase is undertaken or executed by a New Jersey member to that agency or by his partners or a corporation in which he owns or controls more than 1% of the stock.

b. The provisions of subsection a. of this section shall not apply to (a) purchases, contracts, agreements or sales which (1) are made or let after public notice and competitive bidding or which (2), pursuant to section 5 of chapter 48 of the laws of 1944 (C. 52:34-10) or such other similar provisions contained in the public bidding laws or regulations applicable to other State agencies, may be made, negotiated or awarded without public advertising for bids, or (b) any contract of insurance entered into by the Director of the Division of Purchase and Property pursuant to section 10 of article 6 of chapter 112 of the laws of 1944 (C. 52:27B-62), if such purchases, contracts or agreements, including change orders and amendments thereto, shall receive prior approval of the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards if a member of the Legislature or State officer or employee or special State officer or employee in the Legislative Branch has an interest therein, or the State Ethics Commission if a State officer or employee or special State officer or employee in the Executive Branch has an interest therein.

### **52:13D-19.1. State officer, employee may enter into certain contracts with State agency**



Notwithstanding the provisions of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et seq.), a State officer or employee or a special State officer or employee or his partners or any corporation or firm in which he owns or controls more than 1% of the stock, assets or profits may enter into a contract or agreement with a State agency where the contract or agreement is for the development of scientific or technological discoveries or innovations in which the State agency has a property right, if the State agency has a procedure in its code of ethics for authorizing these contracts or agreements which minimizes actual conflicts of interest and the code of ethics was approved in accordance with section 12 of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-23) and the contract or agreement complies with that code procedure.

**52:13D-19.2. State officer, employee may enter into certain rental agreements with State agency**

Notwithstanding the provisions of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et seq.), a State officer or employee or a special State officer or employee or his partners or any corporation or firm in which he owns or controls more than 1% of the stock, assets or profits may enter into a rental agreement with a State agency which operates a facility which rents space or provides services to assist small businesses which employ 50 people or less, pursuant to the same terms and conditions as those offered to members of the public generally.

**52:13D-19.3. Other provisions not altered or affected**

Nothing in this act shall alter or affect any other applicable provisions regulating public contracts.

**52:13D-20. Representation of state agency in transaction involving pecuniary interest for legislator or state officer employee**

No member of the Legislature or State officer or employee or special State officer or employee shall act as officer or agent for a State agency for the transaction of any business with himself or with a corporation, company, association or firm in the pecuniary profits of which he has an interest (except that ownership or control of 10% or less of the stock of a corporation shall not be deemed an interest within the meaning of this section).

**52:13D-21. State Ethics Commission; membership; powers; duties; penalties**

(a) The Executive Commission on Ethical Standards created pursuant to P.L.1967, c.229, is continued and established in the Department of Law and Public Safety and shall constitute

the first commission under P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.).

Upon the effective date of P.L.2005, c.382, the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards shall be renamed, and thereafter referred to, as the State Ethics Commission. For the purposes of complying with the provisions of Article V, Section IV, paragraph 1 of the New Jersey Constitution, the State Ethics Commission is allocated in, but not of, the Department of Law and Public Safety, but notwithstanding that allocation, the commission shall be independent of any supervision and control by the department or by any board or officer thereof.

(b) The commission shall be composed of seven members as follows: three members appointed by the Governor from among State officers and employees serving in the Executive Branch; and four public members appointed by the Governor, not more than two of whom shall be of the same political party.

Each member appointed from the Executive Branch shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor during the term of office of the Governor appointing the member and until the member's successor is appointed and qualified. The public members shall serve for terms of four years and until the appointment and qualification of their successors, but of the public members first appointed pursuant to P.L.2003, c.160, one shall serve for a term of two years and one shall serve for a term of four years, and of the two public members first appointed pursuant to P.L.2005, c.382, one shall serve for a term of one year and one shall serve for a term of three years. The Governor shall designate one public member to serve as chairman and one member to serve as vice-chairman of the commission.

The members of the State Ethics Commission who were appointed by the Governor from among the State officers and employees serving in the Executive Branch serving on January 17, 2006 are terminated as of that day. A member terminated pursuant to this paragraph shall be eligible for reappointment.

Vacancies in the membership of the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments but, in the case of public members, for the unexpired term only.

None of the public members shall be State officers or employees or special State officers or employees, except by reason of their service on the commission. A public member may be reappointed for subsequent terms on the commission.

(c) Each member of the commission shall serve without compensation but shall be entitled to be reimbursed for all actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of the member's duties.

