



City of Milwaukee Lobbying Rules and Regulation

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City of Milwaukee Lobbying Rules and Regulations December 2004 marks a first—the city of Milwaukee passed a lobbying law that will take effect July 1, 2005. The measure applies to both paid lobbyists and principals. The following paragraphs summarize the new law.

Your organization must register as a principal if you employ an individual in or outside your organization:

1. for compensation;
2. to communicate with alderpersons (currently only aldermen) or city officials (the mayor, mayor's staff, department personnel, including department heads);
3. to attempt to influence city legislation or administrative rule-making on your organization's behalf; and
4. that individual communicates with city officials or alderpersons for two or more hours on an issue within a six-month period.

In addition, your organization must register as a principal if you are a church group lobbying on a non-religious issue. For instance, a church must register if the issue is related to a zoning change or land purchase for the church building. On the other hand, a church would not have to register if the issue involved having a nativity scene on city property.

Your organization must register as a principal within 15 days of meeting the definition of a lobbyist. Note: Principals who appear before a city board, commission or committee do not have to register. For individuals, you must obtain a lobbying license if:

1. you are acting on behalf of anyone other than yourself;
2. you are representing the views of a business or organization and you are

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not an unpaid volunteer;

3. you are representing the views of a business or organization that pays you and you convey those views to alderpersons not elected from your aldermanic district; and
4. you spend two or more hours meeting with or lobbying alderpersons or city officials on any issue within a six-month period.

You must register within 15 days of meeting the definition of a lobbyist.

Registration forms will be available from the city clerk. Individual lobbyists and principals will pay \$125 annually to register. If several individuals from the same firm are involved with an issue, all would pay the fee. Governmental entities would not have to pay the fee but must register.

Lobbyists who fail to register or violate the reporting requirements may be fined up to \$1,000 and could lose the right to lobby for up to three years. Principals (developers or business owners) who fail to register or violate the reporting requirements may be fined up to \$5,000.

Lobbyists are not allowed to give gifts to elected officials or other city employees. Unlike the state's policy, there is no prohibition against or restrictions (other than statutory election law amounts) on contributions made to campaign funds of elected officials during a period when a measure is before the council or mayor.

All materials filed by principals and lobbyists, including documentation on how much time and money was spent on issues, will be considered a public record. The reporting period is either the six-month period from January 1 to June 30 each year or July 1 to December 31 each year.

The city's lobbying law applies to resolutions and proposed ordinances awaiting council or mayoral approval, matters requiring administrative approval, zoning changes, land purchases and development plans. Therefore, developers and small-or large- business owners are subject to registration.

Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren s.c. is available to determine if you or your organization needs to register, to provide the necessary registration forms and to help with any questions on the law or filing requirements that you may have.



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