Version 1.0 | 1 December 2026

Guide to the Queensland Registered Lobbyists Code of Conduct and Directives

Table of contents

About this Guide 2
Code of Conduct 2
Application and operation of this Code 2
Definitions 4
Standards of conduct 4
Acting with honesty, integrity and professionalism 4
Demonstrating respect for public institutions 6
Ensuring no improper influence 8
Acting transparently 12
Respecting confidentiality 13
Demonstrating and promoting regulatory compliance 13
Conflicts of interest policy 15
Avoiding conflicts of interest 15
Identifying conflicts of interest 16
Disclosing conflicts of interest 19
Managing conflicts of interest 20
Record keeping 21
Accountability 21
Directives 22
Directive 03/26: Registered lobbyists to only use official business channels when undertaking lobbying activities 22
Directive 04/26: Registered lobbyists to make disclosures in first communication with a representative 23
Directive 06/26: Registered lobbyists to give the Integrity Commissioner specified information about lobbying activities 23
Giving information about certain activities 23
Timeframes for giving information 25
Giving information about commercial-in-confidence activities 26

About this Guide

This Guide has been approved by the Queensland Integrity Commissioner (Integrity Commissioner) and should be read in conjunction with the Queensland Registered Lobbyists Code of Conduct (Code) and Integrity Commissioner Directives (Directives).

The purpose of the Guide is to provide registered lobbyists (lobbyists) with practical advice for applying the Code and Directives. Throughout the Guide, advice is provided in the form of:

- **Guidance:** Information to help clarify or explain lobbyists' obligations, key considerations for lobbyists to be mindful of and/or links to relevant resources or further information.
- **Examples:** Specific examples of conduct by lobbyists that would or would not be consistent with their obligations.
- **Frequently asked questions:** Answers to common questions the Office of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner (OQIC) has received about lobbyists' obligations.

It is important to note that the Guide does not include advice for all parts of the Code and Directives, only those where the OQIC has identified a need to provide further advice to lobbyists (based on stakeholder feedback, enquiries or reports of non-compliance, for example).

The Guide will be added to and updated as required to respond to new and emerging issues in relation to lobbyists' understanding and application of the Code and Directives.

Lobbyists who need clarification about a specific situation or have questions about their obligations under the Code and Directives that are not answered in this Guide should contact the OQIC for assistance (email lobbyist@integrity.qld.gov.au or phone 07 3096 6406).

Code of Conduct

Application and operation of this Code

Paragraph 1: This Code has been approved by the Queensland Integrity Commissioner (Integrity Commissioner), after consultation with the parliamentary committee, under section 55(1) of the Integrity Act.

[No additional guidance at this time]

Paragraph 2: All registered lobbyists (lobbyists) in Queensland must comply with this Code under section 55(6) of the Integrity Act.

[No additional guidance at this time]

Paragraph 3: This Code only applies to lobbyists in relation to their lobbying activities and their communications with representatives in the course of, or in connection to, lobbying activities. The standards of conduct and the conflicts of interest policy set out in this Code are to be interpreted consistently with this paragraph and with the purpose of the Code.

Guidance
This paragraph makes clear that all the standards of conduct in the Code (paragraphs 8 to 28) and the Code's conflicts of interest policy (paragraphs 29 to 36) only apply to lobbyists in relation to their lobbying activities and their related communications with representatives.

Section 42 of the *Integrity Act 2009* (Integrity Act) outlines what is a lobbying activity. Section 43 of the Integrity Act provides a list of activities that are *not* lobbying activities.

Put simply, the Code does not apply to conduct by lobbyists that is unrelated to their lobbying activities. This is consistent with the purpose of the Code as outlined in section 55(3) of the Integrity Act.

> **55 Code of Conduct**
>
> ...
>
> (3) The purpose of the registered lobbyists code of conduct is to provide standards of conduct for registered lobbyists designed to ensure that communication between registered lobbyists and representatives is carried out in accordance with public expectations of transparency and integrity.

Paragraph 4: Non-compliance with this Code may result in the Integrity Commissioner taking action, such as:

a. issuing a notice (a compliance notice) requiring the lobbyist to rectify their non-compliance
b. imposing a condition on the lobbyist's registration
c. suspending the lobbyist's registration for up to 12 months
d. cancelling the lobbyist's registration.