(d) The Attorney General shall act as legal adviser and counsel to the commission. The Attorney General shall upon request advise the commission in the rendering of advisory opinions by the commission, in the approval and review of codes of ethics adopted by State agencies in the Executive Branch and in the recommendation of revisions in codes of ethics or legislation relating to the conduct of State officers and employees in the Executive

Branch.

(e)

(1) The commission may, within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to it for the purpose, employ such other professional, technical, clerical or other assistants, excepting legal counsel, and incur such expenses as may be necessary for the performance of its duties.

(2) The commission shall employ a training officer who shall be in the unclassified service of the civil service of this State. The training officer shall devote full-time to the creation, maintenance and coordination of a training program on ethical standards. The program shall be established for the purpose specified in section 2 of P.L.2005, c.382 (C. 52:13D-21.1). The program shall be provided by the training officer or assistants or deputies of such officer, or by such other persons as may be designated by the commission. The commission shall approve the form and content of the training program created by the training officer and shall determine when and at what intervals State officers and employees and special State officers and employees in a State agency in the Executive Branch shall be required to complete such a program. The training program may include content which in particular addresses the situations of certain identified groups of officers or employees such as those who are involved in contracting processes.

(3) The commission shall employ a compliance officer who shall be in the unclassified service of the civil service of this State. The compliance officer shall devote full-time to the creation, maintenance, monitoring and coordination of procedures to ensure that all State officers and employees and special State officers and employees in State agencies in the Executive Branch comply fully with all reporting and training requirements and that all materials, forms, codes, orders and notices are distributed to and acknowledged by appropriate individuals, as may be required. In addition, the compliance officer shall conduct, on such regular basis as determined by the commission, systematic audits of State agencies in the Executive Branch for compliance with the laws, regulations, codes, orders, procedures, advisory opinions and rulings concerning the ethical standards for State employees and officers and special State officers and employees.

(f) The commission, in order to perform its duties pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.), shall have the power to conduct investigations, hold hearings, compel the attendance of witnesses and the production before it of such books and papers as it may deem necessary, proper and relevant to the matter under investigation. The members of the commission and the persons appointed by the commission for that purpose are hereby empowered to administer oaths and examine witnesses under oath.

(g) The commission is authorized to render advisory opinions as to whether a given set of facts and circumstances would, in its opinion, constitute a violation of the provisions of

P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.) or of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.).

(h) The commission shall have jurisdiction to initiate, receive, hear and review complaints regarding violations, by any current or former State officer or employee or current or former special State officer or employee, in the Executive Branch, of the provisions of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.) or of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.). Any complaint regarding a violation of a code of ethics may be referred by the commission for disposition in accordance with subsection (d) of section 12 of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-23).

An investigation regarding a violation committed during service by a former State officer or employee or special State officer or employee shall be initiated by the commission not later than two years following the termination of service.

The commission shall have the authority to dismiss a complaint that it determines to be frivolous.

(i) Any current or former State officer or employee or current or former special State officer or employee found guilty by the commission of violating any provision of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.) or of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.) shall be fined not less than \$500 nor more than \$10,000, which penalty may be collected in a summary proceeding pursuant to the "Penalty Enforcement Law of 1999," P.L.1999, c.274 (C.2A:58-10 et seq.), and may be suspended from office or employment by order of the commission for a period of not in excess of one year. If the commission finds that the conduct of the officer or employee constitutes a willful and continuous disregard of the provisions of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.) or of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.), it may order that person removed from office or employment and may further bar the person from holding any public office or employment in this State in any capacity whatsoever for a period of not exceeding five years from the date on which the person was found guilty by the commission.

In addition, for violations occurring after the effective date of P.L.2005, c.382, the commission may order restitution, demotion, censure or reprimand, or for a failure to file an appropriate financial disclosure statement or form, shall impose a civil penalty of \$50 for each day of the violation, which penalty may be collected in a summary proceeding pursuant to the "Penalty Enforcement Law of 1999," P.L.1999, c.274 (C.2A:58-10 et seq.).

(j) The remedies provided herein are in addition to all other criminal and civil remedies provided under the law.

(k) The commission shall promulgate, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), such rules and regulations as may be necessary to

effectuate the purposes of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et al.).

(l)

(1) The commission shall communicate periodically with the State Auditor, the State Inspector General, the State Commission of Investigation and the Office of Government Integrity, or its successor, in the Department of Law and Public Safety.

