

Ethics Link NV Newsletter

Nevada Commission on Ethics

February 4, 2025

5 min read

As a public servant, you are legally required to comply with NRS 281A Ethics in Government Law. This newsletter helps connect you to educational resources to maintain your compliance and update you about recently published opinions on Ethics Complaints and Advisory Opinions.

What's included in this issue of NV Ethics Link:

- Your Steps to Compliance
- Annual Report Highlights
- How to Make Agency-Wide Change
- Recent Opinions
- Next Commission Meeting
- Quick Links



Your Steps to Ethics Compliance

Step 1: Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [X \(formerly twitter\)](#), and this newsletter, share one of our recent posts, and invite your team to do the same.

Step 2: Visit our website, www.ethics.nv.gov, to explore [educational resources](#) and [prior opinions](#) relevant to your role in government service.

Step 3: Explore [live](#) or [on-demand](#) training for you and your agency.

Step 4: Watch this [10-minute video](#) to learn how to file an ethics complaint and take a few minutes to [watch a video](#) on what is covered by our law.

Oops... did January 15 sneak by?

If your Ethics Acknowledgment is still on the to-do list, now's the time to check that box: [FILE NOW](#)

ETHICS FORM DUE

Required for appointed public officers

- with positions established by law
- with undefined term

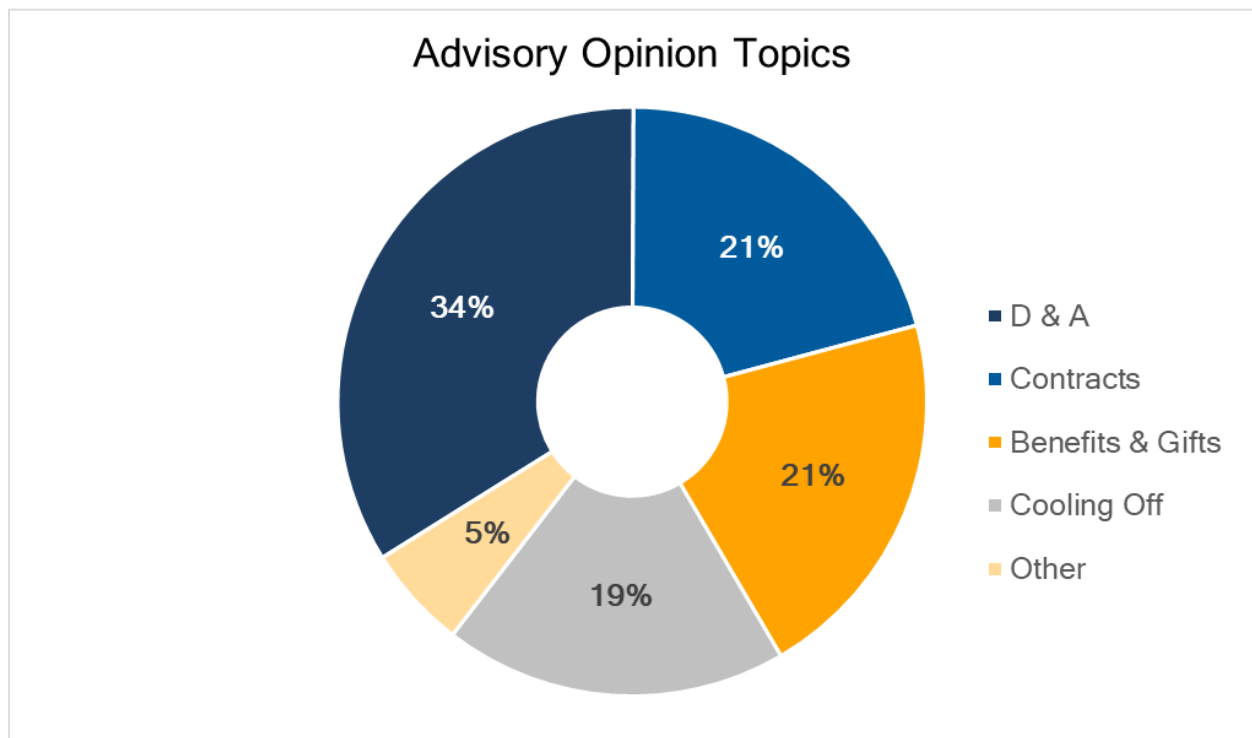
☒ Review the Ethics Manual

☐ File Your Acknowledgment Online

www.ethics.nv.gov

JAN 15

Annual Report Highlights



Since 2021, when the Commission first started tracking this information, Cooling Off and Disclosure & Abstention have been the topics most asked about through the Advisory Opinion process.

