

(9) “Private enterprise” means any activity conducted by any person, whether conducted for profit or not for profit and includes the ownership of real or personal property. Private enterprise does not include any activity of the State or of any political subdivision or of any agency, authority or instrumentality thereof.

(10) “State” means the State of Delaware and includes any state agency.

(11) “State agency” means any office, department, board, commission, committee, court, school district, board of education and all public bodies existing by virtue of an act of the General Assembly or of the Constitution of the State, excepting only political subdivisions of the State, their agencies and other public agencies not specifically included in this definition which exist by virtue of state law, and whose jurisdiction:

- a. Is limited to a political subdivision of the State or to a portion thereof; or
- b. Extends beyond the boundaries of the State.

(12) a. “State employee” means any person:

1. Who receives compensation as an employee of a state agency;
2. Who serves as an appointed member, trustee, director or the like of any state agency and who receives or reasonably expects to receive more than \$5,000 in compensation for such service in a calendar year (not including any reimbursement for expenses); or
3. Who is an elected or appointed school board member.

b. “State employee” does not include:

1. Members of the General Assembly;
2. The Chief Justice and Justices of the Supreme Court;
3. The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellors of the Court of Chancery;
4. The President Judge and Judges of Superior Court;
5. The Chief Judge and Judges of Family Court;
6. The Chief Judge and Resident Judges of the Court of Common Pleas;
7. The Chief Magistrate and Justices of the Peace;
8. State officers; or
9. Honorary state officials.

(13) “State officer” means any person who is required by subchapter II of this chapter to file a financial disclosure statement but does not include:

- a. Members of the General Assembly;
- b. The Chief Justice and Justices of the Supreme Court;
- c. The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellors of the Court of Chancery;
- d. The President Judge and Judges of Superior Court;
- e. The Chief Judge and Judges of Family Court;
- f. The Chief Judge and Judges of the Court of Common Pleas; or
- g. The Chief Magistrate and Justices of the Peace.

(59 Del. Laws, c. 575, § 1; 61 Del. Laws, c. 132, § 23; 62 Del. Laws, c. 48, § 1; 67 Del. Laws, c. 417, § 1; 69 Del. Laws, c. 467, §§ 2, 3; 70 Del. Laws, c. 186, § 1; 71 Del. Laws, c. 176, §§ 33, 34; 73 Del. Laws, c. 19, § 1; 76 Del. Laws, c. 213, §§ 44-51.)

### § 5805. Prohibitions relating to conflicts of interest.

(a) *Restrictions on exercise of official authority.* — (1) No state employee, state officer or honorary state official may participate on behalf of the State in the review or disposition of any matter pending before the State in which the state employee, state officer or honorary state official has a personal or private interest, provided, that upon request from any person with official responsibility with respect to the matter, any such person who has such a personal or private interest may nevertheless respond to questions concerning any such matter. A personal or private interest in a matter is an interest which tends to impair a person’s independence of judgment in the performance of the person’s duties with respect to that matter.

(2) A person has an interest which tends to impair the person’s independence of judgment in the performance of the person’s duties with respect to any matter when:

- a. Any action or inaction with respect to the matter would result in a financial benefit or detriment to accrue to the person or a close relative to a greater extent than such benefit or detriment would accrue to others who are members of the same class or group of persons; or
- b. The person or a close relative has a financial interest in a private enterprise which enterprise or interest would be affected by any action or inaction on a matter to a lesser or greater extent than like enterprises or other interests in the same enterprise.

(3) In any case where a person has a statutory responsibility with respect to action or nonaction on any matter where the person has a personal or private interest and there is no provision for the delegation of such responsibility to another person, the person may exercise responsibility with respect to such matter, provided, that promptly after becoming aware of such conflict of interest, the person

files a written statement with the Commission fully disclosing the personal or private interest and explaining why it is not possible to delegate responsibility for the matter to another person.

(b) *Restrictions on representing another's interest before the State.* — (1) No state employee, state officer or honorary state official may represent or otherwise assist any private enterprise with respect to any matter before the state agency with which the employee, officer or official is associated by employment or appointment.

(2) No state officer may represent or otherwise assist any private enterprise with respect to any matter before the State.