(2) The Executive Director of the commission shall meet with the head of each principal department of the Executive Branch of State Government, each board member if a board is considered the head of a principal department, and the Secretary of Agriculture, the Commissioner of Education, and the Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Commerce and Economic Growth Commission, within 30 days after the head, member, secretary or commissioner takes office, and shall meet annually with these individuals as a group, to inform them of the laws, regulations, codes, orders, procedures, advisory opinions and rulings concerning applicable ethical standards.

(m) The commission shall create and maintain a toll-free telephone number to receive comments, complaints and questions concerning matters under the jurisdiction of the commission. Information or questions received by the commission by this means shall be confidential and not accessible to the public pursuant to P.L.1963, c.73 (C.47:1A-1 et seq.).

(n) Financial disclosure statements required to be submitted to the commission by law, regulation or executive order shall be made available to the public, promptly after receipt, on the Internet site of the commission, commencing with submissions for 2005.

(o) The commission shall prepare and ensure the distribution to each State officer and employee and special State officer and employee in a State agency in the Executive Branch of a plain language ethics guide which provides a clear and concise summary of the laws, regulations, codes, orders, procedures, advisory opinions and rulings concerning ethical standards applicable to such officers and employees. The guide shall be prepared to promote ethical day-to-day decision making, to give general advice regarding conduct and situations, to provide easy reference to sources, and to explain the role, activities and jurisdiction of the State Ethics Commission. Each State officer and employee and special State officer and employee shall certify that he or she has received the guide, reviewed it and understands its provisions.

(p) The commission shall have jurisdiction to enforce the provisions of an Executive Order that specifically provides for enforcement by the commission.

#### **52:13D-21.1. Certain State officers, employees, completion of training program on ethical standards required; annual briefing**

A State officer or employee or a special State officer or employee in a State agency in the Executive Branch shall complete a training program on ethical standards provided by the

State Ethics Commission at such times and intervals as the commission shall require pursuant to subsection (e) of section 10 of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-21). At a minimum, an officer or employee shall complete annually, and acknowledge his or her completion of, a briefing on the ethics standards applicable to such employee or officer pursuant to the laws, regulations, codes, orders, procedures, advisory opinions or rulings of this State. The format and content of the program and briefing shall be determined by the training officer of the State Ethics Commission and approved by the commission as provided in subsection (e) of section 10 of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-21).

**52:13D-21.2. Restrictions on certain State employment for certain relatives of State employees, officers; definition**

a.

(1) A relative of the Governor shall not be employed in an office or position in the unclassified service of the civil service of the State in the Executive Branch of State Government.

(2) A relative of the commissioner or head of a principal department in the Executive Branch of State Government shall not be employed in an office or position in the unclassified service of the civil service of the State in the principal department over which the commissioner or head of the principal department exercises authority, supervision, or control.

(3) A relative of an assistant or deputy commissioner or head of a principal department in the Executive Branch of State Government who is employed in an office or position in the unclassified service of the civil service of the State may be employed in the principal department in which the assistant or deputy commissioner or head serves, but shall not be assigned to a position over which the assistant or deputy commissioner or head exercises authority, supervision, or control.

(4) A relative of a head or assistant head of a division of a principal department in the Executive Branch of State government who is employed in an office or position in the unclassified service of the civil service of the State may be employed in the principal department in which the head or assistant head of a division serves, but shall not be assigned to a position over which the head or assistant head exercises authority, supervision, or control.

b.

(1) A relative of an appointed member of a governing or advisory body of an independent authority, board, commission, agency or instrumentality of the State shall not be employed in an office or position in that independent authority, board, commission, agency or instrumentality.

(2) A relative of an appointed New Jersey member of a governing body of a bi-state or multi-state agency shall not be employed in an office or position in that bi-state or multi-state agency, to the extent permitted by law.

c. A State officer or employee or a special State officer or employee of a State agency in the Executive Branch shall not supervise, or exercise authority with regard to personnel actions over, a relative of the officer or employee.

d. As used in this section, "relative" means an individual's spouse or the individual's or spouse's parent, child, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, stepparent, stepchild, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother or half sister, whether the relative is related to the individual or the individual's spouse by blood, marriage or adoption.

#### **52:13D-22. Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards; membership; powers; terms; duties; penalties**

(a) There is established a Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards in the Legislative Branch of State Government.

(b) Commencing on the 30th day after the effective date of P.L.2008, c.16, the joint committee shall be composed of eight members of the public as follows: two appointed by the President of the Senate, two appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, two appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate, and two appointed by the Minority Leader of the General Assembly. No member of the Senate or of the General Assembly shall be eligible to serve as a member of the joint committee. No more than two members of the joint committee may be former members of the Senate or of the General Assembly. The members shall be full-time residents of the State and available throughout the year to attend, in person, the meetings of the joint committee.

