



## The Voice of Ethics Podcast Transcript

### Bonus Mini Episode

### To Auld Acquaintances

Nick: Hello ethical people. I'm Nick Rohrbaugh of the Ohio Ethics Commission, coming to you from the final days of 2025, that cozy stretch where we're all reflecting on the year behind us and looking forward to 2026, with that familiar mix of nostalgia, a little twinge of melancholy, and a heaping helping of hope. If you find yourself looking ahead and seeing an exit from public service don't forget your old acquaintance the Ohio Ethics Commission, because the Ohio Ethics Law won't forget you!

I'm talking about the revolving door! Not the one at your gym, but the revolving door laws that help keep government honest. If your New Year brings new opportunities, be sure to keep these resources in mind.

The Revolving Door Law fact sheet gathers up everything you need to confidently traverse the road ahead. Post-employment prohibitions, public contract considerations, confidentiality, even checklists to give you a clear view of where you're headed. After all, the easiest conflict to avoid is the one you saw coming.

Advisory Opinion 2011-03 gives a great overview of the restrictions. Basically, there's a one-year prohibition on representing anyone before any public agency on matters you personally participated in at your public job. Like a good cup of hot chocolate, we've got a little "cooling-off period" to keep from getting burned (or burning the public!)

Even so, the law makes room for situations where staying involved actually serves the public. Advisory Opinion 2012-04 explores an exception. In it a public servant at the Department of Agriculture, whose work was dedicated to farmland preservation, retires and wants to work for a non-profit focused on the same cause. Normally, the one-year ban applies. But here's the twist: if the former agency determines that the individual's continued involvement actually helps the public, like advancing farmland preservation, the agency can make an exception. One year? Maybe waived. That's a great example of the law balancing upholding public trust with practical public benefit.

So as you kick off 2026, remember: the revolving door law protects trust in government, but it's not a one-size-fits-all. Check the fact sheet, consult the advisory opinions, and stay on the ethical path.

That's it for this one last hurrah of 2025 for the Ethics Commission. Cheers to you, start the countdown to 2026, and we'll see you next year! Take care, be ethical. Bye bye.