

## Information Paper: The Meade County Ethics Commission and Financial Disclosure Forms

**Purpose:** To inform Meade County officers, employees, and candidates for office of the requirement to file financial disclosure forms.

### Background:

1. Kentucky law provides that counties shall adopt a code of ethics for county officials and certain county employees. These officials and employees occupy positions of public trust. Kentucky Revised Statutes chapter 65.003(1). The Ethics Code, which establishes standards of conduct, was passed by the Meade County Fiscal Court, which has also amended the Code from time to time. It is found in Ordinances 2005-12, 2008-06, and 2011-06.
2. The Code provides officials and employees with standards by which to regulate their public duties and private financial interests. It prohibits these officials from acting in their official capacities on matters affecting their personal interests, or of those whose interests might be imputed to them. To assist in fulfilling this responsibility, the Code requires officers, employees, and candidates for office to file financial disclosure forms, which lists many of their private interests.
3. These financial disclosure forms are reviewed by the Ethics Commission.

### Facts:

1. The Ethics Code provides that no officer or employee shall
  - a. Have a private interest which conflicts with the duties of his or her official position,
  - b. Act in an official capacity in any matter in which he or a close relative or an affiliated business might be affected,
  - c. Undertake any activity which reasonably prejudices his independent judgment on public matters,
  - d. Solicit or accept any favor or thing of value for influencing him on public matters, or
  - e. Use official but generally unknown information to secure financial gain.
2. To assist in making these determinations, officers, employees with procurement authority in excess of \$10,000, and candidates for local office shall file financial disclosure forms with the Ethics Commission, recording certain

financial and other interests. Failure to file these forms may result in a fine of up to \$500.

3. The forms, which are available elsewhere on this webpage or from the County Clerk, require the reporting of financial interests

a. in a business or non-profit entity in which the filer received compensation in excess of \$25,00 for the preceding year. (This includes any compensation.)

b. in each source of income which exceeded \$25,000 for the preceding year. (This includes any source of income, including unearned or investment income.)

c. for each business organization in which the filer had an interest of \$25,000 or more in the preceding year. (This includes any farm or business interest.)

d. with the location and description of any real property located in the county, other than a primary residence, worth in excess of \$25,000.

4. The form shall be filed by officers and employees with procurement authority by February 1<sup>st</sup>. Candidates for office shall file no later than 21 days after the filing date. The forms shall be filed with or mailed to the Office of the Meade County Clerk, who shall time and date stamp the form. Failure to timely file the form may result in a fine of \$500, and \$100 for each subsequent monthly failure to file.

Approved for Release by the Chairman, Meade County Ethics Commission, May 27, 2014. Ethics Commission, care of the Meade County Clerk, 516 Hillcrest Drive, Brandenburg, KY 40108.