No member shall be a lobbyist or governmental affairs agent as defined by the "Legislative and Governmental Process Activities Disclosure Act," P.L.1971, c.183 (C.52:13C-18 et seq.), a full-time State employee or an officer or director of any entity which is required to file a statement with the Election Law Enforcement Commission, and no former lobbyist or governmental affairs agent shall be eligible to serve as a member for one year following the cessation of all activity by that person as a governmental affairs agent or lobbyist.

Notwithstanding the above restrictions, among the members appointed pursuant to this section, one may be a full-time faculty member of a State public institution of higher education having a doctoral degree and expertise in the areas of ethics, philosophy and government with extensive experience in State legislative organization and procedures. No person who served as a member of the joint committee at any time prior to the 30th day after the effective date of P.L.2008, c.16 shall be eligible to serve as a member of the joint

committee as constituted under this subsection. The members shall serve for terms of two years.

The terms of the members shall run from the second Tuesday in January of an even-numbered year to the second Tuesday in January of the next even-numbered year, regardless of the original date of appointment. Vacancies in the membership of the joint committee shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments, but for the unexpired term only. The members of the joint committee shall serve without compensation, but shall be entitled to be reimbursed for all actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

(c) Commencing on the 30th day after the effective date of P.L.2008, c.16, the chairman of the joint committee shall be selected jointly by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly, when the President and Speaker are members of the same political party, from among the members of the joint committee. The first chairman to be selected jointly shall be a full-time faculty member of a State public institution of higher education having a doctoral degree and expertise in the areas of ethics, philosophy and government with extensive experience in State legislative organization and procedures. The vice chairman shall be selected jointly by the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the General Assembly, when the Minority Leaders are members of the same political party, from among the members of the joint committee. When the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly are not members of the same political party, the President and Speaker shall alternate in selecting the chairman of the joint committee with the President of the Senate selecting the chairman first, and then, at the next organization of the joint committee if the President and the Speaker are not members of the same political party, the Speaker of the General Assembly selecting the chairman. When the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the General Assembly are not members of the same political party, the Minority Leaders shall alternate in selecting the vice chairman of the joint committee with the Minority Leader of the Senate selecting the vice chairman first, and then, at the next organization of the joint committee if the Minority Leaders are not members of the same political party, the Minority Leader of the General Assembly selecting the vice chairman. The alternating method of selection shall continue regardless of intervening periods when joint selections are made.

The chairman and the vice chairman shall not be members of the same political party.

(d) The Legislative Counsel in the Office of Legislative Services shall act as legal adviser to the joint committee. The Executive Director of the Office of Legislative Services shall appoint another attorney in the Office of Legislative Services to serve as Ethics Counsel to the individual members of the Legislature and officers and employees in the Legislative Branch. The Ethics Counsel shall provide informal ethics advice to individual members of the Legislature and officers and employees in the Legislative Branch upon request, when



the request is one fully answered by the New Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law or the Legislative Code of Ethics or is on a subject previously determined by the Joint Committee. Informal ethics advice from the Ethics Counsel to a member of the Legislature or an officer or employee in the Legislative Branch shall be confidential and subject to the attorney-client privilege. The Ethics Counsel may also assist members of the Legislature and officers or employees in the Legislative Branch in requesting formal advisory opinions from the joint committee on novel subject matters. The Legislative Counsel shall, upon request, assist and advise the joint committee in the rendering of formal advisory opinions by the joint committee, in the approval and review of codes of ethics adopted by State agencies in the Legislative Branch, and in the recommendation of revisions in codes of ethics or legislation relating to the conduct of members of the Legislature or State officers and employees in the Legislative Branch.

(e) The joint committee may, within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise available to it for the purpose, employ other professional, technical, clerical or other assistants, excepting legal counsel, and incur expenses as may be necessary to the performance of its duties.

(f) The joint committee shall have all the powers granted pursuant to chapter 13 of Title 52 of the Revised Statutes [R.S.52:13-1 et seq.].

(g) The joint committee is authorized to render formal advisory opinions as to whether a given set of facts and circumstances would, in its opinion, constitute a violation of the provisions of this act [C.52:13D-12 et seq.], of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this act or of any rule of either or both Houses which gives the joint committee jurisdiction and the authority to investigate a matter.

