

**As Adopted by the Senate**

**129th General Assembly**

**Regular Session**

**2011-2012**

**H. C. R. No. 14**

**Representative Blessing**

**Cosponsors: Representatives Adams, R., Amstutz, Anielski, Antonio, Ashford, Baker, Balderson, Barnes, Beck, Blair, Boose, Brenner, Bulp, Buchy, Budish, Burke, Butler, Carey, Carney, Celeste, Clyde, Coley, Combs, Damschroder, DeGeeter, Derickson, Dovilla, Driehaus, Duffey, Fedor, Fende, Foley, Gardner, Garland, Gentile, Gerberry, Gonzales, Goodwin, Goyal, Grossman, Hackett, Hagan, C., Hagan, R., Hall, Hayes, Heard, Henne, Hollington, Hottinger, Huffman, Johnson, Kozlowski, Landis, Letson, Luckie, Lundy, Maag, Martin, McClain, McGregor, McKenney, Mecklenborg, Milkovich, Murray, Newbold, O'Brien, Okey, Patmon, Phillips, Pillich, Ramos, Reece, Roegner, Rosenberger, Ruhl, Schuring, Sears, Slaby, Sprague, Stautberg, Stebelton, Stinziano, Sykes, Szollosi, Thompson, Uecker, Wachtmann, Weddington, Winburn, Yuko, Speaker Batchelder**  
**Senators Bacon, Beagle, Brown, Cafaro, Cates, Daniels, Faber, Gillmor, Grendell, Hite, Hughes, Jones, Jordan, Kearney, Lehner, Manning, Niehaus, Obhof, Oelslager, Patton, Sawyer, Schaffer, Schiavoni, Seitz, Smith, Stewart, Tavares, Wagoner, Widener, Wilson**

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**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

To adopt the Legislative Code of Ethics for the 1  
members and employees of both chambers of the 2  
129th General Assembly, employees of any 3  
legislative agency, and candidates for the 130th 4  
General Assembly. 5

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE**

**OF OHIO (THE SENATE CONCURRING):**

WHEREAS, The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee, appointed by 6  
the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of 7  
the Senate pursuant to section 101.34 of the Revised Code, is 8  
required to recommend a Code of Ethics that is consistent with the 9  
law to govern all members and employees of each chamber of the 10  
General Assembly and all candidates for the office of member of 11  
each chamber; and 12

WHEREAS, The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee is the 13  
appropriate ethics committee for matters relating to members and 14  
employees of the General Assembly, employees of any legislative 15  
agency, including the Correctional Institution Inspection 16  
Committee, Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review, Legislative 17  
Information Systems, Legislative Inspector General, and 18  
Legislative Service Commission, and candidates for the office of 19  
member of the General Assembly; now therefore be it 20

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives and the Senate of 21  
the 129th General Assembly adopt the following Legislative Code of 22  
Ethics: 23

LEGISLATIVE CODE OF ETHICS 24  
FOR MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE 25  
129th OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 26  
EMPLOYEES OF ANY LEGISLATIVE AGENCY, 27  
AND CANDIDATES FOR THE 130th GENERAL ASSEMBLY 28

SECTION 1. CONDUCT 29

All members of the Senate or the House of Representatives 30  
shall conduct themselves at all times so as to reflect credit upon 31  
the member's respective chamber of the General Assembly, shall 32  
obey all rules of the member's respective chamber of the General 33  
Assembly, and shall conform the member's conduct to this Code of 34

Ethics. All employees of the Senate or House of Representatives 35  
and all employees of any legislative agency shall conduct 36  
themselves at all times so as to reflect credit upon the 37  
employee's respective chamber of the General Assembly or 38  
institution of employment, shall obey all rules of the employee's 39  
respective chamber of the General Assembly or institution of 40  
employment, and shall conform the employee's conduct to this Code 41  
of Ethics. 42

SECTION 2. DISCLOSURE STATEMENT 43

(A) The Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall 44  
accept disclosure statements filed by members and employees of the 45  
General Assembly and employees of any legislative agency pursuant 46  
to section 102.02 of the Revised Code and shall maintain a file of 47  
all disclosure statements that are filed pursuant to that section. 48  
Every member of the General Assembly and every employee of the 49  
General Assembly and any legislative agency who is required to 50  
file a financial disclosure statement, within the period 51  
prescribed by law, shall file with the Office of the Legislative 52  
Inspector General, a disclosure statement as provided for by 53  
section 102.02 of the Revised Code. Each member and each employee 54  
of the General Assembly and employee of any legislative agency 55  
required to file a financial disclosure statement, within the 56  
period and in the manner prescribed by section 102.02 of the 57  
Revised Code, shall receive from the Office of the Legislative 58  
Inspector General the form on which the statement shall be 59  
prepared. 60

(B) Division (A)(2)(c) of section 102.02 of the Revised Code 61  
applies to members of the General Assembly who are attorneys or 62  
physicians or who otherwise engage in the practice of a profession 63  
and to the clients, patients, and other recipients of professional 64  
services of members of the General Assembly who are attorneys or 65  
physicians or who otherwise engage in the practice of a 66

profession, even if those clients, patients, and other recipients 67  
of professional services are legislative agents. 68

(C) Division (A)(8) of section 102.02 of the Revised Code 69  
requires a member of the General Assembly and an employee of the 70  
General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file a 71  
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code to 72  
identify on a disclosure statement the source and amount of any 73  
payment of expenses incurred for travel to destinations inside or 74  
outside this state that the member or employee receives in the 75  
member's or employee's own name or that another person receives 76  
for the member's or employee's use or benefit in connection with 77  
the member's or employee's official duties, except for expenses 78  
for travel to meetings or conventions of a national or state 79  
organization to which any state agency, including, but not limited 80  
to, any legislative agency or state institution of higher 81  
education as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised Code, pays 82  
membership dues, or any political subdivision or any office or 83  
agency of a political subdivision pays membership dues. 84

(D) Division (A)(9) of section 102.02 of the Revised Code 85  
requires a member of the General Assembly and an employee of the 86  
General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file a 87  
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code to 88  
identify on a disclosure statement the source of payment of 89  
expenses for meals and other food and beverages that are incurred 90  
in connection with the person's official duties and that exceed 91  
one hundred dollars aggregated per calendar year, except for 92  
expenses for meals and other food and beverages provided at a 93  
meeting at which the member or employee participated in a panel, 94  
seminar, or speaking engagement or at a meeting or convention of a 95  
national or state organization to which a state agency, including, 96  
but not limited to, any legislative agency or state institution of 97  
higher education as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised 98