(Refer to Chapter 4, Parts 8 and 9 of the Integrity Act.)

[No additional guidance at this time]

Paragraph 5: This Code applies in conjunction with:

a. Chapter 4 of the Integrity Act; and
b. directives made by the Integrity Commissioner and published on the Integrity Commissioner's website under section 57 of the Integrity Act (Integrity Commissioner directives).

[No additional guidance at this time]

Paragraph 6: This Code is compatible with human rights and must be interpreted consistently with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld).

Guidance
For information about human rights in Queensland, please refer to the Queensland Human Rights Commission website.

Definitions

Paragraph 7: Key terms used in this Code are defined in Appendix 1.

[No additional guidance at this time]

Standards of conduct

Acting with honesty, integrity and professionalism

Paragraph 8: Lobbyists will operate with the highest professional and ethical standards. In particular, lobbyists will uphold both the letter and the spirit of the Integrity Act, this Code, and Integrity Commissioner directives.

[No additional guidance at this time]

Paragraph 9: Lobbyists will act with honesty, integrity and good faith and avoid any behaviour likely to discredit themselves as a lobbyist, the entity that engages them for the lobbying activity, or the representatives they lobby.

Guidance
It is wholly appropriate for a lobbyist to transparently pursue their client's commercial and other legitimate interests.

A lobbyist who engages in conduct that is deceptive, misleading, obstructive or manipulative would not be acting with honesty, integrity and good faith. Lobbyists should also have regard to their obligations under paragraphs 8 and 10.

Discredit means to harm the reputation, credibility or professional standing of. Lobbyists must not behave in a way that is likely to discredit:

- themselves, as a lobbyist
- the lobbying entity (i.e. lobbying business), listed on the Queensland Lobbying Register (noting an individual lobbyist may be registered as a lobbyist for more than one lobbying entity)
- the representatives they lobby.

Examples

- A lobbyist who knowingly makes false, misleading or exaggerated claims about their access to public institutions or political parties or to individuals within them would not

be acting with honesty, integrity and good faith and may be likely to discredit themselves and/or the entity that engages them in certain circumstances.

- Repeated agitation of a matter with a representative after the representative has already declined the lobbyist's request may be considered behaviour that is likely to discredit the lobbyist and/or the entity that engages them.

Paragraph 10: Lobbyists will not engage in corrupt, dishonest or illegal conduct, or intentionally cause or threaten any harm to a person.

Guidance
As noted in Appendix 1 of the Code, ***corrupt conduct*** is defined in section 15 of the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001* (Qld). Corrupt conduct may include a lobbyist misusing public agency information or offering a representative a secret commission for assisting a client. The Crime and Corruption Commission publishes information and resources on its website to assist in identifying corrupt conduct and corruption risks. A short explainer on corrupt conduct is published here.

Dishonest conduct includes any statements by a lobbyist that the lobbyist knows to be untrue, or actions by a lobbyist that are designed to mislead. Examples could include a lobbyist providing false data to support an assertion about a client's proposal or suggesting a client's project has community support where no steps have been taken to discover community views on the subject. The standards in paragraphs 20 to 22 supplement this standard.

Illegal conduct is any conduct that is contrary to law that occurs in the course of or in connection to a lobbying activity. Examples may include bribery, stalking and breaches of statutory provisions protecting confidential information, as well as breaches of the Integrity Act. Lobbyists should take reasonable steps to familiarise themselves with any laws that relate directly to the subjects about which they are engaged to lobby representatives or that apply to any representatives and agencies they communicate with for the purposes of lobbying. Lobbyists should also have regard to paragraph 11.

Harm to a person includes financial harm and physical harm.

Paragraph 11: Lobbyists will maintain a high level of professional knowledge and understanding of all requirements, obligations and standards of conduct applying to them under the Integrity Act, this Code, and Integrity Commissioner directives.

Guidance
Lobbyists are required to complete an approved foundational training course within 2 months of being registered (see Directive 01/25). The training is designed to ensure new lobbyists understand their obligations under the Integrity Act, the Code and the Directives, and are equipped to engage with representatives in a transparent and ethical manner.

In addition to the mandatory foundational training, lobbyists are required to complete annual mandatory training as approved by the Integrity Commissioner. The Integrity Commissioner imposes strict timelines within which this training must be completed. The

training is intended to ensure that lobbyists maintain a high level of knowledge about their obligations under the Integrity Act, the Code and the Directives.