(h)(1) The joint committee shall have jurisdiction to initiate, receive, hear and review complaints regarding violations of the provisions of this act or of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this act. It shall further have such jurisdiction as to enforcement of the rules of either or both Houses of the Legislature governing the conduct of the members or employees thereof as those rules may confer upon the joint committee. A complaint regarding a violation of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this act may be referred by the joint committee for disposition in accordance with subsection 12(d) [C.52:13D-23(d)] of this act.

(2) The joint committee shall not accept a complaint against a member of the Legislature submitted within 90 days of a primary or general election in which the member is a candidate. An attempt to file a complaint during this period shall toll any statute of limitations. This paragraph shall not bar the joint committee from initiating a complaint during this period.

A complaint that is filed within seven days following a primary or general election shall be considered by the joint committee in an expedited manner that results in a final

determination by the end of the annual session of the Legislature.

(3) The joint committee, when reviewing a complaint, shall have the authority to require a member of the Legislature who is the subject of a complaint to submit detailed financial disclosures containing information that is in addition to the information required to be disclosed by a law, rule or code of ethics. Such additional information shall remain confidential, unless the joint committee, by a vote of at least three-fourths of the total membership, directs that the information be made public.

(4) The joint committee shall inform a complainant of the time, date, and location of any meeting at which the joint committee will discuss or make a determination on any aspect of the complaint.

(i) Any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee in the Legislative Branch found guilty by the joint committee of violating any provisions of this act, of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this act or of any rule of either or both Houses which gives the joint committee jurisdiction and the authority to investigate a matter shall be fined not less than \$500.00 nor more than \$10,000, which penalty may be collected in a summary proceeding pursuant to the "Penalty Enforcement Law of 1999," P.L.1999, c.274 (C.2A:58-10 et seq.), and may be reprimanded and ordered to pay restitution where appropriate and may be suspended from office or employment by order of the joint committee for a period not in excess of one year. If the joint committee finds that the conduct of the officer or employee constitutes a willful and continuous disregard of the provisions of this act, of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this act or of any rule of either or both Houses which gives the joint committee jurisdiction and the authority to investigate a matter, it may order that person removed from office or employment and may further bar the person from holding any public office or employment in this State in any capacity whatsoever for a period not exceeding five years from the date on which the person was found guilty by the joint committee.

(j) A member of the Legislature who shall be found guilty by the joint committee of violating the provisions of this act, of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this act or of any rule of either or both Houses which gives the joint committee jurisdiction and the authority to investigate a matter shall be fined not less than \$500.00 nor more than \$10,000, which penalty may be collected in a summary proceeding pursuant to the "Penalty Enforcement Law of 1999," P.L. 1999, c.274 (C.2A:58-10 et seq.), and shall be subject to such further action as may be determined by the House of which the person is a member. In such cases the joint committee shall report its findings to the appropriate House and shall recommend to the House such further action as the joint committee deems appropriate, but it shall be the sole responsibility of the House to determine what further action, if any, shall be taken against such member.

### **52:13D-22.1. Definition**

As used in this act, “document” means any statement, report, form, or accounting which is required to be filed with the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards within a prescribed period or on or before a prescribed date pursuant to law or the legislative code of ethics promulgated pursuant to the “New Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law,” P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et seq.). The term “within a prescribed period or on or before a prescribed date” includes any extension of time granted by the committee for filing a document.

### **52:13D-22.2. Timely postmark on mailed documents**

Any document which is mailed shall be deemed to be timely filed if the postmark stamped on the cover, envelope or wrapper in which the document was mailed bears a date on or before the date of the last day prescribed for filing the document.

### **52:13D-22.3. Weekend, holiday rule**

When the date or the last day prescribed for filing a document falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, the next succeeding business day shall be regarded as the date of the last day prescribed for filing the document.

### **52:13D-23. Codes of ethics**

(a)

(1) The head of each State agency, or the principal officer in charge of a division, board, bureau, commission or other instrumentality within a department of State Government designated by the head of such department for the purposes hereinafter set forth, shall within six months from the date of enactment, promulgate a code of ethics to govern and guide the conduct of the members of the Legislature, the State officers and employees or the special State officers and employees in the agency to which said code is applicable. Such code shall conform to the general standards hereinafter set forth in this section, but it shall be formulated with respect to the particular needs and problems of the agency to which said code is to apply and, when applicable, shall be a supplement to the uniform ethics code promulgated pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, the New Jersey members to any interstate agency to which New Jersey is a party and the officers and employees of any State agency which fails to promulgate a code of ethics shall be deemed to be subject to a code of ethics the

provisions of which shall be paragraphs (1) through (6) of subsection (e) of this section.

