

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ETHICS**

NOVEMBER 21, 2025

12:00 PM

12:06:07 PM

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

Chair Joyce Anderson convened the full meeting of the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics on November 21, 2025, at 12:06 PM. She directed Administrator Kevin Reeve to conduct roll call.

Roll Call

Chair Joyce Anderson

Committee Member Skip Cook (via Microsoft Teams)

Committee Member Deb Fancher

Committee Member Conner Thomas

Committee Member Carl White

Senator Gary Stevens

Senator Mike Cronk (alternate for Senator Robert Yundt)

Representative Kevin McCabe (via Microsoft Teams)

Representative Alyse Galvin (via Microsoft Teams)

Others

Administrator Kevin Reeve

Ethics Administrative Assistant Jacqueline Yeagle

Ethics Assistant Jamie Benton

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Chair proposed amendments to the agenda, removing the following items: Items 5, 6, and 7 – Executive Session. Item 9C – Harassment and Civility Training. Item 9D – Late

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Filing Disclosures in the Senate and House Journal Supplements. Motion to approve the amended agenda as presented by Carl White. No objections. Motion passed.

12:08:09 PM

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a. Full Committee Meeting of November 12, 2024

Motion to approve the minutes as presented by Deb Fancher. No objections.

Motion passed.

b. Full Committee Meeting of May 30, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes as presented by Carl White. No objections. Motion passed.

c. Senate Subcommittee Meeting of May 30, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes as presented by Deb Fancher. No objections.

Motion passed.

d. House Subcommittee Meeting of July 25, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes as presented by Skip Cook. No objections. Motion passed.

e. Full Committee Meeting of July 25, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes as presented by Carl White. No objections. Motion passed.

f. Senate Subcommittee Meeting of September 23, 2025

A typo in Item 1 was noted by Representative Galvin (“September 23, 2023” corrected to “September 23, 2025”). Motion to approve the minutes as amended by Skip Cook. No opposition. Motion passed.

g. Full Committee Meeting of September 23, 2025

Administrator Kevin Reeve reminded the committee that at the May 30, 2025, meeting, that the committee had decided to seek an advisory opinion regarding mailing graduation communications. He requested an amendment on page 6, Item 9, to clarify that Legislative Legal Services is always available to provide legal opinions and assist with advisory opinions. All remaining minutes in the

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paragraph remain unchanged. Motion to approve the minutes as amended by Connor Thomas. No opposition. Motion passed.

12:15:02 PM

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Anderson opened the meeting to public comment. There was no public comment.

5. Motion to go into EXECUTIVE SESSION *to discuss matters which by law must remain confidential under AS 24.60.160, Uniform Rule 22(b) regarding executive sessions, and Rules of Procedure Section 5: Executive Sessions and discussion of matters, the immediate knowledge of which would adversely affect the finances of a governmental unit, and discussion of subjects that tend to prejudice the reputation and character of a person.*

Removed from the agenda.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION (+)

Removed from the agenda.

7. PUBLIC SESSION

Removed from the agenda.

12:17:04 PM

8. Sealaska Corporation Internship update (presentation by Sealaska)

Ms. Charlotte Moore, Internship Program Coordinator for Sealaska, presented a proposal to establish an annual internship/fellowship program for Sealaska shareholders and descendants, beginning with the 2027 legislative session. The intent is to afford two to five interns with hands-on experience in legislative and policy work.

Ms. Moore described the proposed program including placement of interns in legislative offices focusing on tribal affairs, fisheries, land and resources, environmental conservation, and education. Expected duties such as attending committee and staff

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meetings, constituent communication, research, and general office support were discussed. Ms. Moore stated Sealaska will require regular check-ins from interns, blogs, surveys, and a possible presentation to the Sealaska Board. In turn, Sealaska will provide living stipends, housing assistance, and travel support.