Code, pays membership dues, or any political subdivision or any office or agency of a political subdivision pays membership dues. 99  
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(E)(1) Except as otherwise provided in division (E)(2) of this section, in accordance with section 102.02 of the Revised Code, every member of the General Assembly and every employee of the General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file an annual statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code shall disclose the source of a gift or gifts, where the value of the gift or gifts aggregated per calendar year exceeds seventy-five dollars, except gifts received by will or by virtue of section 2105.06 of the Revised Code, or received from spouses, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, siblings, nephews, nieces, uncles, aunts, cousins, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, fathers-in-law, mothers-in-law, step-relations, or any person to whom the member or employee of the General Assembly or employee of any legislative agency stands in loco parentis, or received by way of distribution from any inter vivos or testamentary trust established by a spouse or by an ancestor. 101  
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(2) In accordance with section 102.02 of the Revised Code, every member of the General Assembly and every employee of the General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file an annual statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code shall disclose the source of a gift or gifts from a legislative agent, where the value of the gift or gifts aggregated per calendar year exceeds twenty-five dollars. 118  
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SECTION 3. LICENSE DISCLOSURE 125

Any member of the General Assembly who engages in the conduct or practice of a particular business, profession, trade, or occupation that is subject to licensing or regulation by any branch, department, division, institution, instrumentality, board, commission, or bureau of the state shall file a notice that the 126  
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member is the holder of a particular license, or is engaged in 131  
such activity, as part of the financial disclosure statement 132  
required by section 102.02 of the Revised Code. 133

SECTION 4. VOTING ABSTENTION 134

(A) A member who has reason to believe that the member has a 135  
substantial personal interest in legislation may request 136  
permission of the chair to abstain from voting on the legislation 137  
and may state the member's reason for the request. The request 138  
shall be granted by the chair or the member's respective chamber 139  
of the General Assembly pursuant to the rules of that chamber. The 140  
request and permission to abstain shall be entered in the House or 141  
Senate Journal, as is appropriate. 142

(B) No member of the General Assembly shall vote on any 143  
legislation that the member knows is then being actively advocated 144  
if the member is one of the following with respect to a 145  
legislative agent or employer that is then actively advocating on 146  
that legislation: 147

(1) An employee, as defined in section 102.031 of the Revised 148  
Code; 149

(2) A business associate, as defined in section 102.031 of 150  
the Revised Code; 151

(3) A person, other than an employee, who is hired under 152  
contract to perform certain services, and such position involves a 153  
substantial and material exercise of administrative discretion in 154  
the formulation of public policy. 155

(C) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may impose a fine 156  
of not more than one thousand dollars upon a member of the General 157  
Assembly who violates division (B) of this section. 158

SECTION 5. COMPENSATION 159

(A) Except as provided in division (D) of section 102.04 of 160

the Revised Code, no person elected to or employed by the General Assembly or employed by any legislative agency shall receive or agree to receive, directly or indirectly, compensation other than from the house with which the person serves or from any legislative agency, if the person is a legislative agency employee, for any service rendered or to be rendered by the person personally in any case, proceeding, application, or other matter that is before the General Assembly or any department, division, institution, instrumentality, board, commission, or bureau of the state, excluding the courts.

Division (A) of this section shall not be construed to prohibit the performance of ministerial functions, including, but not limited to, the filing or amendment of tax returns, applications for permits and licenses, incorporation papers, security registrations, and other documents.

Except as provided in division (D) of section 102.04 of the Revised Code, no person elected to or employed by the General Assembly or employed by any legislative agency shall sell or agree to sell, except through competitive bidding, any goods or services to the General Assembly or any department, division, institution, instrumentality, board, commission, or bureau of the state, excluding the courts.

(B) No member or employee of the General Assembly or employee of any legislative agency shall knowingly accept any of the following from a legislative agent:

(1) The payment of any expenses for travel or lodging except as otherwise authorized by division (H) of section 102.03 of the Revised Code;

(2) More than seventy-five dollars aggregated per calendar year as payment for meals and other food and beverages, other than for those meals and other food and beverages provided to the

member or employee at a meeting at which the member or employee 192  
participates in a panel, seminar, or speaking engagement, at a 193  
meeting or convention of a national organization to which either 194  
house of the General Assembly or any state agency, including, but 195  
not limited to, any legislative agency or state institution of 196  
higher education as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised 197  
Code, pays membership dues, or at a dinner, party, or function to 198  
which all members of the General Assembly or all members of either 199  
house of the General Assembly are invited. 200

(C) No member or employee of the General Assembly or employee 201  
of any legislative agency shall knowingly accept from a 202  
legislative agent a gift of any amount in the form of cash or the 203  
equivalent of cash, or a gift or gifts of any other thing of value 204  
where the value of the gift or gifts aggregated per calendar year 205  
exceeds seventy-five dollars. As used in this division, "gift" 206  
does not include any contribution as defined in section 3517.01 of 207  
the Revised Code or any gifts of meals and other food and 208  
beverages or the payment of expenses incurred for travel to 209  
destinations either inside or outside this state that is received 210  
by a member of the General Assembly and that is incurred in 211  
connection with the member's official duties. 212

(D) It is not a violation of division (B)(2) of this section 213  
if, within sixty days after receiving notice pursuant to division 214  
(F)(2) of section 101.73 of the Revised Code from a legislative 215  
agent that the legislative agent has provided a member of the 216  
General Assembly or an employee of the General Assembly or any 217  
legislative agency with more than seventy-five dollars aggregated 218  
in a calendar year as payment for meals and other food and 219  
beverages that were purchased for consumption on the premises in 220  
which the food and beverages were sold, the member or employee of 221  
the General Assembly or employee of any legislative agency returns 222  
to that legislative agent the amount received that exceeds 223



seventy-five dollars. 224

SECTION 6. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION 225

No present or former member or employee of the General 226  
Assembly or present or former employee of any legislative agency 227  
shall disclose or use for the member's or employee's personal 228  
profit, without appropriate authorization, any information 229  
acquired by the member or employee in the course of the member's 230  
or employee's official duties that has been clearly designated to 231  
the member or employee as confidential when such confidential 232  
designation is warranted because of the status of the proceedings 233  
or the circumstances under which the information was received and 234  
preserving its confidentiality is necessary to the proper conduct 235  
of government business. No present or former member or employee of 236  
the General Assembly or present or former employee of any 237  
legislative agency shall disclose or use, without appropriate 238  
authorization, any information acquired by the member or employee 239  
in the course of the member's or employee's official duties that 240  
is confidential because of statutory provisions, except as 241  
provided in section 101.30 of the Revised Code or Section 12 or 13 242  
of Article II, Ohio Constitution. 243