(2) Within 180 days following the effective date of this act, P.L.2005, c.382, the State Ethics Commission shall promulgate a uniform ethics code to govern and guide the conduct of State officers and employees and special State officers and employees in State agencies in the Executive Branch. Such code shall conform to the general standards hereinafter set forth in this section, shall be the primary code of ethics for State agencies once it is adopted and a code promulgated pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be a supplement to the primary code. The head of each State agency, or the principal officer in charge of a division, board, bureau, commission or other instrumentality within a department of State Government designated by the head of such department shall revise each code of ethics promulgated prior to the uniform code to recognize the uniform code as the primary code.

(b) A code of ethics formulated pursuant to subsection (a) of this section to govern and guide the conduct of the State officers and employees or the special State officers and employees in any State agency in the Executive Branch, or any portion of such a code, shall not be effective unless it has first been approved by the State Ethics Commission. When a proposed code is submitted to the said commission it shall be accompanied by an opinion of the Attorney General as to its compliance with the provisions of this act and any other applicable provision of law. Nothing contained herein shall prevent officers of State agencies in the Executive Branch from consulting with the Attorney General or with the State Ethics Commission at any time in connection with the preparation or revision of such codes of ethics.

(c) A code of ethics formulated pursuant to this section to govern and guide the conduct of the members of the Legislature, State officers and employees or special State officers and employees in any State agency in the Legislative Branch, or any portion of such code, shall not be effective unless it has first been approved by the Legislature by concurrent resolution. When a proposed code is submitted to the Legislature for approval it shall be accompanied by an opinion of the chief counsel as to its compliance with the provisions of this act and any other applicable provisions of law. Nothing contained herein shall prevent officers of State agencies in the Legislative Branch from consulting with the Chief Legislative Counsel or the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards at any time in connection with the preparation or revision of such codes of ethics.

(d) Violations of a code of ethics promulgated pursuant to this section shall be cause for removal, suspension, demotion or other disciplinary action by the State officer or agency having the power of removal or discipline. When a person who is in the classified civil service is charged with a violation of such a code of ethics, the procedure leading to such removal or discipline shall be governed by any applicable provisions of the Civil Service Act, N.J.S.11A:1-1 et seq., and the Rules of the Civil Service Commission. No action for

removal or discipline shall be taken under this subsection except upon the referral or with the approval of the State Ethics Commission or the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards, whichever is authorized to exercise jurisdiction with respect to the complaint upon which such action for removal or discipline is to be taken.

(e) A code of ethics for officers and employees of a State agency shall conform to the following general standards:

(1) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in any business or transaction or professional activity, which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his duties in the public interest.

(2) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should engage in any particular business, profession, trade or occupation which is subject to licensing or regulation by a specific agency of State Government without promptly filing notice of such activity with the State Ethics Commission, if he is an officer or employee in the Executive Branch, or with the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards, if he is an officer or employee in the Legislative Branch.

(3) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should use or attempt to use his official position to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages for himself or others.

(4) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should act in his official capacity in any matter wherein he has a direct or indirect personal financial interest that might reasonably be expected to impair his objectivity or independence of judgment.

(5) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should undertake any employment or service, whether compensated or not, which might reasonably be expected to impair his objectivity and independence of judgment in the exercise of his official duties.

(6) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should accept any gift, favor, service or other thing of value under circumstances from which it might be reasonably inferred that such gift, service or other thing of value was given or offered for the purpose of influencing him in the discharge of his official duties.

(7) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should knowingly act in any way that might reasonably be expected to create an impression or suspicion among the public having knowledge of his acts that he may be engaged in conduct violative of his trust as a State officer or employee or special State officer or employee.

(8) Rules of conduct adopted pursuant to these principles should recognize that under our democratic form of government public officials and employees should be drawn from all of our society, that citizens who serve in government cannot and should not be expected to be without any personal interest in the decisions and policies of government; that citizens who are government officials and employees have a right to private interests of a personal,

financial and economic nature; that standards of conduct should separate those conflicts of interest which are unavoidable in a free society from those conflicts of interest which are substantial and material, or which bring government into disrepute.

(f) The code of ethics for members of the Legislature shall conform to subsection (e) hereof as nearly as may be possible.