The Select Committee on Legislative Ethics raised considerations for Sealaska. Senator Stevens requested clarification on the presentation regarding the wording of interns “carrying legislation” and Ms. Moore elucidated that interns would not carry legislation; wording in the draft proposal will be corrected. Representative Galvin expressed concern about describing the program as “advocacy work.” Ms. Moore agreed to revise language to reflect non-partisan staff expectations. Administrator Reeve discussed whether public blogging by interns would be appropriate; no determination was made. Senator Stevens encouraged limiting participation to Alaska residents. Ms. Moore will consult Sealaska leadership regarding whether such a restriction can be adopted.

The Chair noted distinctions between volunteer service, internships, and third-party payment under AS 24.60.080(h) and Ms. Moore confirmed Sealaska interns would receive a stipend rather than hourly pay. The committee clarified to Ms. Moore that all interns, including those associated with Sealaska, must complete legislative ethics training and are subject to Rules Committee approval for office placement.

A motion was made by Carl White to approve the Sealaska internship program as presented, with an understanding that language in the proposal will be updated regarding terminology and legislative requirements. The committee voted unanimously to approve the Sealaska Corporation internship program for the 2027 legislative session.

12:45:01 PM

1. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS (+)
 - a. Travel policy guidelines

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Administrator Kevin Reeve provided an update on the subcommittee's work. A preliminary outline of proposed travel policy guidelines has been drafted, with contributions from staff and the subcommittee chair. Due to workload constraints, the subcommittee does not yet have a complete draft for committee review. Administrator Kevin Reeve noted the growing need to formally document standards for airfare class, allowable reimbursements, and other travel-related practices.

Committee Member Deb Fancher added that three members will attend the upcoming Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (COGEL) conference in three weeks, where they plan to gather examples from jurisdictions with comparable travel challenges, including Guam and Hawaii. The goal is to identify reasonable and practical standards without having to build the policy entirely from scratch.

Committee members discussed current inconsistencies in airfare purchasing practices—specifically varying use of super-saver fares, main cabin fares, and assigned-seat options—and noted the need for clearer guidelines on what constitutes a reimbursable standard. The committee emphasized they are not seeking preferential treatment, but a uniform policy that is fair, defensible, and reflective of Alaska's unique travel realities.

The subcommittee intends to reconvene after the COGEL conference, gather additional information, and report back to the full committee. No timeline for completion has been established.

12:50:02 PM

b. Rules of Procedure (+)

The Chair provided background on the Rules of Procedure Subcommittee, which met on September 5 to review Sections 1–12 of the committee's Rules of Procedure. She noted that revisions to complaint-related procedures will be addressed separately later.

The Chair confirmed that the Rules of Procedure are public documents as they are adopted during public meetings. She acknowledged concerns that had been raised about

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the use and interpretation of the rules in past matters and agreed that the topic may be revisited during the complaint-procedure review process.

Internship Program. Committee Member Deb Fancher questioned if the definition of “legislative employee,” includes interns. Chair Joyce Anderson agreed that expressly identifying interns improves clarity. The committee clarified that the ethics office approves the internship program itself, rather than individual intern hires. Approval remains with the legislative office where the intern may work.

The Committee concurred.

Employment prerequisites. The committee reviewed proposed language establishing a process for appointing an Acting Interim Administrator in the event of an unexpected vacancy. The Chair referenced commitments made to the Ombudsman following the passing of Administrator Jerry Anderson. Revisions include options for appointments of an Acting Interim Administrator, including a sitting public member, the ethics administrative assistant, or another qualified individual subject to committee approval. Additionally, the Committee will notify legislative leadership and the Chief Justice when an interim appointment is made.

The Committee concurred.

Administrator Kevin Reeve clarified for the committee that new employees of the Ethics committee will undergo an Alaska State Troopers background check, sign confidentiality acknowledgments and complete ethics training. Additionally, the administrator may approve merit-based pay increases after consultation with the chair.

The Committee concurred.

Benefit and Loan Program. The Chair addressed that language requiring state departments to justify changes to the benefit/loan list was removed as it was deemed unnecessary. The committee clarified that significant changes to the list must be approved by majority vote in a public meeting.

