

Chapter 149

(Senate Bill 79)

AN ACT concerning

Public Ethics – Lobbyist Registration and Reporting – Mandatory Electronic Filing

FOR the purpose of requiring a regulated lobbyist to file a registration and certain reports electronically with the State Ethics Commission; altering the manner in which a lobbyist is required to file a certain report with the Department of Legislative Services; repealing a requirement that the Department of Legislative Services forward a certain report to the State Ethics Commission; altering a requirement that the State Ethics Commission develop certain procedures regarding electronic filing of certain reports filed by regulated lobbyists; and generally relating to public ethics and regulated lobbyists.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – General Provisions

Section 5–704(a) and (g), 5–705(a)(1), 5–706(f), 5–708(c), 5–709(a) and (c), and 5–710(a)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2014 Volume and 2018 Supplement)

BY adding to

Article – General Provisions

Section 5–707(e) and 5–709(e)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2014 Volume and 2018 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – General Provisions

5–704.

(a) (1) At the times specified in subsection (d) of this section, each regulated lobbyist shall register with the Ethics Commission [on a form provided by the Ethics Commission] **AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (G) OF THIS SECTION.**

(2) A regulated lobbyist shall register separately for each entity that has engaged the regulated lobbyist for lobbying purposes.

(g) (1) An individual [may] **SHALL** file a registration under this section electronically and without additional cost to the individual who files the registration.

(2) A registration filed electronically under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall include the oath and affirmation required under § 5–703 of this subtitle made by an electronic signature that:

(i) is a part of the registration form or attached to and made part of the registration form; and

(ii) is made expressly under the penalties for perjury.

(3) An oath or affirmation signed electronically under paragraph (2) of this subsection subjects the individual making the oath or affirmation to the penalties for perjury to the same extent as an oath or affirmation made by an individual in person before an individual authorized to administer oaths.

5–705.

(a) (1) A regulated lobbyist shall file **ELECTRONICALLY** with the Ethics Commission, under oath and for each registration, a separate report concerning the regulated lobbyist's lobbying activities:

(i) by May 31 of each year, to cover the period from November 1 of the previous year through April 30 of the current year; and

(ii) by November 30 of each year, to cover the period from May 1 through October 31 of that year.

5–706.

(f) The report shall be filed **ELECTRONICALLY** at the time and in the manner required for reports filed under § 5–705 of this subtitle.

5–707.

(E) THE REPORT SHALL BE FILED ELECTRONICALLY AT THE TIME AND IN THE MANNER REQUIRED FOR REPORTS FILED UNDER § 5–705 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

5–708.

(c) The report shall be filed **ELECTRONICALLY** at the time and in the manner required for reports filed under § 5–705 of this subtitle.

5–709.

(a) A regulated lobbyist who invites all members of a legislative unit to a meal or reception shall, at least 5 days before the date of the meal or reception:

- (1) extend a written invitation to all members of the legislative unit; and
- (2) register the meal or reception with the Department of Legislative Services [on a form] **BY FILING A REPORT ELECTRONICALLY AS** required by the Ethics Commission.

(c) (1) Based on information contained in a legislative unit registration report filed under subsection (a) of this section, the Department of Legislative Services shall publish once a week a list containing the date and location of each upcoming meal or reception and the name of the legislative unit invited.

(2) (i) The Department of Legislative Services shall allow public inspection of any legislative unit registration report required under this section during regular business hours.

(ii) [Within 3 business days after receipt of a legislative unit registration report required under this section, the Department of Legislative Services shall forward the original registration report to the Ethics Commission.

(iii) The Department of Legislative Services shall maintain a photocopy or electronic copy of each registration report required under this section.

(E) A REPORT REQUIRED UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE FILED ELECTRONICALLY IN THE MANNER REQUIRED FOR REPORTS FILED UNDER § 5-705 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

5-710.

(a) The Ethics Commission shall develop procedures under which a report required under §§ 5-705 through 5-709 of this subtitle:

(1) [may] **SHALL** be filed electronically without additional cost to the individual who files the report; and

(2) shall be made available for public inspection electronically.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2019.

Approved by the Governor, April 18, 2019.