

**OREGON  
GOVERNMENT ETHICS  
COMMISSION**



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**GOVERNMENT ETHICS LAWS OVERVIEW**

<p><b>Prohibited Use of Position or Office</b> (ORS 244.040)</p>	<p>Public officials are prohibited from using or attempting to use their public positions to obtain financial benefits for themselves, relatives, household members, or businesses with which any is associated, if the benefit would not be available but for the public official holding the position.</p>
<p><b>Financial Interest in Public Contract</b> (ORS 244.047)</p>	<p>A person who ceases to be a public official may not have a direct beneficial financial interest in a public contract (defined at ORS 279A.010) for two years after the date of its authorization, if the person played a significant role in authorizing (<i>i.e.</i>, selecting, executing, recommending, or approving) that public contract as a public official.</p>
<p><b>Limits to Accepting Gifts</b> (ORS 244.025; see ORS 244.020(10))</p>	<p>Public officials and their relatives are limited to accepting gifts (defined at ORS 244.020(7)) worth no more than an aggregate of \$50 in a given calendar year from any individual source reasonably known to have an economic interest in the public official’s decision-making.</p>
<p><b>Conflicts of Interest</b> (ORS 244.020(1); ORS 244.020(13); ORS 244.120)</p>	<p>When a public official, in an official capacity, is faced with making a decision, recommendation, or other action that “<i>would</i>” or “<i>could</i>” financially affect the official, a relative, or business with which either is associated, the public official is faced with an “<i>actual</i>” or “<i>potential</i>” conflict. A conflicted <i>member of a governing body</i> must provide notice of the conflict by making a public announcement, and if the conflict is “<i>actual</i>” (<i>i.e.</i>, “<i>would</i>” financially affect...) must refrain from participation in the matter. <i>Most other public officials</i> must provide written notice to a supervisor/employer. Either type of notice must state the nature of the conflict. A written notice must additionally request that the supervisor/employer dispose of the matter.</p>
<p><b>Nepotism Prohibitions</b> (ORS 244.177 – 179)</p>	<p>Public officials may not directly – or participate in any interview, discussion, or debate to – appoint, employ, promote, discharge, fire, or demote a relative or household member of the public official. Public officials are also prohibited from supervising relatives and household members.</p>

\* *NOTE: The terms “business”, “business with which the person is associated”, “member of the household”, “public official”, and “relative” are defined at ORS 244.020(2), (3), (11), (15), and (16), respectively.*

**DISCLAIMER:** This document presents a brief overview of the most generally applicable Oregon Government Ethics duties and may not account for all relevant laws, exceptions or circumstances. It is ***intended for use as a training tool only*** and should not substitute for review of ORS Chapter 244 or consultation with an attorney or the Oregon Government Ethics Commission regarding application of the law in a specific situation.