SECTION 7. IMPROPER INFLUENCE 244

(A) No member or employee of the General Assembly or employee 245  
of any legislative agency shall use or attempt to use or authorize 246  
the use of the authority or influence of the member's or 247  
employee's office or employment to secure anything of value or the 248  
promise or offer of anything of value that is of such a character 249  
as to manifest a substantial and improper influence upon the 250  
member or employee with respect to the member's or employee's 251  
duties. 252

(B) No member or employee of the General Assembly or employee 253  
of any legislative agency shall solicit or accept anything of 254

value that is of such a character as to manifest a substantial and 255  
improper influence upon the member or employee with respect to the 256  
member's or employee's duties. 257

(C) No member of the General Assembly shall solicit or 258  
receive funds from any legislative agent who is registered 259  
pursuant to section 101.72 of the Revised Code, for use other than 260  
by a political party, campaign committee, legislative campaign 261  
fund, political action committee, or political contributing 262  
entity, as defined in section 3517.01 of the Revised Code, except 263  
that a member may solicit or receive funds from any legislative 264  
agent on behalf of religious and benevolent organizations 265  
regulated by Chapter 1716. of the Revised Code or charitable 266  
organizations that have registered with the Attorney General 267  
pursuant to section 109.26 or 1716.02 of the Revised Code. 268

(D) In the absence of bribery or another offense under the 269  
Revised Code or a purpose to defraud, the receipt of 270  
contributions, as defined in section 3517.01 of the Revised Code, 271  
made to a campaign committee, political party, legislative 272  
campaign fund, political action committee, or political 273  
contributing entity on behalf of a member of or candidate for the 274  
General Assembly does not violate divisions (A) and (B) of this 275  
section. 276

(E) A member or employee of the General Assembly and an 277  
employee of any legislative agency may accept travel, meals, and 278  
lodging or expenses or reimbursement of expenses for travel, 279  
meals, and lodging in connection with conferences, seminars, and 280  
similar events related to the member's or employee's official 281  
duties if the travel, meals, lodging, expenses, or reimbursement 282  
is not of such a character as to manifest a substantial and 283  
improper influence upon the member or employee with respect to 284  
those duties and if, in relation to expenses or reimbursement for 285  
travel or lodging provided to a member by a legislative agent, the 286

expenses or reimbursement are not made in violation of division 287  
(C)(1) of section 102.031 of the Revised Code. A member or 288  
employee who acts in compliance with this division does not 289  
violate division (A), (B), or (C) of this section. 290

SECTION 8. STAFF USE 291

(A) A member of the General Assembly shall utilize General 292  
Assembly employees only for the official purposes for which they 293  
are employed. 294

(B)(1) In accordance with section 3517.092 of the Revised 295  
Code, no member of or candidate for the General Assembly, no 296  
campaign committee of a member of or candidate for the General 297  
Assembly, no legislative caucus campaign committee, and no other 298  
person or entity shall knowingly solicit or accept a contribution 299  
on behalf of that member or candidate, that member's or 300  
candidate's campaign committee, or a legislative caucus campaign 301  
committee from any of the following: 302

(a) A state employee whose appointing authority is the member 303  
of the General Assembly; 304

(b) A state employee whose appointing authority is authorized 305  
or required by law to be appointed by the member of the General 306  
Assembly; 307

(c) A state employee who functions in or is employed by the 308  
Ohio Senate, the Ohio House of Representatives, or any legislative 309  
agency; 310

(d) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, whose 311  
appointing authority will be the candidate for the General 312  
Assembly, if elected; 313

(e) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, whose 314  
appointing authority will be appointed by the candidate for the 315  
General Assembly, if elected, as authorized or required by law; 316

(f) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, who 317  
will function in or be employed in or by the same public agency, 318  
department, division, or office as the candidate for the General 319  
Assembly, if elected. 320

(2) As used in this section, "contribution" does not include 321  
services provided by individuals volunteering a portion of their 322  
time on behalf of a campaign. 323

(C) In addition to any complaint brought or penalty that may 324  
be imposed under sections 3517.152 to 3517.157 of the Revised 325  
Code, the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may receive and 326  
initiate complaints against members and employees of, and 327  
candidates for, the General Assembly and employees of any 328  
legislative agency concerning conduct alleged to be in violation 329  
of this section. Upon a finding of a violation of this section, 330  
the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend whatever 331  
sanction is appropriate with respect to a particular member, 332  
employee, or candidate as will best maintain in the minds of the 333  
public a good opinion of the conduct and character of members and 334  
employees of the General Assembly. 335

SECTION 9. SEPARATION OF FUNDS 336

(A) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly shall 337  
convert, receive, or accept for personal or business use anything 338  
of value from the member's or candidate's campaign fund, as 339  
defined in section 3517.01 of the Revised Code, including, without 340  
limitation, payments to the member or candidate for services 341  
personally performed by the member or candidate, except as 342  
reimbursement for any of the following: 343

(1) Legitimate and verifiable prior campaign expenses 344  
incurred by the member or candidate; 345

(2) Legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, and necessary prior 346  
expenses incurred by the member or candidate in connection with 347

duties as the holder of a public office, including, without 348  
limitation, expenses incurred through participation in nonpartisan 349  
or bipartisan events where the participation of the holder of a 350  
public office would normally be expected; 351

(3) Legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, and necessary prior 352  
expenses incurred by a member or candidate while doing any of the 353  
following: 354

(a) Engaging in activities in support of or opposition to 355  
another candidate, political party, or ballot issue; 356

(b) Raising funds for a political party, political action 357  
committee, campaign committee, legislative campaign fund, 358  
political contributing entity, or other candidate; 359

(c) Participating in the activities of a political party, 360  
political action committee, legislative campaign fund, political 361  
contributing entity, or campaign committee; 362

(d) Attending a political party convention or other political 363  
meeting. 364

(B) For purposes of division (A) of this section, an expense 365  
is incurred whenever a member or candidate has either made payment 366  
or is obligated to make payment, as by the use of a credit card or 367  
other credit procedure, or by the use of goods or services 368  
received on account. 369

