

# ISACo POLICY BRIEF

## Ethics Reform Law and Local Officials

October 8, 2021

### OVERVIEW

The Illinois General Assembly accepted Governor JB Pritzker's Amendatory Veto of SB 539 and the changes were certified by the Governor on October 8, 2021. The new law is P.A. 102-0664 and becomes effective on January 1, 2022.

The new law intends to bolster reporting requirements and transparency provisions with respect to investments, assets and business relationships involving elected officials. Provisions within the new law also affect local officials.

### PROVISIONS AFFECTING LOCAL OFFICIALS

#### LOBBYING RESTRICTION

County officials are not permitted to engage in compensated lobbying on behalf of any lobbyist or lobbying entity registered to lobby their county.

#### STATEMENTS OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS

- The new law alters the information that must be disclosed on the Statement of Economic Interests. These disclosure changes include the following:
- Assets valued in excess of \$10,000, held individually, jointly with a spouse or jointly with a minor child or children.
- Assets in a trust based on the total value of the assets, either subject to the beneficial interest or from which income is to be derived for the benefit of the beneficial interest, regardless of whether distributions have been made.
- Sources of income in excess of \$7,500 annually for the filer and spouse.
- Sale or transfer of assets resulting in capital gains in excess of \$7,500 annually along with the transaction date.
- Creditors of a debt in excess of \$10,000 owed by the filer, jointly with a spouse or jointly with a minor child or children.
- Name of the unit of government for which the filer or spouse was an employee, contractor or office holder (not including the position necessitating the Statement).



- Names of lobbyists who have an economic relationship with, or are a family member (defined in Act) of, the filer.
- The source and type of gifts, individually or in the aggregate, in excess of \$500 in the preceding year.

### LOBBYIST REGISTRATION ACT

- County board members and countywide elected officials are defined as “officials” under the Act.
- The definition of “lobby” includes any communication, including the soliciting of others to communicate, with an official, as defined, for the ultimate purpose of influencing any executive, legislative, or administrative action at the county level.
- Lobbying counties is subject to the state’s Lobbyist Registration Act, providing transparency for residents on efforts to influence county government.
- County officials lobbying for the interests of their own county via their office is permitted.
- Elected or appointed officials or employees of a unit of local government are exempted from registering as a lobbyist if, in the scope of their public office or employment, they seek to influence executive, legislative or administrative action exclusively on behalf of that unit of government.



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