**52:13D-24. Restriction of solicitation, receipt, etc. of certain things of value by certain State officers, employees**

a. No State officer or employee, special State officer or employee, or member of the Legislature shall solicit, receive or agree to receive, whether directly or indirectly, any compensation, reward, employment, gift, honorarium, out-of-State travel or subsistence expense or other thing of value from any source other than the State of New Jersey, for any service, advice, assistance, appearance, speech or other matter related to the officer, employee, or member's official duties, except as authorized in this section.

b. A State officer or employee, special State officer or employee, or member of the Legislature may, in connection with any service, advice, assistance, appearance, speech or other matter related to the officer, employee, or member's official duties, solicit, receive or agree to receive, whether directly or indirectly, from sources other than the State, the following:

(1) reasonable fees for published books on matters within the officer, employee, or member's official duties; (2) reimbursement or payment of actual and reasonable expenditures for travel or subsistence and allowable entertainment expenses associated with attending an event in New Jersey if expenditures for travel or subsistence and entertainment expenses are not paid for by the State of New Jersey;

(3) reimbursement or payment of actual and reasonable expenditures for travel or subsistence outside New Jersey, not to exceed \$500.00 per trip, if expenditures for travel or subsistence and entertainment expenses are not paid for by the State of New Jersey. The \$500 per trip limitation shall not apply if the reimbursement or payment is made by (a) a nonprofit organization of which the officer, employee, or member is, at the time of reimbursement or payment, an active member as a result of the payment of a fee or charge for membership to the organization by the State or the Legislature in the case of a member of the Legislature; (b) a nonprofit organization that does not contract with the State to provide goods, materials, equipment, or services; or (c) any agency of the federal government, any agency of another state or of two or more states, or any political subdivision of another state. Members of the Legislature shall obtain the approval of the presiding officer of the member's House before accepting any reimbursement or payment of expenditures for travel or subsistence outside New Jersey. As used in this subsection,

“reasonable expenditures for travel or subsistence” means commercial travel rates directly to and from an event and food and lodging expenses which are moderate and neither elaborate nor excessive; and “allowable entertainment expenses” means the costs for a guest speaker, incidental music and other ancillary entertainment at any meal at an event, provided they are moderate and not elaborate or excessive, but does not include the costs of personal recreation, such as being a spectator at or engaging in a sporting or athletic activity which may occur as part of that event.

c. This section shall not apply to the solicitation or acceptance of contributions to the campaign of an announced candidate for elective public office, except that campaign contributions may not be accepted if they are known to be given in lieu of a payment prohibited pursuant to this section.

d.

(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a designated State officer as defined in paragraph (2) of this subsection shall not solicit, receive or agree to receive, whether directly or indirectly, any compensation, salary, honorarium, fee, or other form of income from any source, other than the compensation paid or reimbursed to him or her by the State for the performance of official duties, for any service, advice, assistance, appearance, speech or other matter, except for investment income from stocks, mutual funds, bonds, bank accounts, notes, a beneficial interest in a trust, financial compensation received as a result of prior employment or contractual relationships, and income from the disposition or rental of real property, or any other similar financial instrument and except for reimbursement for travel as authorized in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection b. of this section. To receive such income, a designated State officer shall first seek review and approval by the State Ethics Commission to ensure that the receipt of such income does not violate the “New Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law,” P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et seq.) or any applicable code of ethics, and does not undermine the full and diligent performance of the designated State officer’s duties.

(2) For the purposes of this subsection, “designated State officer” shall include: the Governor, the Adjutant General, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Attorney General, the Commissioner of Banking and Insurance, the director of the Division of Business Assistance, Marketing, and International Trade, the Commissioner of Community Affairs, the Commissioner of Corrections, the Commissioner of Education, the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, the Commissioner of Human Services, the Commissioner of Children and Families, the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, the President of the State Board of Public Utilities, the Secretary of State, the Superintendent of State Police, the Commissioner of Transportation, the State Treasurer, the head of any other department in the Executive Branch, and the following members of the staff of the Office of the Governor:

Chief of Staff, Chief of Management and Operations, Chief of Policy and Communications, Chief Counsel to the Governor, Director of Communications, Policy Counselor to the Governor, and any deputy or principal administrative assistant to any of the aforementioned members of the staff of the Office of the Governor listed in this subsection.

e. A violation of this section shall not constitute a crime or offense under the laws of this State.