(C) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly shall 370  
knowingly receive or accept reimbursement for an expense under 371  
division (A) of this section to the extent that the expense 372  
previously was reimbursed or paid from another source of funds. If 373  
an expense is reimbursed under division (A) of this section and is 374  
later paid or reimbursed, wholly or in part, from another source 375  
of funds, a member or candidate shall immediately repay the 376  
reimbursement received under division (A) of this section to the 377  
extent of the payment made or reimbursement received from the 378

other source. 379

(D) A member of the General Assembly may be reimbursed under 380  
division (A)(1) or (3) of this section for expenses incurred for 381  
the member's meals and lodging in Franklin County if the expenses 382  
otherwise meet the requirements for reimbursement under division 383  
(A)(1) or (3) of this section and were not incurred while the 384  
member was in Franklin County to attend floor sessions of the 385  
General Assembly or meetings of its committees, except that a 386  
member may be reimbursed under division (A)(1), (2), or (3) of 387  
this section for expenses incurred for the member's meals in 388  
Franklin County at any time if the expenses otherwise meet the 389  
requirements for reimbursement under division (A)(1), (2), or (3) 390  
of this section and were incurred for meals at which the member 391  
hosted other persons. 392

(E) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly shall 393  
accept for personal or business use anything of value from a 394  
political party, political action committee, legislative campaign 395  
fund, political contributing entity, or campaign committee other 396  
than the member's or candidate's own campaign committee, except 397  
for the following: 398

(1) Reimbursement for legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, 399  
and necessary prior expenses not otherwise prohibited by law 400  
incurred by the member or candidate while engaged in any 401  
legitimate activity of the political party, political action 402  
committee, legislative campaign fund, political contributing 403  
entity, or such campaign committee. Without limitation, 404  
reimbursable expenses under this division include those incurred 405  
while doing any of the following: 406

(a) Engaging in activities in support of or opposition to 407  
another candidate, political party, or ballot issue; 408

(b) Raising funds for a political party, campaign committee, 409

legislative campaign fund, or another candidate; 410

(c) Attending a political party convention or other political 411  
meeting. 412

(2) Compensation not otherwise prohibited by law for actual 413  
and valuable personal services rendered under a written contract 414  
to the political party, political action committee, legislative 415  
campaign fund, political contributing entity, or the member's or 416  
candidate's own campaign committee for any legitimate activity of 417  
the political party, political action committee, legislative 418  
campaign fund, political contributing entity, or such campaign 419  
committee. 420

Reimbursable expenses under this division do not include, and 421  
it is a violation of this division for a member or candidate to 422  
accept from a political party, political action committee, 423  
legislative campaign fund, political contributing entity, or 424  
campaign committee other than the member's or candidate's own 425  
campaign committee, anything of value for activities primarily 426  
related to the member's or candidate's own campaign for election, 427  
except for contributions to the member's or candidate's campaign 428  
committee. 429

For purposes of this division, an expense is incurred 430  
whenever a member or candidate has either made payment or is 431  
obligated to make payment, as by the use of a credit card or other 432  
credit procedure, or by the use of goods or services received on 433  
account. 434

(F)(1) Divisions (A) and (C) of this section do not prohibit 435  
a member's or candidate's campaign committee from making a direct 436  
advance or post payment from the member's or candidate's campaign 437  
fund to vendors for goods and services for which reimbursement is 438  
permitted under division (A) of this section, except that no 439  
campaign committee shall pay a member or candidate for services 440

personally performed by the member or the candidate. 441

(2) When any expense that may be reimbursed under division 442  
(A), (C), or (E) of this section is part of other expenses that 443  
may not be paid or reimbursed, the separation of the two types of 444  
expenses for the purpose of allocating for payment or 445  
reimbursement those expenses that may be paid or reimbursed may be 446  
by any reasonable accounting method, considering all of the 447  
surrounding circumstances. 448

(3) For purposes of divisions (A), (C), and (E) of this 449  
section, mileage allowance at a rate not greater than that allowed 450  
by the Internal Revenue Service at the time the travel occurs may 451  
be paid instead of reimbursement for actual travel expenses 452  
allowable. 453

(G) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall report 454  
violations of this section to the Elections Commission pursuant to 455  
division (E)(1) of Section 13 of this Code of Ethics. 456

SECTION 10. HONORARIA AND TESTIMONIALS 457

(A) No member of the General Assembly, employee of the 458  
General Assembly who is required to file a financial disclosure 459  
statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code, or employee of 460  
any legislative agency who is required to file a financial 461  
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code 462  
shall solicit or accept an honorarium. This division and divisions 463  
(A), (B), and (C) of Section 7 of this Code of Ethics do not 464  
prohibit a member or employee who is required to file a financial 465  
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code from 466  
accepting the payment of actual travel expenses, including any 467  
expenses incurred in connection with the travel for lodging, and 468  
meals, food, and beverages provided to the member or employee at a 469  
meeting at which the member or employee participates in a panel, 470  
seminar, or speaking engagement or provided to the member or 471



employee at a meeting or convention of a national organization to 472  
which either house of the General Assembly, or any state agency, 473  
including, but not limited to, any legislative agency or state 474  
institution of higher education as defined in section 3345.011 of 475  
the Revised Code, pays membership dues. This division and 476  
divisions (A), (B), and (C) of Section 7 of this Code of Ethics do 477  
not prohibit an employee of the General Assembly or employee of 478  
any legislative agency who is not required to file a financial 479  
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code from 480  
accepting an honorarium or the payment of travel, meal, and 481  
lodging expenses if the honorarium, expenses, or both were paid in 482  
recognition of demonstrable business, professional, or esthetic 483  
interests of the employee that exist apart from the employee's 484  
public employment, including, but not limited to, such a 485  
demonstrable interest in public speaking and were not paid by any 486  
person or other entity, or by any representative or association of 487  
such person or entities, that is regulated by, doing business 488  
with, or seeking to do business with the General Assembly or any 489  
legislative agency. 490

(B) No member of the General Assembly shall conduct a public 491  
or private fund raising event that seeks to provide money for the 492  
member's personal use. 493

(C) As used in this section, "honorarium" means any payment 494  
made in consideration for any speech given, article published, or 495  
attendance at any public or private conference, convention, 496  
meeting, social event, meal, or similar gathering. "Honorarium" 497  
does not include ceremonial gifts or awards that have 498  
insignificant monetary value; unsolicited gifts of nominal value 499  
or trivial items of informational value; or earned income from any 500  
person, other than a legislative agent, for personal services that 501  
are customarily provided in connection with the practice of a bona 502  
fide business, if that business initially began before the member 503

or employee conducting that business was elected or appointed to 504  
the member's or employee's office or position of employment. 505

SECTION 11. IMPROPER INDUCEMENT 506

If any person attempts to induce a member or employee of or 507  
candidate for the General Assembly or employee of any legislative 508  
agency to violate any provision of this Code of Ethics, the 509  
member, employee, or candidate shall report the matter to the 510  
Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. 511

