

Tips for Talking to People Who Disagree With You

1. Don't assume bad intent. *"Assuming ill motives almost instantly cuts us off from truly understanding why someone does and believes as they don't. ...when we assume good or neutral intent, we give our minds a much stronger framework for dialogue."*

2. Ask questions. *"When we engage people across ideological divides, asking questions helps us map the disconnect between our differing points of view. That's important because we can't present effective arguments if we don't understand where the other side is actually coming from and it gives them an opportunity to point out flaws in our positions."*

3. Stay calm. *"This takes practice and patience, but it's powerful. ...People often lament that digital communication makes us less civil, but this is one advantage that online conversations have over in-person ones. We have a buffer of time and space between us and the people whose ideas we find so frustrating. We can use that buffer. Instead of lashing out, we can pause, breathe, change the subject or walk away, and then come back to it when we're ready."*

4. Make the argument. *"This might seem obvious, but one side effect of having strong beliefs is we sometimes assume that the value of our position is, or should be, obvious and self-evident; that we shouldn't have to defend our positions because they're so clearly right and good; that if someone doesn't get it, it's their problem—that it's not my job to educate them. But if it were that simple, we would all see things the same way ... We can't expect others to spontaneously change their own minds. If we want change, we have to make the case for it."*

The words of Megan Phelps-Roper in a 2017 TED talk. Phelps-Roper regularly contributes to ideas.ted.com and is a writer and educator on topics related to empathy in dialogue.

Disclaimer

Information in this newsletter is provided as a general overview. Your circumstances may require more specific information and advice. Contact the Ethics Office if you have any questions as to whether your intended action is in compliance with the [Legislative Ethics Act AS 24.60](http://legis.ak.gov/legislation/ethics).

Contact the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics

Mailing Address:

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Anchorage, AK 99509-0251

Physical Location:

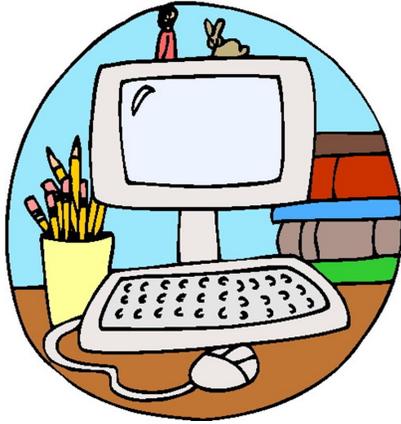
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Phone: 907-269-0150

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Email: Ethics.Committee@akleg.gov

Website: <http://ethics.akleg.gov/>



File Your Ethics Disclosures Online

1. Go to <http://intranet.akleg.gov/> and scroll down to the “File an Ethics Disclosure” section.
2. Click on the line that reads “CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE ON-LINE PROCESS.”
3. Enter your credentials (your computer log-in, not your email address).
4. Click on the type of disclosure you want to file.
5. Complete the form using drop down menus when available. (Provide complete information. Remember, gifts of travel are for the purpose of obtaining information about matters of legislative concern. Include a one or two sentence narrative that addresses how the information you obtained is a matter of legislative concern.)
6. Check your completed disclosure for accuracy and click “Proceed.”
7. Review your disclosure and if correct, press “Submit.”

Contact the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 or 907-269-8179

More Help in Filing Your Disclosure

Download a four-page detailed instruction handout at <https://ethics.akleg.gov/disclosures.php> or **contact the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 or 907-269-8179 if you need additional information.**

➔ Disclosures Required for New Close Economic Associations

AS 24.60.070 requires a close economic association disclosure when a substantial (\$250 or more) financial relationship exists with a legislator, a legislative employee (if one supervises the other), a public official who is required to file an APOC financial disclosure, or a registered lobbyist. The disclosure must be filed within 30 days of the beginning of the association regardless of whether it's during session, a recess, or the interim. Generally, both parties must file a disclosure. Examples of close economic associations include shared housing expenses, a business partnership or relationship, and the purchase/sale of an item or service. **Contact the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 or 907-269-8179 for more information.**

Deciding Whether to Accept a Gift of Travel?

Gifts of travel are for the purpose of obtaining information about matters of legislative concern. In Advisory Opinion 88-03, the Ethics Committee advises ...“Since inception, the committee has adopted a conservative approach in the interpretation of the code of ethics, recognizing that avoidance of an appearance of conflict can be as important as avoiding conflicts.”



Before accepting a gift of travel or hospitality, be sure that the activity has a legislative purpose.

- What legislative concern is being addressed in the activity?
- Will the activity help me better perform my official duties?
- Will the activity benefit the legislature as a whole?
- Does the activity have the appearance of reward or inducement for official action on my part?

If after reviewing the questions above, you are unsure whether the gift of travel or hospitality has a legislative purpose or whether it may have the appearance of a conflict, we advise contacting the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 or Ethics.Committee@akleg.gov before accepting the gift.