The Committee concurred.

Executive Sessions. The committee discussed revisions regarding circumstances under which a complainant may be asked to testify in executive session under AS 24.60.170(b). The committee agreed testimony is limited to issues related to the complainant's belief that a statute has been violated and established additional revisions emphasizing confidentiality concerns and allows complainants to participate via teleconference or online technology when necessary.

The Committee concurred.

Use of Teleconference and Online Technology. The committee updated language to reflect the use of "online technology" and removed outdated references to telephonic equipment. The Chair conveyed that the revisions allow for preliminary examinations to be conducted using teleconference or online technology, however deliberations during the investigation phase must occur in person.

The Committee concurred, noting that in-person requirements may be reevaluated at a future date.

Materials and Correspondence. The committee discussed and agreed that confidential materials transmitted to non-committee recipients will be sent by U.S. Mail with return receipt. Confidential documents may be transmitted by email after confirming the intended recipient's address. Draft minutes will be posted "when available," removing the requirement for next-workday posting. Duplicative language regarding subpoena requirements was removed. The requirement that original complaints be forwarded "immediately" to staff was amended to remove the word "immediately."

The Committee concurred.

Informal Advice. The committee clarified that staff would request additional information when informal advice requests lack sufficient detail. Staff may issue advice only regarding the person making the request, not third parties.

The Committee concurred.

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Advisory Opinions. The committee reviewed and discussed proposed updates to the advisory opinion process. In that, requests may be submitted in any written format, including email. The 60-day timeline begins upon receipt of the request. If additional information is required, the 60-day period restarts when the requested information is received. Draft opinions will not include identifying information. Procedures for requesting extensions were clarified. If the committee cannot meet within 60 days and the requester declines to grant an extension, the chair may circulate a draft opinion for member concurrence. If a majority concurs, the draft becomes a tentative advisory opinion, which is not binding until formally adopted at a subsequent meeting. The tentative opinion will be shared confidentially with the requester. If concurrence is not reached, the full committee must meet to finalize the opinion.

The Committee concurred.

Motion to approve the amended Rules of Procedure as presented by Conner Thomas. No objections. Motion passed.

c. Ethics legislation (+)

The Chair explained that the subcommittee met previously on October 31, 2025, to review the April 25 draft regarding updates to legislation developed by Senator Tobin's office. She stated the purpose was to review and approve revised draft statutory language and authorize submission to Legislative Legal Services for formal drafting. She iterated that although the committee was scheduled to meet until 2:00 p.m., the intent was to continue until the ethics legislation review was complete as the goal is to finalize draft language suitable for submission to Legislative Legal Services.

Subpoena Authority. The Chair stated current law requires concurrence of the Senate President or House Speaker for issuance of subpoenas unless the entity is listed as exempt. The Select Committee on Legislative Ethics is not listed. She noted that the committee has previously issued subpoenas and was unaware of the concurrence requirement at the time. Members agreed confidentiality and independence concerns

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justify adding the Ethics Committee to the exempt list. Senator Stevens and others acknowledged the statutory ambiguity and the need for clarity.

The Committee concurred adding the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics to entities authorized to issue subpoenas without external concurrence.

Ombudsman Jurisdiction. The Chair addressed a complaint filed with the Ombudsman against the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics raised ambiguity: legislators are exempt, but public members and employees of the Ethics Committee were not explicitly exempted. The Chair proposed that public members make decisions jointly with legislators; excluding them from the exemption created confusion. This exemption was included as part of the negotiated resolution of a prior Ombudsman complaint.

The Committee concurred with adding public members and employees of the Ethics Committee to the Ombudsman exemption.

Use of Title “Senator/Representative. The Chair addressed codifying long-standing Ethics Committee guidance regarding permissible use of legislative titles. The Chair proposed a legislator may use the title “Senator” or “Representative” provided the use does not create the appearance that legislative action may be taken or withheld for private benefit.