Lobbyists must ensure that they have understood the training they have received and if they have any concerns or queries about their obligations, they should seek further information from the OQIC.

Demonstrating respect for public institutions

Paragraph 12: Lobbyists will operate in a way that shows respect for public institutions, including the duty of government representatives to act in the public interest.

Guidance
Showing respect for public institutions means lobbyists recognising that the role of government representatives is to act in the public interest, and ensuring their actions help to uphold trust in public institutions. It includes:

- following proper processes for applications, tenders and other procurements, appeals or reviews
- treating representatives with respect.

Lobbyists should note that some representatives are required to comply with codes of conduct where the primacy of the public interest is a fundamental principle — for example, Queensland public service employees are required to comply with the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service, and Ministers and Assistant Ministers are required to comply with the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

Example
Where a lobbyist takes a client's proposal to a government representative, and the government representative has an obligation to go to market in relation to the proposal, the lobbyist needs to show respect for that process. Trying to persuade the representative to not go to market would not be demonstrating respect for public institutions.

Paragraph 13: Lobbyists will not ask, either directly or indirectly, for preferential access to, or treatment from, representatives they lobby.

Guidance
Lobbyists must ensure their lobbying activities do not involve any attempt to seek preferential access to or treatment from a representative, including because of a close personal friendship, or as a reward or favour for some other work the lobbyist has done for the representative in the past or an undertaking to do something in the future. When considering their conduct under this standard, lobbyists should also consider whether paragraph 14, paragraph 16 and/or the Code's conflicts of interest policy apply to their circumstances.

Example
An example of indirectly asking for preferential access might be a lobbyist making repeated reference to a personal relationship they have with the responsible portfolio Minister when attempting to secure a meeting with a department's Director-General or

Senior Executive Service member, especially where a meeting has previously been refused for the same matter.

Paragraph 14: Lobbyists will not propose or take any action knowing that it would place a representative in a conflict of interest situation.

Guidance
When communicating with government representatives, lobbyists must:

(a) have regard to relevant policies and procedures applying to government representatives; and

(b) understand government representatives' obligations to disclose and manage personal interests, including personal and close professional relationships with lobbyists.

Relevant policies and procedures applying to government representatives include, but are not limited to:

- For **Ministers and Assistant Ministers:**
  - the Ministerial Code of Conduct (see 'Interests' and 'Conflicts of interest')
  - the Queensland Ministerial Handbook (see 3.4 Declaration of Interests)
  - the Queensland Cabinet Handbook (see 1.3 Management of Conflicts of Interest)
  - the Code of Ethical Standards and the Guide to the Code of Ethical Standards and Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members (see '4. Primacy of the Public Interest' in the Code and '3. Primacy of the Public Interest' in the Guide).
- For **ministerial staff**:
  - the Code of Conduct – Ministerial Staff Members (see Principle 1 — Acting honesty, fairly and in the public interest)
  - the Queensland Ministerial Handbook (see 3.4 Declaration of Interests).
- For **Queensland public sector officers,** the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* contains 4 guiding principles (see Part 2 Ethics principles) and corresponding values (see Part 3 Ethics values) that drive public sector officers' obligations and conduct. These principles are the basis of many of the policies that public sector officers must follow, including:
  - the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service (see 1.2 Manage conflicts of interest)
  - Directive 03/24: Declaration of interests – public sector employees excluding chief executives
  - Directive 05/24: Declaration of interests – Chief Executives of departments
  - other agency-specific conflicts of interest policies and procedures.
- For **local councillors**:
  - the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld) (see Chapter 5B Dealing with personal interests of councillors).

Paragraph 15: Lobbyists will not propose or take any action knowing that it would cause a representative to breach any law, regulation or rule that applies to them.

Guidance
Lobbyists must have particular regard to policies and procedures regulating representatives' contact with lobbyists. These include, but are not limited to:

- For **Ministers, Assistant Ministers and ministerial staff**, the Queensland Ministerial Handbook (see 3.6 Lobbying Contact)
- For **Queensland public sector employees**, agency policies and procedures regarding contact with lobbyists.

When undertaking lobbying activities, lobbyists should only use official business channels (see Directive 03/26). This requirement reflects the fact that government representatives have obligations under the *Public Records Act 2023* (Qld) to ensure that records of their business activities, including communications with lobbyists, are kept. Contacting a government representative outside of an official business channel could cause the representative to unintentionally breach their obligations by not correctly recording the communication.

