

You Asked, We Answered

Under AS 24.10.110, may a legislator use an office account to print or distribute a newsletter within 60 days of an election?

Yes. AS 24.60.030(c) specifically exempts an office allowance account from the restriction on the use of state funds to print or distribute a political mass mailing within 60 days of an election by a legislator who is a candidate in that election. There is no firm cutoff date for the actual mailing of a legislative newsletter. The closer the mailing is to the election, the more scrutiny from the committee would occur in the event a complaint is filed. In any case, the newsletter should not be distributed fewer than 30 days before the election.

Is a legislator who is not a candidate in a primary election restricted from sending a constituent newsletter during the campaign period as defined in AS 24.60.030(c)?

No. The restriction under AS 24.60.030(c) on the use of state funds and resources for a political mass mailing would not apply at any time during the year to a legislator who is not a candidate in either the primary or general election.

Note that a legislator who is a candidate only in the general election (does not appear on the primary ballot) is also restricted from political mass mailings and the use of state resources during the time period before the primary election.

May a legislator use state resources to print or distribute a newsletter within 60 days of the election?

Under AS 24.60.030(c), a legislator may not use state funds, other than the funds under AS 24.10.110, to print or distribute a political mass mailing during a campaign period for an election in which the legislator is a candidate.

A mass mailing is considered political if it is from or about a legislator who is a candidate for election. This restriction includes the use of the Print Shop and/or a legislative office printer to produce the newsletter.

May a legislator copy email addresses and other information from a legislative database of constituents for campaign purposes?

Yes. A legislator may use constituent information gathered by a legislator using legislative resources and copy and use that information for personal or campaign use under advice given in AO 04-01. This would include email addresses.

Five Ways to Boost Your Ethics IQ

1. Visit the Alaska Legislature's Ethics website at <https://ethics.akleg.gov/>, where you can learn about the Ethics Committee, read the Ethics Act, search advisory opinions, access previous *Advisor* newsletters, and more.
2. Reference the Standards of Conduct Handbook for guidance. The handbook includes situational examples for each section of the Ethics Act and other informational material. The handbook is distributed at the beginning of each legislative session. If you do not have a paper copy of the handbook and you want one, call the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 or 907-269-8179 and we will get one to you. The handbook is also posted on the Ethics website.
3. Call the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 for informal advice.
4. Review ethics training materials by visiting quickhelp.com and logging in with your legislative email address (*first.last@akleg.gov*) and password.
5. Suggest items/issues to include in future *Advisor* newsletters or ethics training videos.

DISCLAIMER

Information in this newsletter is given 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 Ethics Act AS 24.60.

Contact the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics

Mailing Address:

PO Box 90251
Anchorage, AK 99509-0251

Physical Location:

Anchorage Legislative Office Building
1500 W Benson Blvd Suite 220
Anchorage, AK 99503

Phone: 907-269-0150**FAX:** 907-269-0152**Email:** Ethics.Committee@akleg.gov**Website:** <http://ethics.akleg.gov/>

Remember: Disclosures Required for New Associations

Disclosures need be filed within 30 days of the beginning of an association regardless of whether it's during session, a recess, or the interim. If you are unsure whether you need to file a disclosure, contact the Ethics Office at 269-0150 or 269-8179.

Board memberships (within 30 days of the beginning of the association). *Example:* A legislator or legislative employee is elected to a condo association board on July 12, 2022.

Close economic associations (When applicable, both parties must file a disclosure within 30 days of the beginning of the association). *Example:* A legislator purchases a piece of artwork worth \$250 or more from a legislative employee on August 15, 2022.

State Benefit and Loan Programs (within 30 days of the beginning of participation). *Example:* A legislator or legislative employee receives a new commercial fishing loan on June 16, 2022.

State Contracts, Leases, and Grants (within 30 days of the beginning of the association). *Example:* A legislator or legislative employee renegotiates a state contract on July 1, 2022.

File Ethics Disclosures Online It's Easy!

1. Go to <http://intranet.akleg.gov/> & scroll down to click on **Login** in the **File an Ethics Disclosure** section.
2. Enter the filer's computer login (not email address) and password. NOTE: If the filer is a legislator, use the legislator's computer login and password.
3. Click on **Sign in**.
4. Click on the type of disclosure you want to file.
5. Complete the form using drop down menus when available. (Remember, **gifts of travel are for the purpose of obtaining information about matters of legislative concern**. Provide complete information about the donor, a one or two sentence narrative that addresses how the information obtained is a matter of legislative concern, and **attach a copy of the agenda**.)
5. Check your completed disclosure and click "Proceed."
7. Review your disclosure and if correct, press "Submit."

Need More Help 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 more information.**

Traveling this Summer? Attach Agenda to Your Disclosure

At the meeting on December 17, 2021, the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics voted unanimously to require that an agenda be provided when filing a disclosure under the exception in AS 24.60.080)(c)(4) for gifts of travel and hospitality primarily for obtaining information on matters of legislative concern. This is a change from previous practices where a copy of the agenda and a narrative addressing how the information obtained was a matter of legislative concern was requested but not required.

Attach the agenda when you file your disclosure. If you do not provide an agenda for a travel and hospitality event, you will be required to repay to the donor organization the amount gifted for the travel and hospitality. Failure to provide an agenda or to repay the gifted amount of money may be considered a violation of the Legislative Ethics Act as a prohibited gift under AS 24.60.080(a). **Contact the Ethics Office at 907-269-0150 for more information.**

"To inspire public trust and integrity we cannot rely alone on formal laws, codes, and institutional reforms – that is, institutional integrity... We need also to reinvoke personal integrity, trust, and other ethical values."

Rosamund Margaret Thomas, "Public Trust, Integrity, and Privatization," *Public Integrity*, July 2001.