

THE VOICE OF ETHICS

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2025 Quarter 4



Galloway Log House
Xenia, Ohio
Built 1799



It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Ethics: Holiday Reminders for Staying Within the Law

There is a LOT happening during this time of year, isn't there? Holiday feasts, parties, shopping, baking, wrapping presents, traveling, church and temple services, caroling, decorating and so much more! Phew!

Just to make sure all holiday activities go according to plan, don't forget to add complying with the Ethics Law to your "to do" list this season. We don't want to find a lump of coal in our stockings this year or find The Grinch on our doorsteps - especially since the answers are right at your fingertip – not just at the holidays, but all year long!

- Wondering what the law says in general about gifts and public service? [You know Dasher and Dancer and Prancer and Ethics!](#)
- Dreaming of a White Christmas AND a ticket you're wondering if you can buy from a vendor? [Ethics - just like the ones I used to know!](#)
- It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year - for Ethics! Wondering what else you need to know? [Holly Jolly Compliance is Here!](#)
- What if a vendor wants to donate a corncob pipe and a button nose to our agency? [Don't you cry, the Ethics Law is here to stay!](#)
- Need more info? [Oh, what fun it is to understand the Ohio Ethics Law!](#)

*Happy Holidays from the
Ohio Ethics Commission!*

Public Officials & Employees Serving on External Boards



Public officials and employees are often active in their communities, including through service on non-profit boards. To help clarify when such service is permitted, the Ethics Commission has created a new resource outlining the restrictions that may apply.

In general, the Ohio Ethics Law does not prohibit a public official or employee from serving on a non-profit board if the organization has no connection to the public agency the individual serves. However, there are important nuances. In some cases, the law may bar a public official from serving on a non-profit board if the organization was created by, receives funding from, or contracts with the official's public entity—unless the individual serves in his or her “official capacity.”

The Commission has explained that a public agency may, in certain circumstances, create or participate in a private non-profit corporation to deliver essential community services it cannot otherwise provide. In these situations, a public official or employee may serve with the non-profit in a role that might ordinarily present a conflict of interest. The individual may fully participate in both positions when serving in an “official capacity” as a representative of the public agency.

The new [fact sheet](#) on public officials serving on external boards explores the official-capacity exception and other common questions, and includes links to relevant advisory opinions.



Did you hear?

Stop me if you've heard this one...

The Ohio Ethics Commission's podcast, **The Voice of Ethics**, keeps delivering the **juiciest** true crime stories from the world of ethics directly to your feed. Did you catch these?



School superintendent submits substitute spawn in **Detention! Public Schools, Public Transgressions**



Spooky scary cemetery shenanigans in **The Skeleton in the Cemetery Board's Closet**



Hamilton tickets lead to corruption taking the stage in **Take a Bow: Broadway and Bad Decisions**



Township trustee axes the Ethics Law and splinters public trust in **Fall Into Woodchipper Crime**

Listen Now!

Visit ethics.ohio.gov/education/podcast, or find The Voice of Ethics on [Spotify](#), [YouTube Music](#), [Amazon Music](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), or wherever you listen.

Take care, be ethical!

Tick tock, tick tock...December 31 is Getting Closer!

If you are wondering where this year went AND how you are going to complete your Ohio Ethics Law training before 2025 is behind us, do not despair – the Ethics Commission has you covered!

1. Our [2025 e-course](#) is on-demand training that provides an overview of the Ethics Law.
2. Our final [live one-hour webinar](#) takes place on December 18 at 10 AM and is awaiting your registration today!

Both options:

- provide proof of completion
- meet the annual training requirement as outlined in the Governor's Ethics Executive Order 2019 – 11D (for both financial disclosure filers and non-filers)
- are approved for one general hour of self-study CLE and
- are approved for 1.0 contact hour of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) for CPAs through the Ohio Accountancy Board.

If procrastination is NOT a problem for you, perhaps you're ready to schedule your 2026 training already! If so, watch for our next newsletter where we will announce upcoming webinars, e-courses, and CLE classes. Happy New Year!



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