



New York State Relations Lobbying Policies

The New York State Lobbying Act (Chapter 1040, Laws of 1981 and as subsequently amended) requires registration and regular reporting of lobbying activities to the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE). There are severe civil and criminal penalties associated with lobbying without being registered and/or violating provisions of the lobbying act.

Any faculty or staff member whose interaction with:

- any employee of New York State (or any municipality – county, city, village, town, or special district with a population of 5,000 or more)
- any industrial development agency (IDA) in a jurisdictional subdivision with a population exceeding 5,000
- all school districts, local public authorities and public benefit corporations

must immediately report such activity to the Office of Government and Community Relations (GCR).

1. Definition of Lobbying in NYS

NYS lobbying is defined as any attempt to influence the introduction, passage or defeat of legislation, executive orders, ordinances, resolutions or regulations at the State or municipal levels (if the municipality has a population of 50,000 or more).

This includes any oral, written or electronic communications to public officials such as the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Comptroller, Attorney General, Members of the State Legislature, state officers and employees, officers and employees of the legislature and municipal officers and employees. It also includes any efforts in support of such contacts including preparation or planning activities, research and other background work that is intended for use in coordinating the lobbying activities of others.

In addition, lobbying includes influencing the outcome of rate-making proceedings, State or municipal contracts, requesting public money for research projects and certain contacts with the press.

If you are applying for State or municipal funding through an RFP or other solicitation, please aware that there are very specific rules regarding when and if contacts may be made with the procuring entity once the solicitation has been released. Violating these rules could prohibit the university from applying for grants in the future.

Several members of the faculty and staff are registered to lobby in New York State; only such individuals are authorized to lobby on behalf of the Institute. Lobbying is not discouraged – but it must be properly registered and reported.

If you believe that you will be engaging in lobbying activity, please notify the GCR (x6359) **BEFORE** you engage in such activity, so that we may determine if you should become a registered lobbyist and provide lobbying training.

2. Reporting on Lobbying

It is the responsibility of GCR to maintain accurate registration of lobbyists and file all appropriate bi-monthly and semi-annual reports with JCOPE. Employees must disclose to GCR the amount of time spent lobbying as well as all costs associated with any lobbying activity engaged in on behalf of Rensselaer including but not limited to photocopies, travel, and printing costs.

Employees must report their lobbying activities and related costs on the NYS Lobbying Activity Report form and submit it to GCR no later than the 7th day of the month following the lobbying activity, according to the following chart.

This information is also used by the GCR to fulfill the necessary federal filing requirements. *(If you are planning to lobby at the federal level, be advised that different standards apply. Please contact the Director of Federal Relations at (202)220-1324 for details.)*

Reporting Period	Report due to GCR
January	February 7
February	March 7
March	April 7
April	May 7
May	June 7
June	July 7
July	August 7
August	September 7
September	October 7
October	November 7
November	December 7
December	January 7

3. NYS Gift Rule

Lobbying entities and their employees are prohibited from giving anything of value to anyone who is paid by the State (or municipality with a population of 50,000 or more), whether or not they actually lobby such individual.

As an employee of an institution that is registered to lobby, faculty and staff are prohibited from giving anything of value to any person on the State or municipal payrolls. There are very limited exceptions to this rule, please contact GCR prior to giving anything to a public official.

Please also contact the GCR prior to inviting a public official to any event – either on- or off-campus. Inviting a public official to an event where food and beverages are served could potentially violate the ban on giving gifts to public officials.

4. Political Activities

Rensselaer does not discourage employees from engaging in political campaign activity or lobbying activity on their own time in a personal capacity, or on behalf of groups or organizations to which they belong.

However, when activities are undertaken in a personal capacity, it is the responsibility of the individual involved to expressly state that the activity is conducted in a personal capacity and not as a representative of Rensselaer. In addition, please note that if you are registered to lobby for RPI, you must register separately for any other entity that asks you to lobby on their behalf.

Subject to limited exceptions for permissible certain student activities, Rensselaer resources of any kind (e.g., letterhead, email, secretarial support, printers, office supplies, meeting rooms) may never be used in connection with any political campaign activity.

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