



# Ethics Reminder

A REMINDER FROM THE NEW YORK STATE JOINT COMMISSION ON PUBLIC ETHICS

## WORK OR VOLUNTEER OUTSIDE THE OFFICE?

### SPEAK TO YOUR ETHICS OFFICER. YOU MAY NEED APPROVAL.

- ✦ As a State officer or employee, you may not engage in any outside employment or a professional activity (including volunteer work and service on a corporate board) that “interferes or is in conflict with” your State job.

If your agency has designated you as a “policy maker,” there are special rules and restrictions that may apply to many of your outside activities. These rules and restrictions are found in JCOPE’s “Outside Activity Regulations” ([View the regulations.](#)) For example, all policy makers, including those who serve on an unpaid or per diem basis, are prohibited from holding certain positions with political parties and political organizations. Additionally, the following rules apply to all paid policy makers:

- You must inform your agency prior to serving as an unpaid officer or director of a not-for-profit corporation.
- You need prior approval from your agency for an outside activity in which you expect to receive compensation between \$1,000 and \$5,000.
- You need prior approval from **both** your agency and JCOPE for an outside activity in which you expect to receive compensation greater than \$5,000.
- You need prior approval from **both** your agency and JCOPE prior to serving as an officer or director of a for-profit corporation (regardless of any compensation you receive).
- ✦ All requests for JCOPE approval of an outside activity must be accompanied by a completed JCOPE approval form. [Click here to view JCOPE’s approval form.](#)
- ✦ Please keep in mind that your agency may have its own policy regulating outside activities – for both policy makers and non-policy makers – that is *more restrictive* than JCOPE’s regulations.
- ✦ *Note:* If you are not a “policy maker,” you should check with your agency’s ethics officer to see what rules and procedures may apply to you regarding your outside activities. Additionally, Members and employees of the Legislature are subject to a different analysis and should consult with the Legislative Ethics Commission for guidance.
- ✦ **BOTTOM LINE: Contact your ethics officer or JCOPE if you are engaged in, or plan to engage in, any outside activities.**

*The Joint Commission on Public Ethics periodically releases Ethics Reminders. Each Ethics Reminder is a brief and easy to understand synopsis of the laws and rules under the Commission’s jurisdiction. Ethics Reminders are issued to assist those subject to the Commission’s jurisdiction in understanding and complying with their obligations under the law.*

### Have Questions?

Call or Email the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics

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