SECTION 12. ADVISORY BODY 512

(A) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend 513  
legislation relating to ethics, conflicts of interest, and 514  
financial disclosure and, upon a vote of a majority of its 515  
members, may render advisory opinions with regard to questions 516  
concerning these matters for members and employees of and 517  
candidates for the General Assembly and for employees of any 518  
legislative agency. 519

(B) When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee renders an 520  
advisory opinion that has been publicly sought and that relates to 521  
a special set of circumstances involving ethics, conflicts of 522  
interest, or financial disclosure under Chapter 102. or section 523  
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the person to whom the 524  
opinion was directed or who was similarly situated may reasonably 525  
rely upon such opinion and shall be immune from criminal 526  
prosecutions, civil suits, or actions for removal from the 527  
person's office or position of employment for a violation of 528  
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code 529  
based on facts and circumstances covered by the opinion, if the 530  
opinion states that there is no violation of Chapter 102. or 531  
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code. The committee 532  
shall include in every advisory opinion it renders a statement as 533  
to whether the set of circumstances described in the advisory 534

opinion constitutes a violation of section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of 535  
the Revised Code. When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee 536  
renders an opinion that has been publicly sought, the advisory 537  
opinion is a public record available under section 149.43 of the 538  
Revised Code. 539

(C) When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee renders a 540  
written opinion that has been privately sought and that relates to 541  
a special set of circumstances involving ethics, conflicts of 542  
interest, or financial disclosure under Chapter 102. or section 543  
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the written opinion does 544  
not have the legal effect of an advisory opinion issued under 545  
division (B) of this section. When the Joint Legislative Ethics 546  
Committee renders a written opinion that has been privately 547  
sought, the written opinion is not a public record available under 548  
section 149.43 of the Revised Code. 549

The person to whom a written opinion is issued under this 550  
division may request the committee to issue the written opinion as 551  
an advisory opinion. The person may make the request at any time 552  
within thirty days after the written opinion is issued and prior 553  
to committing any proposed action discussed in the written 554  
opinion. Upon receiving a timely request and with the approval of 555  
a majority of the members of the committee, the committee may 556  
issue the written opinion as an advisory opinion. If the committee 557  
issues the written opinion as an advisory opinion, the advisory 558  
opinion has the same legal effect as an advisory opinion issued 559  
under division (B) of this section and is a public record 560  
available under section 149.43 of the Revised Code. If the person 561  
commits any proposed action discussed in the written opinion 562  
before the committee issues the written opinion as an advisory 563  
opinion, the advisory opinion grants no immunity to the person 564  
regarding any action that is discussed in the written opinion and 565  
that the person commits before the committee issues the written 566

opinion as an advisory opinion. 567

(D) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall issue an 568  
advisory opinion under division (B) of this section or a written 569  
opinion under division (C) of this section, whether it is publicly 570  
or privately sought, only at a meeting of the committee and only 571  
with the approval of a majority of the members of the committee. 572

(E) All requests for an opinion shall be submitted in writing 573  
by the member or employee of or candidate for the General Assembly 574  
or employee of any legislative agency who desires the opinion and 575  
shall state in the request whether the opinion is being publicly 576  
or privately sought. If the request fails to state whether the 577  
opinion is being publicly or privately sought, the committee shall 578  
consider the opinion to be privately sought. The committee shall 579  
issue in writing all advisory opinions that have been publicly 580  
sought, appropriately number them, and make them available for 581  
public inspection. The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall 582  
conduct all of its proceedings surrounding the rendering of an 583  
opinion so as to protect the confidentiality of those named in the 584  
request for the opinion. 585

SECTION 13. CONSIDERATION AND HEARING OF COMPLAINTS 586

(A)(1) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall receive, 587  
and may initiate, complaints concerning breach of privilege and 588  
complaints against members and employees of and candidates for the 589  
General Assembly and employees of any legislative agency 590  
concerning conduct alleged to be misconduct, a violation of 591  
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, 592  
this Code of Ethics, or the House or Senate rules. All complaints 593  
except those by the committee shall be by affidavit made on 594  
personal knowledge, subject to the penalties of perjury. A 595  
complaint by the committee shall be by affidavit, based upon facts 596  
that constitute reasonable cause to believe that a breach of 597  
privilege, misconduct, or a violation of the House or Senate 598

rules, this Code of Ethics, or Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 599  
2921.43 of the Revised Code, has occurred. The complaint shall not 600  
contain innuendo, speculative assertions, or conclusory 601  
statements. 602

At the first meeting of the committee in each calendar year, 603  
the chairperson of the committee for that year shall appoint an 604  
investigation subcommittee. The subcommittee shall consist of the 605  
chairperson of the committee for that year and a member of the 606  
committee who is a member of the chamber and political party of 607  
which the chairperson is not a member. This subcommittee shall 608  
have the authority to issue subpoenas regarding complaints 609  
referred to it and approve depositions by the Office of the 610  
Legislative Inspector General. 611

(2) A complaint other than a complaint by the committee shall 612  
be filed with the executive director of the Office of the 613  
Legislative Inspector General of the Joint Legislative Ethics 614  
Committee. Upon receiving the complaint, the executive director or 615  
the executive director's designee shall gather, if necessary, 616  
preliminary facts surrounding the complaint for presentation to 617  
the chairperson or committee. Thereafter, the executive director 618  
shall seal the complaint and deliver it to the chairperson of the 619  
Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. A complaint by the committee 620  
shall be drafted by the legal counsel of the Office of the 621  
Legislative Inspector General, and, if at least eight members of 622  
the committee approve the draft complaint, the draft complaint 623  
shall be a complaint by the committee and shall be filed with the 624  
Office of the Legislative Inspector General and delivered to the 625  
chairperson of the committee. 626

Within fourteen days after the filing of a complaint by a 627  
complainant, the chairperson shall notify the complainant that the 628  
complaint has been filed with the committee, that all further 629  
proceedings of the committee are confidential, that the committee 630

is required to dismiss the complaint if it is not disposed of 631  
within six months after the complaint is filed, and that, if a 632  
report dealing with the complaint has not been published in the 633  
House or Senate Journal, as appropriate, within that time, the 634  
complaint has been dismissed because no violation was found to 635  
have been committed by the accused person. Within fourteen days 636  
after the filing of any complaint, the chairperson shall deliver a 637  
copy of the complaint to the accused person and shall notify the 638  
accused person that the accused person may file, within twenty 639  
days after receiving the copy, a written response to the complaint 640  
with the executive director of the Office of the Legislative 641  
Inspector General and, if desired, may file in addition to the 642  
written response a request to appear personally before the 643  
committee to answer to the complaint. The executive director 644  
immediately shall seal the written response to the complaint, the 645  
request, or both and deliver the written response, the request, or 646  
both to the chairperson. 647

