

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §6b-3-1

§6B-3-1. Definitions.

As used in this article, unless the context in which used clearly indicates otherwise:

- (1) "Compensation" means money or any other thing of value received or to be received by a lobbyist from an employer for services rendered.
- (2) "Employer" or "lobbyist's employer" means any person who employs or retains a lobbyist.
- (3) "Expenditure" means payment, distribution, loan, advance deposit, reimbursement, or gift of money, real or personal property or any other thing of value; or a contract, promise or agreement, whether or not legally enforceable.
- (4) "Government officer or employee" means a member of the Legislature, a legislative employee, the Governor and other members of the board of Public Works, heads of executive departments and any other public officer or public employee under the legislative or executive branch of state government who is empowered or authorized to make policy and perform nonministerial functions. In the case of elected offices included herein, the term "government officer or employee" includes candidates who have been elected but who have not yet assumed office.
- (5) "Legislation" means bills, resolutions, motions, amendments, nominations and other matters pending or proposed in either house of the Legislature and includes any other matters that may be the subject of action by either house or any committee of the Legislature and all bills or resolutions that, having passed both houses, are pending approval or veto by the Governor.
- (6) "Lobbying" or "lobbying activity" means the act of communicating with a government officer or employee to promote, advocate or oppose or otherwise attempt to influence:
 - (i) The passage or defeat or the executive approval or veto of any legislation which may be considered by the Legislature of this state; or
 - (ii) The adoption or rejection of any rule, regulation, legislative rule, standard, rate, fee or other delegated legislative or quasilegislative action to be taken or withheld by any executive department.
- (7) "Lobbying firm" means any business entity, including an individual contract lobbyist, which meets either of the following criteria:
 - (A) The business entity receives or becomes entitled to receive any compensation, other than reimbursement for reasonable travel expenses, for the purpose of lobbying on behalf of any other person, and any partner, owner, officer or employee of the business entity.

(B) The business entity receives or becomes entitled to receive any compensation, other than reimbursement for reasonable travel expenses, to communicate directly with any elected state official, agency official or legislative official for the purpose of lobbying on behalf of any other person.

(8)(A) "Lobbyist" means any individual employed by a lobbying firm or who is otherwise employed or contracts for economic consideration, other than reimbursement for reasonable travel expenses, to communicate directly or through his or her agents with any elective state official, agency official or legislative official for the purpose of promoting, advocating, opposing or otherwise attempting to influence:

(i) The passage or defeat or the executive approval or veto of any legislation which may be considered by the Legislature of this state; or

(ii) The adoption or rejection of any rule, legislative rule, standard, rate, fee or other delegated legislative or quasilegislative action to be taken or withheld by any executive department.

(B) The term "lobbyist" does not include the following persons, who are exempt from the registration and reporting requirements set forth in this article, unless they engage in activities which would otherwise subject them to the registration and reporting requirements:

(i) Persons who limit their lobbying activities to appearing before public sessions of committees of the Legislature, or public hearings of state agencies, are exempt.

(ii) Persons who limit their lobbying activities to attending receptions, dinners, parties or other group functions and make no expenditure in connection with such lobbying are exempt.

(iii) Persons who engage in news or feature reporting activities and editorial comment as working members of the press, radio or television and persons who publish or disseminate such news, features or editorial comment through a newspaper, book, regularly published periodical, radio station or television station are exempt.

(iv) Persons who lobby without compensation or other consideration, other than reimbursement for reasonable travel expenses, for acting as lobbyists, who are not employed by a lobbying firm or lobbyist employer, and whose total expenditures in connection with lobbying activities do not exceed \$150 during any calendar year, are exempt. The exemptions contained in this subparagraph and in subparagraph (ii) are intended to permit and encourage citizens of this state to exercise their Constitutional rights to assemble in a peaceable manner, consult for the common good, instruct their representatives, and apply for a redress of grievances. Accordingly, such persons may lobby without incurring any registration or reporting obligation under this article. Any person exempt under this subparagraph or subparagraph (ii) may at his or her option register and report under this

article.

(v) Persons who lobby on behalf of a nonprofit organization with regard to legislation, without compensation, and who restrict their lobbying activities to no more than twenty days or parts thereof during any regular session of the Legislature, are exempt. The Commission may promulgate a legislative rule to require registration and reporting by persons who would otherwise be exempt under this subparagraph, if it determines that such rule is necessary to prevent frustration of the purposes of this article. Any person exempt under this subparagraph may, at his or her option, register and report under this article.

(vi) The Governor, members of the Governor's staff, members of the board of Public Works, officers and employees of the executive branch who communicate with a member of the Legislature on the request of that member, or who communicate with the Legislature, through the proper official channels, requests for legislative action or appropriations which are deemed necessary for the efficient conduct of the public business or which are made in the proper performance of their official duties, are exempt.

(vii) Members of the Legislature are exempt.

(viii) Persons employed by the Legislature for the purpose of aiding in the preparation or enactment of legislation or the performance of legislative duties are exempt.

(ix) Persons rendering professional services in drafting proposed legislation or in advising or rendering opinions to clients as to the construction and effect of proposed or pending legislation are exempt.

(9) "Person" means any individual, partnership, trust, estate, business trust, association or corporation; any department, commission, board, publicly supported college or university, division, institution, bureau or any other instrumentality of the state; or any county, municipal corporation, school district or any other political subdivision of the state.