The Committee concurred.

Mass Mailings During Campaign Period – Clarification and Limitation. The Chair noted numerous disputes arise each election season regarding what can be sent during the 60-day campaign period. Current law contains an exemption allowing use of the “office allowance account,” leading to inconsistent interpretations. The Chair proposed removing the exemption for use of office allowance funds during the 60-day period, clarify permissible communications during that period and adding explicit allowance for communications necessary due to emergencies, natural disasters, or urgent public needs.

Committee members expressed concern that removal of the exemption narrows what has historically been allowed. Representative McCabe raised timing concerns in that 60 days

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are close to the end of session when wrap-up newsletters are commonly sent.

Additionally email communications are not clearly addressed in statute; members noted inconsistency in past guidance and enforcement. Representative McCabe observed the ambiguity that legislators may send mass emails using personal resources as statute does not clearly prohibit it. All members agreed that staff time, state devices, and state email systems cannot be used during the campaign blackout. However, members emphasized the need for clarity and fairness across incumbents and challengers.

The Committee agreed to remove this from the current draft and revisit the mass-mailing statute separately after further study, including consideration of email definitions and blackout periods.

Whistleblower Protection. The Chair proposed clarification regarding whistleblower protections. Currently protection applies only to legislators and legislative employees, not members of the public. She noted a prior complaint revealed confusion about confidentiality and applicability of existing protections. Public complainants are not covered by statute, and this section clarifies that.

The Committee concurred.

Gifts Related to Travel, Documentation of Agenda. The Chair stated the committee previously adopted a rule requiring agendas for travel-related gifts and this addition is formalizing it in statute. The Chair proposed requiring an agenda or equivalent documentation demonstrating the primary legislative purpose. On a different subject regarding Gifts of Travel Representative McCabe raised whether the \$250 gift limit remains appropriate given increased travel costs. Members agreed this figure may be outdated.

The Committee concurred with the agenda-documentation requirement and agreed to revisit the \$250 threshold separately.

Per Diem for Public Members. The Chair addressed that public members currently receive executive-branch per diem rates (\$60/day), unlike legislators and Ethics staff. The Chair proposed public members receive the same Legislative Council per diem rates.

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The Committee concurred.

Subpoena Authority Placement. The Chair reiterated the earlier statutory addition specifying that the Ethics Committee chair may authorize subpoenas.

The Committee concurred.

Advisory Opinions – Time Extension. The Chair reiterated current statute requires the requestor's permission to extend the 60-day deadline. She proposed allowing the committee itself to extend the deadline when necessary.

The Committee concurred.

Mr. Dan Wayne noted that the ethics legislation materials offered to the full committee for presentation purposes did not conform to the formatting requirements for a legislative work draft. Senator Stevens requested that the materials be converted into a formal legislative work draft for committee review and approval. The Chair recommended an additional meeting to complete the review of proposed changes to legislation.

2. Chair/Staff Report (+)

a. FY 2026 Budget status (+)

Not discussed due to time restraints, removed from agenda.

b. Staff Report on Informal Advice (+)

Not discussed due to time restraints, removed from agenda.

c. Harassment and Civility training

Removed from agenda.

d. Annotation of late filing of disclosures in the journal.

Removed from agenda.

e. Benefit and Loan Update Department of Transportation (+)

Not discussed due to time restraints, removed from agenda.

f. COGEL conference update

The administrator confirmed with the chair on attendees regarding the 2025 COGEL conference.

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- g. Staffing workload and focus areas (+)
Not discussed due to time restraints, removed from agenda.
- h. Status of Reinbold case
Not discussed due to time restraints, removed from agenda.
- i. Alan Dick corrective action update (+)
Not discussed due to time restraints, removed from agenda.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Public member vacancies
Not discussed due to time restraints, removed from agenda.
- b. New legislator training
Not discussed due to time restraints, removed from agenda.

4. ADJOURN

Senator Stevens moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 2:31 PM.

2:31:50 PM