Within forty-five days after the filing of any complaint and 648  
at least twenty days after the chairperson has delivered a copy of 649  
the complaint to the accused person, the chairperson shall convene 650  
a meeting of the committee regarding the complaint. If at least 651  
eight members of the committee find that the complaint before the 652  
committee is not frivolous and that the facts alleged constitute 653  
on their face a breach of privilege, misconduct, a violation of 654  
this Code of Ethics or the House or Senate Rules, or a violation 655  
of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, 656  
the committee shall refer the complaint to the Office of the 657  
Legislative Inspector General for further investigation and may 658  
delegate to the investigation subcommittee appointed pursuant to 659  
division (A)(1) of this section the authority to issue subpoenas 660  
regarding a given complaint or other matter. The chairperson of 661  
the committee shall notify the accused of the referral. Unless 662  
eight members of the committee find that the complaint before the 663

committee alleges facts that, on their face, constitute a breach 664  
of privilege, misconduct, a violation of this Code of Ethics or 665  
the House or Senate Rules, or a violation of Chapter 102. or 666  
sections 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the committee 667  
shall dismiss the complaint. 668

(B) The Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall 669  
investigate each complaint referred to it by the committee and 670  
shall investigate any other matters as directed by the committee. 671  
The Office of the Legislative Inspector General may request 672  
further information from the complainant, any person presenting 673  
charges to the committee, the accused person if the information 674  
sought is directly relevant to a complaint or charges received by 675  
the committee pursuant to this section, and any other person it 676  
believes may have information pertaining to the complaint or other 677  
matter referred for investigation to the Office of the Legislative 678  
Inspector General. It may request the committee to issue a 679  
subpoena to obtain any necessary information. Upon the approval of 680  
the investigation subcommittee appointed pursuant to division 681  
(A)(1) of this section, the Office of the Legislative Inspector 682  
General may depose any person. Any person interviewed or deposed 683  
by the Office of the Legislative Inspector General may be 684  
represented by an attorney. The substance of any request for 685  
further information and the information provided pursuant to any 686  
request are confidential. Except as otherwise provided in this 687  
section, the person from whom information is requested shall not 688  
divulge the substance of the committee's request to any person 689  
other than the person's attorney and shall not divulge the 690  
information provided in response to the request to any person 691  
other than the person's attorney and any person necessary to 692  
prepare the information for delivery to the committee. Except as 693  
otherwise provided in this section, no attorney or person who 694  
prepares information for delivery to the committee shall divulge 695  
the substance of the committee's request or the information 696

provided in response to the request. 697

Upon the completion of an investigation based on a complaint 698  
referred to the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, the 699  
executive director, or the executive director's designee, shall 700  
present to the committee the executive director's or designee's 701  
preliminary findings with respect to the facts and evidence 702  
gathered regarding the complaint. Upon receiving the preliminary 703  
findings, the committee, upon a vote of at least eight members of 704  
the committee, may refer the complaint back to the Office of the 705  
Legislative Inspector General for further investigation, hold a 706  
hearing pursuant to divisions (D) and (G) of this section, order 707  
remedial action pursuant to division (D) of this section, or 708  
dismiss the complaint. 709

Upon the completion of an investigation of any other matter 710  
referred to the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, the 711  
executive director or the executive director's designee shall 712  
present to the committee the executive director's or designee's 713  
preliminary findings with respect to the facts and evidence 714  
gathered regarding the matter referred. Upon receiving the 715  
preliminary findings, the committee, upon a vote of at least eight 716  
members of the committee, may refer the matter back to the Office 717  
of the Legislative Inspector General for further investigation, 718  
request that a complaint be drafted by the legal counsel of the 719  
Office of the Legislative Inspector General, terminate the 720  
investigation, or hold a hearing pursuant to division (E) of this 721  
section. 722

Before the fifth day of each month, the executive director of 723  
the Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall make a 724  
report, in writing, to the committee regarding the status of any 725  
ongoing investigation that the committee referred to the Office of 726  
the Legislative Inspector General. 727

(C) Before the committee takes any formal action against a 728



person who is the subject of an investigation based upon a 729  
complaint filed with the committee, the committee shall consider 730  
the complaint. 731

(D) The committee may defer action on a complaint against 732  
members and employees of and candidates for the General Assembly 733  
and employees of any legislative agency when the complaint alleges 734  
conduct that at least eight members of the committee find reason 735  
to believe is being reviewed by appropriate law enforcement or 736  
regulatory authorities, or when at least eight members of the 737  
committee determine that it is appropriate for the conduct alleged 738  
in the complaint to be reviewed initially by law enforcement or 739  
regulatory authorities. 740

(E)(1) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with the 741  
committee, at least eight members of the committee find that the 742  
complaint is not frivolous and there is reasonable cause to 743  
believe that the facts alleged in the complaint constitute a 744  
breach of privilege, misconduct, or a violation of Chapter 102. or 745  
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, this Code of 746  
Ethics, or the House or Senate Rules, the committee shall hold a 747  
hearing. At the hearing, the legal counsel of the Office of the 748  
Legislative Inspector General shall present to the committee the 749  
case against the accused person, introduce evidence, call 750  
witnesses, and cross-examine witnesses. The chairperson of the 751  
committee shall make all rulings regarding procedure and the 752  
admissibility of evidence. The hearing and all related proceedings 753  
of the committee are absolutely confidential as provided under 754  
this Code of Ethics and section 102.06 of the Revised Code. No 755  
member or employee of the committee, person who staffs or 756  
otherwise serves the committee, witness, or other person shall 757  
divulge any information about the hearing or related proceedings, 758  
except that a witness and the complainant may consult with an 759  
attorney before and after the hearing and any related proceeding, 760

any witness may be represented by an attorney while the witness is 761  
being examined or cross-examined, the accused person may be 762  
represented by an attorney at all stages of the proceedings, and 763  
the attorney of the accused person may attend all hearings and 764  
related proceedings of the committee. 765

(2) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with the 766  
committee, at least eight members of the committee find that the 767  
complaint is frivolous or that there is no reasonable cause to 768  
believe that the charge or complaint constitutes a breach of 769  
privilege, misconduct, or a violation of Chapter 102. or section 770  
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, this Code of Ethics, or 771  
the House or Senate Rules, the committee shall dismiss the 772  
complaint and notify the accused person in writing of the 773  
dismissal of the complaint. If the committee so dismisses the 774  
complaint, the committee shall not issue a report of its findings 775  
unless the accused person requests a report. If the accused person 776  
requests a report, the committee shall issue a report in 777  
accordance with division (F)(2) of this section. 778