Ensuring no improper influence

Paragraph 16: Lobbyists will not lobby a representative where the lobbyist knows that the representative has a conflict of interest in relation to the lobbyist and the circumstances of the conflict could reasonably be seen to constitute an improper influence on the representative.[1]

Guidance
Improper influence means anything that could unfairly or inappropriately sway a representative's decision, or could reasonably be perceived as trying to do so.

A close personal relationship or a current business relationship between the lobbyist and the representative are examples of situations that could give rise to a representative having a conflict of interest (a conflict of interest for a representative is defined in Appendix 1 of the Code). A lobbyist lobbying a representative who is conflicted in their dealing with the lobbyist, could reasonably be seen to constitute an improper influence on the representative depending on the circumstances of the relationship. Whether a relationship between a lobbyist and a representative could constitute improper influence can be assessed using the following factors:

- **Substance:** How significant to the representative's functions is the issue about which the lobbyist is communicating with the representative? For example, is it a routine decision, or is it a significant decision that is likely to be controversial?

[1] Note: The Code, and this Guide, only applies to lobbyists' conduct with a member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland in their role as a Minister, Assistant Minister or an Opposition representative (as relevant), and not in their role as a Member of Parliament generally. However, improper influence on a Member of Parliament could constitute a contempt of Parliament (see section 37 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* and Chapter 43 of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly for more information).

- **Proximity:** If the relationship/association is not current, but relates to a lobbyist's previous dealings with the representative, how long ago did the relationship/association cease? For example, was there a business relationship that ended in the last few months, or was there a business relationship over 10 years ago?
- **Nature:** What is the nature of the relationship/association? That is, is it professional or personal, and in either case, in what capacity does the lobbyist know the representative? For example, a professional relationship/association might involve a business partner or a former colleague, while a personal relationship/association might involve a close family member, a close friend or a more casual acquaintance.
- **Duration:** How long have the lobbyist and the representative been associated with each other for?
- **Intensity:** How familiar is the relationship/association? Relevant considerations include the frequency with which the lobbyist and representative communicate with each other — for example, does communication occur regularly and frequently or irregularly and infrequently?

Lobbyists should consider what a reasonable person would think about the relationship they have with the representative — could it give the appearance that the representative might not be impartial in their consideration of the matter they are being lobbied about? The key issue is to ensure that the lobbying activity does not create perceptions of improper influence on the exercise of the powers and functions of the representative.

The Integrity Act imposes some restrictions and obligations on registered lobbyists to deal with improper influence risks. These apply to registered lobbyists who perform or intend to perform a substantial role in the election campaign of a political party. See:

- section 49 (Disqualification of individual engaged in dual hatting)
- section 58 (Registered lobbyist must not perform substantial role in election campaign of political party)
- section 66A (Individual who is registered lobbyist must give notice of intention to perform substantial role in election campaign).

Frequently asked questions

Does this standard mean I can't lobby someone I know or have worked for?
Potentially. It will depend on the circumstances, considering factors like the nature, intensity and duration of the relationship or association. You should keep in mind that representatives have their own obligations to manage conflicts of interest, which may sometimes mean removing themselves from the relevant situation.

Does this standard mean I can't attend campaign events for representatives (e.g. fundraisers)?
This standard does not prevent you from attending fundraisers or other campaign events for representatives. This standard is about ensuring lobbyists don't lobby representatives where the lobbyist knows the representative has a conflict of interest in relation to the lobbyist that could reasonably be seen to constitute an improper influence on the representative.

I have organised fundraising events for election candidates. What does this standard mean for me?
Whether organising fundraising events for a representative when they were an election candidate could give rise to a situation where they have a conflict of interest in relation to you will depend on the circumstances, particularly considering the value and frequency of fundraising activities and the nature of your involvement in them.

For example, if you organise official fundraising events for a representative in a campaign manager role, or if you have organised fundraising events generating tens of thousands of dollars for each of the representative's last 3 election campaigns, this could be seen to create a conflict of interest. This may be seen to make the representative feel indebted to you and be swayed to decide in favour of your client because of that, instead of the merits of any information or arguments you put forward. This is less likely if you have organised a fundraising event as a one-off activity or as part of a local community group, and it does not make up a significant proportion of the funds the candidate has to spend of their election campaign.

