

CITY OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND



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DEPARTMENT OF CITY CLERK

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CITY HALL

**RULES AND REGULATIONS
RELATIVE TO THE LOBBYIST REGISTRATION ORDINANCE**

The Department of City Clerk has promulgated these rules and regulations relative to lobbying activity pursuant to and in accordance with the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2013-3, Number 84 (approved February 28, 2013), entitled: "An Ordinance Relative to Lobbyist Registration" (hereafter, LRO).

These rules and regulations are available for public inspection or request at the Department of City Clerk, City Hall, Room 311, 25 Dorrance Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903, and on the City website, www.providenceri.com. If any part of these rules and regulations is found to be in conflict with any applicable law, such part shall be inoperative, null and void insofar as it is in conflict with said law, but the remainder of these rules and regulations shall be in full force and effect.

In order for the Department of City Clerk to properly provide for and implement the provisions of the LRO, these rules and regulations shall apply with respect to legislative branch lobbying activity and related action in the City of Providence.

CITY OF PROVIDENCE LOBBYING ACTIVITY

The purpose of the LRO is to create registration and disclosure requirements for individuals acting as municipal lobbyists. The registration requires lobbyists to provide pertinent information for the benefit of the general public, the mayor and the city council. The LRO is not intended to discourage or prohibit the exercise of constitutional rights.

In order to preserve responsible government, people must have the ability to petition for the redress of grievances and to express freely their opinions on pending legislation and current issues. Public confidence in the integrity of the legislative process is strengthened by the identification of persons and groups who, on behalf of private interests, seek to influence the content, introduction, passage, or defeat of such legislation and by the disclosure of funds expended in that effort.

WHO MUST REGISTER AND REPORT

Any person, who, as an appointed representative, seeks to influence a municipal decision, must register and report. This includes any attorneys, accountants, or consultants.

REGISTRATION

Lobbyists must register with the City Clerk within 30 days of their first lobbying activity, by filing a Statement of Registration in accordance with procedures set forth by that office. An annual fee of \$25.00 shall be paid by the lobbyist for each entity for which he or she lobbies and is payable to the clerk at the time of registration. Online registration will be available on March 20, 2013, and can be accessed at

<https://www.providenceri.com/city-clerk/lobbyist-registration>.

Lobbyists must certify that the information contained on the registration and reporting forms is true and correct.

REPORTS

One report is required per lobbyist each quarter, with certain optional sections requiring multiple submissions dependent on lobbying activity if a lobbyist is serving multiple clients. Reports include the name of the lobbyist, the employer(s) or client(s), employer's address, telephone number, email address, and the amount of client salary or compensation related to lobbying. Reports must also detail the lobbyist's activities, including the city official(s) and municipal decision(s) concerned, as well as other information.

Quarterly reports shall be filed for the periods of:

January through March
April through June
July through September
October through December

Quarterly Reports shall include the lobbyist's salary or compensation related to lobbying, the lobbyist's activities, including the city official(s) contacted and municipal decisions(s) concerned, and also shall include any expenditure, gift, honorarium, or campaign contribution, in cash or in kind, equal to \$25.00 or more for each occurrence concerning any city official, paid or incurred by the person who engages the lobbyist.

Not later than January 15th of each year, every entity which employs a lobbyist must file a final report including all money or anything of value that exceeds \$250.00 provided or promised to any city official within the preceding calendar year. A copy of the report shall also be filed with the Rhode Island Ethics Commission and sent to any city official to whom the person, corporation, or association provided or promised money or anything of value which exceeds \$250.00 within the preceding calendar year.

Every lobbyist and every entity employing a lobbyist must retain for five years, all documentation related to the reports.

IDENTIFICATION BADGE

An Identification Badge shall be issued by the City Clerk to every lobbyist and worn at all times while in City Hall on official lobbyist business. The color of the badge shall change each year and all lobbyists shall wear the badge where it can be seen at all times while in City Hall on official lobbyist business.

Once the payment is fully processed, the Clerk will issue the lobbyist an identification badge. The badge will reflect the lobbyist's name and registration number, the lobbyist's employer, and the client being represented. A person lobbying on behalf of more than one client will receive a separate registration number and badge for each client. The color of the badge will change annually.

Every lobbyist must conspicuously display the badge on his or her clothing whenever the lobbyist is in City Hall or in City offices. It is insufficient for a lobbyist to carry the badge on his or her person or belongings. A lobbyist representing more than one client must wear each applicable badge.

ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTIES

Any lobbyist found to have intentionally violated any provision of the LRO may be subject to administrative penalties of \$250.00 per day of violation, not to exceed \$25,000.00 in any calendar year, and/or removal of such lobbyist from the register and prohibition of lobbying activity until the following year or until compliance is established.

ACCESS TO THE REGISTRATION FORM AND FILING PROCESS

The Lobbyist Registration is an electronic filing only and can be accessed at:

<https://www.providenceri.com/city-clerk/lobbyist-registration>

Once the application is completed, an automatic receipt will be forwarded to you that will include an identification code. The code number should be copied onto your check for registration and mailed to the Department of City Clerk, 25 Dorrance Street, Providence, RI

Your badge will be mailed to the address on your check, unless otherwise noted.

Please note that without payment you will not receive an ID Badge and your registration will not be valid.

LOBBYING WITHOUT COMPLIANCE PROHIBITED

No lobbyist shall lobby, and no person shall employ a municipal lobbyist, unless the lobbyist's name appears on the Clerk's register of lobbyist, and unless both the lobbyist and the employer are in full compliance with the Ordinance and these rules and regulations.

ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS

Any person, corporation, association, or lobbyist who is found to have violated any provision of this ordinance may be subject to administrative penalties imposed by the City's municipal integrity officer as the circumstances may merit, upon notice and opportunity to be heard before the municipal integrity officer.

Said penalties include the imposition of a fine not to exceed \$250 per violation. Each day of violation shall constitute a new violation of this ordinance. Any violator who has been issued a fine may appeal said fine within twenty (20) days to the Providence Municipal Court.

If any provision of these rules and regulations or the application thereof to any person or circumstance shall be held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the provisions or application of the rules and regulations which can be given effect, and to this end the provisions of these rules and regulations are declared to be severable.