(3) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with the 779  
committee, the committee finds by unanimous concurrence of its 780  
membership that there is reasonable cause to believe that the 781  
charges presented constitute a breach of privilege, misconduct, or 782  
a violation of this Code of Ethics or the House or Senate Rules 783  
but do not constitute a violation of Chapter 102. or section 784  
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code and also finds by unanimous 785  
concurrence of its membership that the breach of privilege, 786  
misconduct, or violation was in good faith and without wrongful 787  
intent and the person has taken or will take suitable remedial 788  
action, it may order the person to take any further remedial 789  
action it considers necessary and, upon satisfaction that any 790  
order it makes is complied with, terminate the investigation, with 791  
the concurrence of the accused person. If an investigation is so 792

terminated, the committee shall not issue a report of its findings 793  
unless the accused person requests a report. If the accused person 794  
requests a report, the committee shall issue a report in 795  
accordance with division (F)(2) of this section. If the accused 796  
person fails to comply with an order of the committee, the 797  
committee, upon concurrence of at least eight of its members, 798  
shall proceed with the original complaint filed against the 799  
person. 800

(F)(1) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight 801  
members of the committee find, based upon a preponderance of the 802  
evidence, that the facts alleged in the complaint are true and 803  
constitute a violation of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 804  
2921.43 of the Revised Code, the committee, upon concurrence of at 805  
least eight of its members, shall order the Office of the 806  
Legislative Inspector General to prepare a report of the 807  
committee's findings to the appropriate prosecuting authority or 808  
other appropriate body for proceedings in prosecution of the 809  
violations and, in accordance with division (F)(1) of this 810  
section, issue a report to the General Assembly recommending 811  
reprimand, censure, expulsion, or other sanction the committee 812  
considers appropriate. Upon acceptance by at least eight members 813  
of the committee of the report to the appropriate prosecuting 814  
authority or other appropriate body, the committee shall report 815  
its findings to the appropriate prosecuting authority, the 816  
Elections Commission, or other appropriate body. This report is 817  
the investigative report described in division (E) of section 818  
101.34 of the Revised Code and shall contain any findings of fact 819  
and conclusions of law made by the committee. This report shall 820  
not contain any papers, records, affidavits, or documents upon any 821  
complaint, inquiry, or investigation relating to the proceedings 822  
of the committee. If at least eight members of the committee find, 823  
based upon a preponderance of the evidence, that the facts alleged 824  
in the complaint are true and constitute a violation of division 825

(B) of section 102.031 of the Revised Code, the committee may 826  
impose a fine of not more than one thousand dollars upon the 827  
member. 828

(2) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight members 829  
of the committee find, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, 830  
that a breach of privilege has been committed or that a member or 831  
employee of or candidate for the General Assembly or employee of 832  
any legislative agency has violated a provision of this Code of 833  
Ethics or the House or Senate Rules that is not a violation of 834  
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, or 835  
has committed misconduct, the committee, upon concurrence of at 836  
least eight of its members and in accordance with division (F)(1) 837  
of this section, may issue a report recommending reprimand, 838  
censure, expulsion, or other sanction the committee considers 839  
appropriate or, upon a finding by unanimous concurrence of its 840  
membership that the breach of privilege, misconduct, or violation 841  
was in good faith and without wrongful intent and the person has 842  
taken or will take suitable remedial action, may order the person 843  
to take any further remedial action it considers necessary and, 844  
upon satisfaction that any order it makes is complied with, 845  
dismiss the complaint without issuing a report of its findings, 846  
unless the accused person requests a report. If the accused person 847  
requests a report, the committee shall issue a report in 848  
accordance with division (F)(2) of this section. If the person 849  
fails to comply with an order of the committee, the committee, 850  
upon concurrence of eight of its members, shall recommend some 851  
sanction. 852

(3) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight members 853  
of the committee do not find, based upon a preponderance of the 854  
evidence, that the facts alleged in a complaint constitute a 855  
breach of privilege, misconduct, or a violation of Chapter 102. or 856  
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, this Code of 857

Ethics, or the House or Senate Rules, the committee shall dismiss 858  
the complaint. The complaint shall also be dismissed if the 859  
committee has not conducted a hearing within ninety days after the 860  
complaint is filed with the committee, or if the committee has not 861  
finally disposed of the complaint within six months after the 862  
complaint is filed with the committee. The committee shall notify 863  
the accused person in writing of the dismissal of the complaint. 864  
The committee shall not issue a report of its findings unless the 865  
accused person requests a report. If the accused person requests a 866  
report, the committee shall issue a report in accordance with 867  
division (F)(2) of this section. If the committee issues the 868  
report, all evidence and the record of the hearing shall remain 869  
confidential unless the accused person also requests that the 870  
evidence and record be made public. Upon request by the accused 871  
person, the committee shall make the evidence and the record 872  
available for public inspection. 873

(G)(1) Any report of the committee that is issued pursuant to 874  
division (E)(1) of this section and contains a finding that the 875  
facts in the complaint are true and constitute a violation of 876  
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, or 877  
that is issued pursuant to division (E)(2) of this section and 878  
contains a finding that a breach of privilege, misconduct, or 879  
violation of this Code of Ethics or the House or Senate Rules has 880  
occurred and recommends reprimand, censure, expulsion, or another 881  
appropriate sanction, shall be entered in the House Journal and 882  
the Senate Journal. The House of Representatives and the Senate 883  
shall vote on approval of any report entered in the House or 884  
Senate Journal in accordance with this division. Concurrence of 885  
two-thirds of the members of both the House and the Senate shall 886  
be necessary for approval of the report, and, upon approval, any 887  
recommended sanction shall be imposed immediately. 888

(2) If the investigation of the committee results in a 889

finding that a complaint that is filed is frivolous or that no 890  
misconduct, breach of privilege, or violation of Chapter 102. or 891  
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, this Code of 892  
Ethics, or the House or Senate Rules has been committed or if the 893  
committee terminates an investigation or dismisses a complaint 894  
pursuant to division (E)(2) or (3) of this section, the committee 895  
shall not issue a report of its findings unless the accused person 896  
requests a report. If the accused person requests a report, the 897  
committee shall issue a report and publish it in the House 898  
Journal, if the accused person is a member or employee of, or 899  
candidate for, the House of Representatives, or the Senate 900  
Journal, if the accused person is a member or employee of, or 901  
candidate for, the Senate or an employee of any legislative 902  
agency. A report published in the House or Senate Journal under 903  
division (F)(2) of this section does not require a vote by the 904  
House or Senate. 905