How to Make Agency-Wide Change

1. **Designate an Ethics Liaison** - Make it easy to ask the small questions before more concerning ethics issues come up.

Who could this be? Someone who maintains compliance for other trainings, someone in HR, your Agency Attorney, or someone knowledgeable and passionate about transparency and integrity.

What would they do? At the beginning, they could connect with Ethics Commission staff to tour their agency (even virtually) to share more about the type of work you do and who is responsible for what. Ethics Outreach and Education staff can then connect with them intermittently to suggest resources or training specific to the needs of their teams and what issues are common. A closer working relationship will make it easier to ask about the small stuff before it grows!

Ambitious Ethics Liaisons can help get their agency to ethics gold by delegating and tackling these next steps.

2. **Coordinate Live Ethics Training(s) for your Agency**

Virtual, in-person, hybrid, different trainings for different groups, training for everyone, a one off training, or setting up a regular schedule, it can look many different ways based on the needs of your agency!

3. **Encourage On-Demand Ethics Training**

A great way to get your whole agency trained is to coordinate different options including both live and on-demand training to make it easy for the busy staff who don't have coverage or are too busy to join a live training and offer live trainings for those who learn best through asking questions in real time.

4. **Encourage Subscribing to Newsletter and Following on LinkedIn and X**

We know one of the greatest contributors to the instances where public servants stumble into ethics violations is lack of awareness or knowing where to turn to when they are not sure what to do. Getting an email four times a year or seeing ethics updates in their socials feeds is a great way to prevent ethics stumbles! Your team can share the agency email directory or have your staff subscribe individually.

5. **Regular Agency-Wide Training** is a great way to keep your teams up to date on new best practices coming out of Commission decisions, refresh their knowledge, and keep ethics at the front of the mind rather than out of sight out of mind.

6. **Embed Ethics Training into Onboarding and Departures**

Ethics training is not currently required in Nevada like some other states, but a handful of agencies require it, some even regularly, to promote a culture of ethics and integrity in their agency and ensure their team is empowered to know where to turn when ethical dilemmas come up. These are great markers of an agency really taking our declaration of “government for the people not the people in government” to heart!

7. **Develop Agency-Specific Ethics Policies**

Your agency policies were likely written long ago with liability and your agency's priorities in mind, but how much of the ethics law is integrated into the relevant policies in your agency? Policies that speak to these issues, when missing a tie in with the Ethics Law, can be fodder for ethics violations:

- Reasonable use of agency property, equipment, facilities (think your laptop, fleet vehicle, room reservations, etc.)
- Conflicts of interest in hiring, supervising, and purchasing
- Gifts, benefits, and preferential treatment
- Additional work in the private sector while a public servant
- Transitioning to the private sector when leaving your agency
- Boards and Commissions best practices for disclosures in public meetings

Recent Opinions

Leaving Public Service (Cooling off)

In a recent advisory opinion, the Commission denied a public employee's request for an exemption of the cooling off restriction of working for a vendor their agency contracts with. Key facts leading to the rejection included: they failed to request the exemption before accepting the position, they supervised the staff who arranged the contract, and they provided input on the revisions and finalizations when the contract was written. [*In re Public Employee, Advisory Opinion No. 25-177A*](#)

In a prior cooling off case, the Commission determined that the public employee's potential employment with a private business in the industry related to their prior position was not restricted by the cooling off provision as this business was not regulated by their agency. Meaning that while this public employee did work in approvals of permits and inspections, this private business was not regulated or inspected by their public agency. [*In re Public Employee, Advisory Opinion No. 25-075A*](#)

Recent Dismissals Following Completion of Deferral Agreements

Deferral agreements are designed to support public servants and their agencies in preventing future ethics violations following a complaint through a combination of strategies such as education, training, policy changes, and deferral periods where further ethics violations could result in more severe penalties.

Executive Director, Las Vegas-Clark County Library District regarding the acceptance of Superbowl tickets as an improper benefit. [*In re Kelvin Watson, Case No. 24-027C*](#)

The Commission posts recent opinions on its [Opinions Page](#).



Forward this newsletter to your team!



Next Commission Meeting

Wednesday, March 18th

[Meeting Materials](#)

Quick Links

[File a Complaint](#) | [Request an Advisory Opinion](#) | [File an Acknowledgment Form](#)

[Request Live Training](#) | [Register for Online Training](#) | [Ethics Manual](#)

Nevada Commission on Ethics

704 W. Nye Lane, Suite 204 Carson City, NV 89703

(775) 687-5469 | ncoe@ethics.nv.gov | www.ethics.nv.gov



[Subscribe](#) [Unsubscribe](#)