**52:13D-24.1. Restriction on acceptance of gifts, etc. from lobbyist, governmental affairs agent by legislation, staff**

a. Except as expressly authorized in section 13 of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-24) or when the lobbyist or governmental affairs agent is a member of the immediate family of a member of the Legislature or legislative staff, no member of the Legislature or legislative staff may accept, directly or indirectly, any compensation, reward, employment, gift, honorarium or other thing of value from each lobbyist or governmental affairs agent, as defined in the "Legislative and Governmental Process Activities Disclosure Act," P.L.1971, c.183 (C.52:13C-18 et seq.), totaling more than \$250.00 in a calendar year. The \$250.00 limit on acceptance of compensation, reward, gift, honorarium or other thing of value shall also apply to each member of the immediate family of a member of the Legislature, as defined in section 2 of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-13) to be a spouse, child, parent, or sibling of the member residing in the same household as the member of the Legislature.

b. The prohibition in subsection a. of this section on accepting any compensation, reward, gift, honorarium or other thing of value shall not apply if received in the course of employment, by an employer other than the State, of an individual covered in subsection a. of this section or a member of the immediate family. The prohibition in subsection a. of this section on accepting any compensation, reward, gift, honorarium or other thing of value shall not apply if acceptance is from a member of the immediate family when the family member received such in the course of his or her employment.

c. Subsection a. of this section shall not apply if a member of the Legislature or legislative staff who accepted any compensation, reward, gift, honorarium or other thing of value provided by a lobbyist or governmental affairs agent makes a full reimbursement, within 90 days of acceptance, to the lobbyist or governmental affairs agent in an amount equal to the money accepted or the fair market value of that which was accepted if other than money. As used in this subsection, "fair market value" means the actual cost of the compensation, reward, gift, honorarium or other thing of value accepted.

d. A violation of this section shall not constitute a crime or offense under the laws of this State.



**52:13D-25. Disclosure or use for personal gain of information not available to public**

No State officer or employee, special State officer or employee, or member of the Legislature shall willfully disclose to any person, whether or not for pecuniary gain, any information not generally available to members of the public which he receives or acquires in the course of and by reason of his official duties. No State officer or employee, special State officer or employee, or member of the Legislature shall use for the purpose of pecuniary gain, whether directly or indirectly, any information not generally available to members of the public which he receives or acquires in the course of and by reason of his official duties.

**52:13D-26. Inducing or attempting to induce legislative member or state officer or employee to violate act; penalty**

No person shall induce or attempt to induce any State officer or employee, special State officer or employee, or member of the Legislature to violate any provision of this act or any code of ethics promulgated thereunder. Any person who willfully violates any provision of this section is a disorderly person, and shall be subject to a fine not to exceed \$500.00 or imprisonment not to exceed 6 months, or both.

**52:13D-27. Short title**

This act shall be known as, and may be cited as, the “New Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law.”

**52:13D-28. Online tutorial on legislative ethics; certification; members of legislature, participation in annual ethics training, consultation with Ethics Counsel**

The Legislature shall provide an online tutorial on legislative ethics for its members and State officers or employees and special State officers or employees in the Legislative Branch of government. Each member of the Legislature and officer or employee in the Legislative Branch shall take the tutorial no later than April 1 of every even-numbered year. Each Executive Director shall submit a certification to the Ethics Counsel for himself or herself and for his or her respective staff members that they have completed the online tutorial. Each member of the Legislature shall submit to the Ethics Counsel a certification that he or she and his or her district office staff members have completed the online tutorial. The certification shall be public information. Failure to take the tutorial and file the certification shall be reported by the Ethics Counsel to the joint committee. In addition to

the tutorial, all officers and employees in the Legislative Branch shall participate in annual ethics training as directed by their Executive Directors and all members of the Legislature shall participate in annual ethics training as directed by the President of the Senate for members of the Senate and by the Speaker of the General Assembly for members of the General Assembly. The Executive Directors, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the General Assembly shall also direct the process by which completion of the training is verified. Such verification shall be filed with the Ethics Counsel. The verification shall be public information. Failure to participate in the training and file the verification shall be reported by the Ethics Counsel to the joint committee.

Each member of the Legislature shall consult with the Ethics Counsel each year regarding the requirements of the New Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law and the Legislative Code of Ethics and any other applicable law, rule or standard of conduct relating to the area of ethics. The assistance of the Ethics Counsel to members of the Legislature is subject to the attorney-client privilege. This assistance is intended as a service to the members of the Legislature and may not be deemed to diminish a member's personal responsibility for adherence to applicable laws, code provisions, rules and other standards of conduct. No privileged information provided to the Ethics Counsel by members of the Legislature or officers or employees in the Legislative Branch shall be used or admitted into evidence in any proceeding against them; but this shall not prohibit proceedings against them from evidence independently derived.

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