



Washington State Public Disclosure Commission

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[www.pdc.wa.gov](http://www.pdc.wa.gov)

# Public Agency Lobbying

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## Zoom Logistics

- Cameras & microphones
- Using the chat box
- Chat is saved
- Class not recorded



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## Why This Class?



Empower agencies to act within the law



Help public agencies file accurate reports



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## Today's Agenda

- What is the PDC?
- What is lobbying?
- What is my agency allowed to do?
- What activities are prohibited?
- Which activities do I have to report?
- Quick demonstration



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## About the PDC

- 1972 ballot
- Initiative 276

RCW 42.17A

WAC 390

*“The public’s right to know of the financing of political campaigns and lobbying and the financial affairs of elected officials and candidates far outweighs any right that these matters remain secret and private.”*

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## About Lobbying Law

- Goal to inform the public
- PDC regulates state-level
- Agencies have expenditure restrictions
- Agencies have reporting requirements

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## What is Lobbying?

*Acting with the intent to influence, in a material way, the adoption or rejection of specific proposed or reasonably anticipated bills, resolutions, motions, amendments, nominations, and other like matters before the state legislature or governor.*



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## What is My Agency Allowed to Do?

- ✓ Communicate about official agency business
- ✓ Advocate for the agency's position or interests
- ✓ Communicate with legislature upon request
- ✓ Use proper channels to request necessary action
- ✓ Lobby for/against initiatives **once before legislature**

**RCW 42.17A.635**



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## What Activities are Prohibited?

- ✗ Can't use public funds for direct lobbying
- ✗ Can't use public funds for grassroots lobbying
- ✗ Can't ask stakeholders to lobby
- ✗ Can't use public resources to support or oppose initiatives
- ✗ Can't spend public funds on campaigns or gifts

RCW 42.17A.635

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## Key Point

*Agencies must report some lobbying activities.*

*Agencies don't need to report others.*

*It's important to know the difference.*

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## Reporting Lobbying

- If no lobbying, no reporting
- Quarterly L-5 Report
- One person files reports for the agency
- Submitted electronically through PDC website



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## Agencies don't report to PDC...

- phone calls,
- written correspondence,
- reports required by law,
- a report/study in response to a direct request, or
- attempts to influence federal or local legislation.



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## Agencies don't report to PDC...

- appropriation requests to OFM,
- communication within or between state or local agencies,
- policy positions within an agency or group of agencies, or
- in-person lobbying by an elected official (unless over \$25 cost.)

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## Key Point

*Personal funds over \$25 (spent by anyone) in connection with **agency lobbying** must be reported. This includes money spent to entertain or buy gifts for state officials or employees.*

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## L-5 Agencies should report...

- spending of personal funds over \$25, and
- in-person lobbying to include:
  - testifying at hearings,
  - talking with legislators or staff, and
  - conversations with governor or staff.

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## L-5 Agencies should report...

- video calls (Zoom, Teams, etc.),
- travel and per diem costs,
- cost of lobbying materials, and
- payments to consultants.



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# Demonstration Time

Accessing and completing the L-5



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## Key Point

*True public disclosure requires timely and accurate reports.*

*The Commission may impose penalties for late, inaccurate, or missing reports.*



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# Contacting us

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# Thank you!

Remaining Questions?



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