Paragraph 17: Lobbyists will not attempt to improperly influence representatives' engagement with other parties who hold different or opposing interests to their clients.

Example
An example of attempting to improperly influence a representative's engagement with another party would be where a lobbyist meets with a representative and at the end of the meeting, cautions the representative against awarding a contract to their client's competitor based on allegations of improper work practices by the competitor where those allegations are unfounded or not objectively supported.

Paragraph 18: Lobbyists will not seek to influence representatives other than by providing evidence, information, arguments and experiences that support their lobbying activities.

Guidance
This standard seeks to highlight what activities and conduct constitute legitimate attempts to influence a representative, in contrast to other standards in the Code that focus on improper influence on representatives (e.g. the standards in paragraphs 16 and 17).

Any legitimate advocacy activities undertaken by lobbyists will be consistent with this standard (or, put another way, lobbyists who are only undertaking legitimate advocacy activities will not be in breach of this standard).

Paragraph 19: Lobbyists will not offer or provide, either directly or indirectly, any gifts or benefits to representatives they lobby or expect to lobby, other than gifts or benefits that are consistent with relevant policies and procedures applying to the representatives.

Guidance
Relevant policies and procedures impose certain obligations on representatives regarding the acceptance and disclosure of gifts and benefits. Key policies and procedures are identified below. Note, however, that **this table is not exhaustive**. If a lobbyist intends to offer or provide a gift or benefit to a representative, the lobbyist should check with the representative about what specific policies and procedures apply to them.

Representative type	Key policies and procedures
Ministers and Assistant Ministers	• Queensland Ministerial Handbook – 3.7 Gifts - received – 4.7 Hospitality and Official Functions • Code of Ethical Standards and the Guide to the Code of Ethical Standards and Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members – 3.1 Registration of interests • *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* – Chapter 4, Part 2A (Registers of interests) • Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly – Schedule 2 (Registers of Interests)
Ministerial staff	• Queensland Ministerial Handbook – 3.7 Gifts - received – 4.7 Hospitality and Official Functions • Code of Conduct – Ministerial Staff Members – Principle 5
Opposition representatives (Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader's staff)	• Queensland Oppositon Handbook – 3.5 Gifts - received – 4.8 Hospitality and Official Functions • Code of Ethical Standards and the Guide to the Code of Ethical Standards and Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members – 3.1 Registration of interests (for Leader and Deputy Leader) • *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* – Chapter 4, Part 2A (Registers of interests) (for Leader and Deputy Leader) • Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly – Schedule 2 (Registers of Interests) (for Leader and Deputy Leader)

Representative type	Key policies and procedures
Queensland public service employees	• Directive 22/09: Gifts and Benefits • Gifts and Benefits Guideline Agencies may also have their own policies and procedures regarding gifts and benefits to consider.
Local government employees	Different councils have different policies and procedures, so lobbyists should check with the relevant council. Examples: • Brisbane City Council: Code of Conduct – 4.1.2.6 Accepting gifts and benefits • Gold Coast City Council: Employee Code of Conduct Policy – Benefits and gifts

Acting transparently

Paragraph 20: Lobbyists will be open and frank about their lobbying activities while respecting confidentiality (see paragraph 24). In particular, when engaging and communicating with representatives, lobbyists will:

a. make sure the representative is clearly and accurately informed about the nature of their engagement with the representative, including whether they are undertaking lobbying activities on behalf of a client or are engaging with the representative in some other capacity; and
b. disclose to the representative if they have any interest in the matter about which they are lobbying beyond the receipt of their professional fees (for example, if the lobbyist owns shares in the client's company).

Guidance
Lobbyists are required to disclose certain information in their first communication with a representative on a particular matter or issue (see Directive 04/26). For example, lobbyists should ensure that they adequately describe the purpose of the meeting so that the representative understands what decisions the lobbyist and their client may ask for.

Lobbyists are also required to provide certain information about their lobbying activities to the Integrity Commissioner (see Directive 06/26).

Paragraph 21: Lobbyists will make all reasonable efforts to satisfy themselves of the truth and accuracy of the statements and information they provide to representatives.