(3) This subsection shall not preclude any state employee, state officer or honorary state official from appearing before the State or otherwise assisting any private enterprise with respect to any matter in the exercise of such person's official duties.

(c) *Restrictions on contracting with the State.* —

No state employee, no state officer and no private enterprise in which a state employee or state officer has a legal or equitable ownership of more than 10% (more than 1% in the case of a corporation whose stock is regularly traded on an established securities market) shall enter into any contract with the State (other than an employment contract) unless such contract was made or let after public notice and competitive bidding. Such notice and bidding requirements shall not apply to contracts involving \$5,000 per year or less if the terms of such contract reflect arms' length negotiations.

(d) *Post-employment restrictions.* — No person who has served as a state employee, state officer or honorary state official shall represent or otherwise assist any private enterprise on any matter involving the State, for a period of 2 years after termination of employment or appointed status with the State, if the person gave an opinion, conducted an investigation or otherwise was directly and materially responsible for such matter in the course of official duties as a state employee, officer or official. Nor shall any former state employee, state officer or honorary state official disclose confidential information gained by reason of public position nor shall the person otherwise use such information for personal gain or benefit.

(e) *Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information.* — No person shall disclose any information required to be maintained confidential by the Commission under § 5806(d), § 5807(b) or (d), or § 5810(h) of this title.

(f) *Criminal sanctions.* — (1) Any person who knowingly or wilfully violates any provision of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable for each such violation by imprisonment of not more than 1 year and by a fine not to exceed \$10,000.

(2) A prosecution for a violation of this section shall be subject to the time limitations of § 205 of Title 11.

(3) The Superior Court shall have exclusive jurisdiction over prosecution for all criminal violations of this section.

(g) *Contracts voidable by court action.* — In addition to any other penalty provided by law, any contract entered into by any state agency in violation of this subchapter shall be voidable by the state agency; provided, that in determining whether any court action should be taken to void such a contract pursuant to this subsection, the state agency shall consider the interests of innocent 3rd parties who may be damaged thereby. Any court action to void any transaction must be initiated within 30 days after the state agency involved has, or should have, knowledge of such violation.

(h) *Exceptions for transportation contracts with school districts.* — Except for transportation supervisors for any school district within this State, nothing in this section shall prohibit an employee or the employee's spouse or children (natural or adopted) from contracting for the transportation of school children. Such transportation contracts may be entered into by an employee or the employee's spouse or children without public notice and competitive bidding as is provided in § 6904(c) of this title.

(i) [Deleted.]

(59 Del. Laws, c. 575, § 1; 63 Del. Laws, c. 1, § 1; 64 Del. Laws, c. 423, § 1; 67 Del. Laws, c. 314, § 1; 67 Del. Laws, c. 417, § 1; 68 Del. Laws, c. 198, § 1; 69 Del. Laws, c. 467, §§ 4, 27; 70 Del. Laws, c. 186, § 1; 71 Del. Laws, c. 150, § 86; 71 Del. Laws, c. 227, § 2; 84 Del. Laws, c. 463, § 1.)

## § 5806. Code of conduct.

(a) Each state employee, state officer and honorary state official shall endeavor to pursue a course of conduct which will not raise suspicion among the public that such state employee, state officer or honorary state official is engaging in acts which are in violation of the public trust and which will not reflect unfavorably upon the State and its government.

(b) No state employee, state officer or honorary state official shall have any interest in any private enterprise nor shall such state employee, state officer or honorary state official incur any obligation of any nature which is in substantial conflict with the proper performance of such duties in the public interest. No state employee, state officer or honorary state official shall accept other employment, any compensation, gift, payment of expenses or any other thing of monetary value under circumstances in which such acceptance may result in any of the following:

(1) Impairment of independence of judgment in the exercise of official duties;

(2) An undertaking to give preferential treatment to any person;

(3) The making of a governmental decision outside official channels; or

(4) Any adverse effect on the confidence of the public in the integrity of the government of the State.

Provided however, that a minimal gratuity provided on occasion to blind or disabled state employees or other blind or disabled persons supervised by the Division of Visually Impaired, shall not be considered to be a violation of this section.

(c) No state employee, state officer, or honorary state official shall acquire a financial interest in any private enterprise which such official has reason to believe may be directly involved in decisions to be made by such official in an official capacity on behalf of the State.

