



10 THINGS EVERY STATE EMPLOYEE NEEDS TO KNOW  
ABOUT THE TENNESSEE ETHICS COMMISSION

1. The Comprehensive Governmental Ethics Reform Act of 2006 strengthened Tennessee's ethics laws and created a new Tennessee Ethics Commission to regulate lobbying activities.
2. ALL employees of ANY executive department or agency are covered by the Ethics Law. In addition, agencies are free to impose restrictions on their employees that exceed the requirements of the Ethics Law (including those requirements contained in the Governor's Executive Order No. 2 and Executive Order No. 3). Check with your supervisor or your agency's Ethics Officer for the policy in your agency.
3. ALL employees AND members of their immediate family are *prohibited from soliciting or accepting any gift* from a lobbyist or an employer of lobbyist. A gift is anything of value, and thus prohibited gifts can include almost any item (money, travel, loans, tickets, food, entertainment, etc.).
4. If you are unsure whether someone is registered as a lobbyist or an employer of a lobbyist then check the list of lobbyists and employers of lobbyists on the Commission's web-site, [www.tn.gov/sos/tec/](http://www.tn.gov/sos/tec/).
5. The Ethics Reform Act provides exceptions to the gift ban, but those exceptions are limited and a violation could result in disciplinary action or termination. Thus, if you are unsure whether accepting an item or service violates the ban, contact your agency's Ethics Officer or contact the Commission staff directly by telephone (615) 253-8634 or by e-mail at [ethics.counsel@state.tn.us](mailto:ethics.counsel@state.tn.us).
6. If you are otherwise unsure whether an action would violate the Ethics Law, contact your agency's Ethics Officer or contact the Commission staff directly by telephone (615) 253-8634 or by e-mail at [ethics.counsel@state.tn.us](mailto:ethics.counsel@state.tn.us).
7. ALL employees who perform consulting services, which is defined as assisting any person or entity in influencing legislation or administrative action, OR advising or assisting a person in applying or soliciting or entering into a contract with the State, must annually disclose this information and report it to the Commission within 5 days of entering into the consulting services agreement.
8. Any citizen may file a complaint with the Commission by completing a complaint form found on the Commission's web-site, [www.tn.gov/sos/tec/](http://www.tn.gov/sos/tec/).
9. Commission staff is available to conduct ethics training at your agency.
10. State employees hold the public trust; honor that trust by avoiding even the appearance of impropriety.