(H) A person against whom a complaint is filed shall be given 906  
by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by personal 907  
service reasonable notice of the date, time, and place of the 908  
hearing and a statement of the charges and the law or provision 909  
directly involved, and shall be granted the following rights: to 910  
be represented by counsel, to have counsel appointed for the 911  
person if the person is unable to afford counsel without undue 912  
hardship, to examine the evidence against the person, to have 913  
access to all information relative to the complaint that is in the 914  
possession or knowledge of the committee or the Office of the 915  
Legislative Inspector General, to produce evidence and to call and 916  
subpoena witnesses in the person's defense, to confront the 917  
person's accusers, to cross-examine witnesses, to have a 918  
stenographic record made of the hearing, to have the hearing 919  
follow the rules of evidence applicable to the courts of this 920  
state, and to have the hearing closed to the public. A person, 921  
with the approval of the committee, may waive any or all of such 922

rights by executing a written waiver and filing it with the 923  
committee. 924

(I) The chairperson of the committee and the executive 925  
director and chief legal counsel of the Office of the Legislative 926  
Inspector General may administer oaths, and the committee or the 927  
investigation subcommittee appointed pursuant to division (A)(1) 928  
of this section may issue subpoenas to any person in the state 929  
compelling the attendance of witnesses and the production of 930  
relevant papers, books, accounts, and records. The committee or 931  
the investigation subcommittee shall issue subpoenas to compel the 932  
attendance of witnesses and the production of documents upon the 933  
request of an accused person. Section 101.42 of the Revised Code 934  
shall govern the issuance of such subpoenas insofar as applicable. 935  
Upon the refusal of any person to obey a subpoena, be sworn, or 936  
answer as a witness, the committee or the investigation 937  
subcommittee may apply to the Court of Common Pleas of Franklin 938  
County under section 2705.03 of the Revised Code. The court shall 939  
hold proceedings in accordance with Chapter 2705. of the Revised 940  
Code. The committee, the Office of the Legislative Inspector 941  
General, or the accused person may take the depositions of 942  
witnesses residing within or without the state in the same manner 943  
as prescribed by law for the taking of depositions in civil 944  
actions in the court of common pleas. 945

(J)(1) All complaints, papers, records, affidavits, and 946  
documents upon any complaint, inquiry, or investigation relating 947  
to the proceedings of the committee shall be sealed and are 948  
private and confidential, except as otherwise provided in this 949  
section. The substance of any charges received by the committee 950  
and of any request made by the committee for further information, 951  
any information received by the committee, all testimony and other 952  
evidence presented during a hearing, and all committee discussions 953  
are private and confidential, except as otherwise provided in this 954

section. No person serving on or employed in the service of the 955  
committee, or employee of the Office of the Legislative Inspector 956  
General who staffs or otherwise assists the committee or the 957  
Office of the Legislative Inspector General employee who staffs 958  
the committee shall divulge any of the following: 959

(a) Any matter concerning a complaint after it is filed with 960  
the executive director of the Office of the Legislative Inspector 961  
General; 962

(b) In the case of complaints initiated by the committee, any 963  
matter concerning a complaint after the matter is under 964  
investigation by the committee, whether before or after a 965  
complaint is filed; 966

(c) Any other information that is made private and 967  
confidential by this section. 968

(2) The requirement of confidentiality set forth in division 969  
(I)(1) of this section includes without limitation divulging any 970  
matter to members or employees of the House or Senate or employees 971  
of any legislative agency who are not members of or assigned to 972  
the committee or to any employees of the Office of the Legislative 973  
Inspector General who are not assigned to staff the committee or 974  
do not assist any Office of the Legislative Inspector General 975  
employee assigned to staff the committee, but does not prevent any 976  
of the following: 977

(a) The issuance of a final report by the committee or any 978  
commentary upon the contents of the final report; 979

(b) Discussion of any complaint, request for an advisory 980  
opinion, charges presented to the committee, information related 981  
to a complaint, to an advisory opinion request, or to charges 982  
presented to the committee, proceedings of the committee, or other 983  
papers, records, affidavits, documents, or proceedings that are 984  
made private and confidential by this section between the members 985



of the committee and any of the following:	986
(i) Any employees or staff of the committee;	987
(ii) Any employees of the General Assembly assigned to serve the committee, and any employee who serves as legal counsel for a caucus of the General Assembly;	988 989 990
(iii) Any employees of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General assigned to staff the committee;	991 992
(iv) Any other persons employed by or assigned to serve the committee.	993 994
(c) The preparation of any documents necessary for the operation of the committee by employees of the General Assembly assigned to the committee chairperson, employees of the General Assembly assigned to staff the committee, or employees of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General who assist the Office of the Legislative Inspector General employee assigned to staff the committee, except that any confidentiality requirements of this section applicable to the members of the committee shall apply to the employees of the General Assembly, committee, or Office of the Legislative Inspector General who prepare those documents.	995 996 997 998 999 1000 1001 1002 1003 1004 1005
(K) If a complaint filed with the committee alleges a violation by a member of the committee, the member against whom the allegation is made shall not vote on the matter. The committee shall conduct no business concerning complaints unless a majority of its members are present.	1006 1007 1008 1009 1010
(L) The committee shall deliver all notices and other documents by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by personal service.	1011 1012 1013
(M) Within fourteen days after the final disposition of a complaint, either by dismissal or by referral to the appropriate	1014 1015

prosecuting authority, the committee shall notify the complainant 1016  
of the dismissal or referral by certified mail, return receipt 1017  
requested, or by personal service. 1018

SECTION 14. AMENDMENTS TO THE ETHICS CODE 1019

The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend 1020  
amendments to this Code of Ethics at any time by proposing to the 1021  
General Assembly a concurrent resolution containing the desired 1022  
amendments. 1023

SECTION 15. DISTRIBUTION OF ETHICS CODE 1024

Each member and employee of the General Assembly and each 1025  
employee of any legislative agency shall be given a copy of this 1026  
Code of Ethics within ten days after its adoption. 1027

SECTION 16. APPLICATION TO ~~129th~~ 130th GENERAL ASSEMBLY 1028

The Code of Ethics for the ~~128th~~ 129th General Assembly shall 1029  
be effective until the ~~129th~~ 130th General Assembly adopts the 1030  
Code of Ethics for the ~~129th~~ 130th General Assembly. 1031