(d) Any state employee or state officer who has a financial interest in any private enterprise which is subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of, or does business with, any state agency (and any honorary state official who has a financial interest in any private enterprise which is subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of, or does business with, the state agency on which the official serves as an appointee) shall file with the Commission a written statement fully disclosing the same. Such disclosure shall be confidential and the Commission shall not release such disclosed information, except as may be necessary for the enforcement of this chapter. The filing of such disclosure statement shall be a condition of commencing and continuing employment or appointed status with the State.

(e) No state employee, state officer or honorary state official shall use such public office to secure unwarranted privileges, private advancement or gain.

(f) No state employee, state officer or honorary state official shall engage in any activity beyond the scope of such public position which might reasonably be expected to require or induce such state employee, state officer or honorary state official to disclose confidential information acquired by such official by reason of such public position.

(g) No state employee, state officer or honorary state official shall, beyond the scope of such public position, disclose confidential information gained by reason of such public position nor shall such official otherwise use such information for personal gain or benefit.

(h) No state employee, state officer or honorary state official, in the course of public responsibilities, shall use the granting of sexual favors as a condition, either explicit or implicit, for an individual's favorable treatment by that person or a state agency.

(i) Notwithstanding the provisions of Chapters 58, 59, and 69 of this title and the State Merit Rules of Personnel Administration, state employees may contract to provide foster care or respite care for individuals with fees paid for by the State provided further that the employee does so at other than assigned work hours. Additionally, these individuals are not permitted to participate in the review or disposition of any matter related to foster and/or respite care in which they have or may have a personal or private interest and may not be monitored or reviewed by other state employees who are more junior or related to them.

(59 Del. Laws, c. 575, § 1; 63 Del. Laws, c. 1, § 2; 65 Del. Laws, c. 349, § 1; 67 Del. Laws, c. 417, § 1; 69 Del. Laws, c. 467, §§ 5, 27; 70 Del. Laws, c. 186, § 1; 70 Del. Laws, c. 567, § 1; 76 Del. Laws, c. 80, § 33.)

### **§ 5806A. Prohibitions on nepotism.**

(a) By December 1, 2024, the Department of Human Resources shall implement a policy for application to all executive branch agencies that contains the following prohibitions:

(1) A state employee, state officer, or honorary state official may not serve as the direct supervisor of a relative.

(2) A state employee, state officer, or honorary state official may not be directly involved in or attempt to influence state agency decision-making with respect to the hiring or promotion of a relative.

(b) By December 31, 2024, the General Assembly, the judicial branch, and elected state officers shall develop a policy prohibiting nepotism in employment in the legislative and judicial branch, as well as any office or agency led by an elected state officer.

(c) Whenever a substantive change is proposed to the Department of Human Resources policy required under subsection (a) of this section, the Department of Human Resources must provide at least 60 days' notice to the General Assembly prior to implementation of the change. Notice shall be made by delivery of the proposed change to the Secretary of the Senate, the Chief Clerk of the House, and the Director of the Division of Legislative Services.

(d) As used in this section, "relative" means any of the following:

(1) A person's spouse or domestic partner.

(2) A person's parent, stepparent, or child.

(3) The parent, stepparent, or child of a person's spouse or domestic partner.

(4) A person's grandparent or grandchild.

(5) A person's sibling.

(6) The spouse of a person's child.

(7) A minor child for whom the person has assumed and carried out parental responsibilities.

(84 Del. Laws, c. 523, § 1; 84 Del. Laws, c. 255, § 36.)

### **§ 5807. Waivers of restrictions and advisory opinions.**

(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of §§ 5805 and 5806 of this title, upon the written request of any state agency or of any individual who is or was a state employee, state officer or honorary state official, the Commission may grant a waiver to the specific prohibitions contained therein if the Commission determines that the literal application of such prohibition in a particular case is not necessary to achieve the public purposes of this chapter or would result in an undue hardship on any employee, officer, official or state agency. Any such waiver may be granted only by written decision of the Commission. Any person who acts in good faith reliance upon any such waiver decision shall not be subject to discipline or other sanction hereunder with respect to the matters covered by the waiver decision provided there was a full disclosure to the Commission of all material facts necessary for the waiver decision.