# N.C. ETHICS COMMISSION

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*Candidate Special Edition* **December 2025**

# CANDIDATE NEWSLETTER

Congratulations on filing for public office. This newsletter reviews the requirements of the State Government Ethics Act ("Ethics Act") that apply to candidates for certain State offices, including financial disclosure requirements, the gift ban, and lobbyist contribution restrictions.

## PART I: STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTEREST (SEI)

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| **WHO must file SEIs?** | Candidates for the following North Carolina offices:<br>• General Assembly (Senate and House)<br>• Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Superior and District Court Judge<br>• District Attorney<br>• Clerk of Court |
| **WHAT must I file?** | **An electronic "e-filing" or manual/paper 2026 Long or No Change Form SEI:**<br>• **If you have filed a notice of candidacy for a covered office but did not file a 2025 SEI**, you must file a "Long Form" 2026 SEI.<br>• **If you filed a 2025 SEI and are running for reelection to the same office,** you should:<br>  o File a 2026 Long Form SEI if you need to update your 2025 SEI disclosures.<br>  o File a 2026 No Change Form SEI if you have no changes from your 2025 SEI disclosures. If you efile, the system will generate the correct form.<br>• **If you filed a 2025 SEI and are running for election to** a different office, you should:<br>  o File a 2026 Long Form SEI to update your 2025 SEI disclosures. |
| **WHEN must I file my SEI?** | From **1/1/26 to 1/19/2026**<br>You may *not* file your 2026 Candidate SEI earlier than 1/1/2026. |
| **WHERE must I file my SEI?** | You must file your SEI with the State Ethics Commission, **not** the State or local Board of Elections. |
| **HOW do I file?** | Go to **https://ethics.nc.gov/seis** and select "Candidate Filing." You can file in the following ways:<br>**E-file your SEI!** The e-filing option is easier, ensures immediate receipt, and your information is available for later SEI filings. Use your existing account or create a new account if you do not have one. You can also reset your password.<br>**Submit a Paper SEI** Mail or hand-deliver it no later than **1/19/26.** |

## SEI COMPLETION FAQS

1. **What kind of information must be disclosed?** Certain financial, professional, and personal information regarding yourself and members of your "immediate family," including your spouse, your or your spouse's children, and members of your "extended family" residing in your household.

2. **What if I file a paper SEI and some of the questions do not apply?** Please respond to **all** questions by checking the "yes, "no", or "none or none known" boxes and provide additional information as requested. If you do not, you will be required to refile. If you file electronically, the system will ensure that all questions are answered.

3. **I am running for reelection to the same office I currently occupy. Does filing a 2026 Candidate SEI count towards my annual filing requirement?** Yes! You only need to file **one** SEI in 2026. That SEI will satisfy both your candidate and annual SEI filing requirement. But make sure to list your current position and state that you are a candidate.

4. **If I file a paper SEI, can I fax or email it?** No. You must mail or hand-deliver your signed original SEI.

5. **Is my SEI a public record?** Yes. All SEIs, including candidate SEIs, are public records and will be available for review on the Commission's website once accepted.

6. **What if I forget my password?** Go to the e-filing link and enter the email address under which your account is registered and click "forgot password." You will be emailed a password reset link. If you forgot which email address you used or no longer have access to that email account, please call our office for assistance. Do not create a new account.

## PENALTIES

1. **Are there fines for filing my SEI late or failing to file it?** Yes. The Ethics Commission may levy a $250.00 fine for late or non-filing of your SEI.

2. **Are there criminal penalties?** Yes. Knowingly concealing or failing to disclose information on an SEI is a Class 1 misdemeanor. Knowingly providing false information on an SEI is a Class H felony.

*Contact the State Ethics Commission staff at (919) 814-3600 or by email at SEI@ethics.nc.gov if you have any questions about filing an SEI.*

**Visit: https://ethics.nc.gov/seis**

**CANDIDATE SEI FILING DEADLINE IS JANUARY 19**

# PART II: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

## A. THE ETHICS ACT'S GIFT BAN

✓ If you are currently a member of the NC General Assembly, are a legislative employee, or a State official subject to the Ethics Act, you cannot accept gifts, directly or indirectly, from registered North Carolina lobbyists or lobbyist principals unless there is a gift ban exception that would allow that gift.

✓ The Ethics Act's gift ban does not apply to judges, district attorneys, or clerks of court or candidates for those offices, although other laws may restrict such gifts.

✓ If you do not currently hold a position that is subject to the gift ban but have filed as a candidate for General Assembly, you are restricted from accepting gifts from lobbyists and lobbyist principals unless there is an exception in the Ethics Act that would allow that gift.

✓ A gift is anything of monetary value. There is not a de minimis or "small gift" exception; therefore, the value of the gift does not matter.

✓ A lobbyist is someone who is paid by either an individual or organization ("lobbyist principal,") to engage in communications or activities designed to influence legislative or executive action. Here is searchable list of registered lobbyists and lobbyist principals: https://sosnc.gov/divisions/lobbying

✓ Campaign contributions properly received and reported under the Election Law are not subject to the Ethics Act's gift ban. However, the Elections Law includes various restrictions on campaign contributions.

## B. ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS

✓ Lobbyists may not make campaign contributions to members of or candidates for General Assembly. Lobbyists also may not collect, take possession of, or transfer contribution given by third parties.

✓ Lobbyists cannot serve as treasurers or assistant treasurers for the campaign committee of a candidate for General Assembly.

✓ There are additional restrictions against the solicitation, giving, and receipt of campaign contributions to members of or candidates for General Assembly while the General Assembly is in session.

Questions concerning the Ethics Act's gift ban, or lobbyists serving as campaign treasurers should be directed to the State Ethics Commission staff at (919) 814-3600 or by e-mail at ethics.commission@ethics.nc.gov.

Questions concerning the acceptance of campaign contributions should be directed to the State Board of Elections at (919) 814-0700 or by email at elections.sboe@ncsbe.gov.