

OHIO ETHICS COMMISSION
William Green Building
30 West Spring Street, L3
Columbus, Ohio 43215-2256



Telephone: (614) 466-7090

Fax: (614) 466-8368

www.ethics.ohio.gov

Press Release ***May 1, 1995***

For more information, contact:

Ohio Ethics Commission
(614) 466-7090

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ETHICS COMMISSION HOLDS MEETING, ADOPTS CONFLICT OPINION

During its meeting held today, the Ohio Ethics Commission adopted a formal advisory opinion that applies to the business associations of public attorneys, according to David Freel, executive director. The syllabus of Advisory Opinion No. 95-004 states:

Division (A)(4) of Section 2921.42 of the Revised Code prohibits an associate in a law firm from being appointed as an assistant attorney general to serve as counsel to a state university if a partner in the associate's law firm is a member of the university's board of trustees.

The opinion establishes that a state university trustee is prohibited from having an interest in the employment of an assistant attorney general to represent the state university. "A university trustee who is a partner in a law firm has an interest in the contracts of the law firm," stated Freel, "including the appointment of a law firm associate to represent the university. In more general terms, a state board or commission member is prohibited by law from having any interest in the employment contract of an associate attorney who represents the board or commission."

In other matters, the Executive Director gave the Commission an update on the status of H.B. 182, which provides that financial disclosure statements filed by the presidents of state colleges and universities are available for public inspection. In addition, the commission staff reported that, as of April 25, 1995, the Commission had received a total of 8,505 Financial Disclosure Statements for 1994. This represents a substantial increase over the number of financial disclosure statements filed with the Commission at the same time in 1993. Further, the Commission also considered complaints and pending investigations in a session that is statutorily closed to the public.

The Ohio Ethics Commission is an independent agency of state government charged with interpreting and administering the Ohio Ethics Law for many state and local public officials and employees. The Commission has been serving the public, and state and local governments, since its formation in 1973.