Guidance
Reasonable efforts may include a lobbyist:

- familiarising themselves with the sources of any significant claims that a client makes about a proposed project, such as business cases or modelling for expected revenue or downstream business or employment

- checking that any material references to or quotes from public-facing reports or documents are accurate
- taking notes during meetings and reviewing them to ensure future references the lobbyist makes to what was said there are accurate.

Paragraph 22: Where practicable, lobbyists will provide accurate and updated information to representatives if they become aware that previously supplied information is, or has become, materially inaccurate and they have reason to believe the representative may still be relying on it.

Guidance
Lobbyists' obligations under this standard apply even where providing the accurate and updated information to a representative is unfavourable to their client's interests. Relevantly, lobbyists should note their obligations under paragraph 26 to inform their clients of their obligations, including complying with this Code.

Paragraph 23: Lobbyists will give particular information about their lobbying activities to the Integrity Commissioner as set out in Directive 06/26.

[No additional guidance at this time]

Respecting confidentiality

Paragraph 24: Lobbyists will not disclose confidential information they have received from another party unless they have the other party's consent or are legally required to do so.

Guidance
Before obtaining the other party's consent to disclose confidential information, lobbyists should ensure the other party is properly informed about what information the lobbyist intends to disclose, to whom the information will be disclosed, and the proposed purpose of or reason for the disclosure.

A lobbyist who meets with a representative and receives confidential information from them on the basis that it will not be further disclosed, must keep that information confidential in accordance with any requirements imposed by the representative.

Lobbyists should ensure that confidentiality clauses in contracts with clients do not conflict with their obligations under the Code. As per paragraph 26, lobbyists should inform their clients of their obligations under the Code.

Demonstrating and promoting regulatory compliance

Paragraph 25: Lobbyists will comply with all relevant laws and regulations about lobbying, including the Integrity Act (see summary of obligations and prohibitions in Appendix 2), this Code, and Integrity Commissioner directives.

[No additional guidance at this time]

Paragraph 26: Lobbyists will inform their clients of their obligations under the Integrity Act, this Code, and Integrity Commissioner directives, including that success fees are prohibited in Queensland and that giving a lobbyist or a related person of a lobbyist, money or other reward contingent on the outcome of a lobbying activity, is a criminal offence under the Integrity Act (see section 66P).

[No additional guidance at this time]

Paragraph 27: Lobbyists that have officers or employees will make sure all officers and employees are aware of both the lobbyist's obligations and their own obligations under the Integrity Act, this Code, and Integrity Commissioner directives.

[No additional guidance at this time]

Paragraph 28: Lobbyists that employ or engage former Queensland representatives (former representatives) in any capacity, will take reasonable steps to make sure former representatives are aware of their post-separation obligations and will implement procedures to make sure former representatives do not breach those obligations.

Guidance
Lobbyists that employ or engage former representatives should have particular regard to section 62 of the Integrity Act, which prohibits former Queensland representatives, in their first 2 years after leaving office, from carrying out lobbying activity on any matter they had official dealings with in their last 2 years as a representative.

They should also have regard to the Queensland Government's Post separation employment provisions, which prohibit former Queensland senior government representatives, for up to 2 years after leaving office, from conducting business meetings with departmental staff on any matter they had official dealings with in their last 18 months or 2 years as a representative. There are similar restrictions in the Code of Conduct – Ministerial Staff Members.

The OQIC has published a range of fact sheets about the post-separation obligations of specific groups of representatives, including Ministers, Assistant Ministers, ministerial staff, the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and public service chief executives and senior executive service (SES) officers. Those resources can be found on the OQIC website.

Example
Taking reasonable steps to make sure former representatives are aware of their post-separation obligations could include reminding former representatives of those obligations as part of an induction program.

Implementing procedures to make sure former representatives do not breach their post-separation obligations could include recording details of a former representative's official dealings (without breaching confidentiality) and making sure these are reviewed and considered when the former representative is allocated lobbying matters.

Conflicts of interest policy

Avoiding conflicts of interest

Paragraph 29: Lobbyists will take reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest when undertaking lobbying activities, including by keeping their lobbying activities completely separate from any personal activity or involvement with a political party.

Guidance
This paragraph requires lobbyists to take reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their work, but recognises there will be some conflicts that cannot be reasonably avoided. In these cases, lobbyists need to manage their conflicts of interest in accordance with the other requirements in the Code's conflicts of interest policy. Conflicts of interest that cannot be reasonably avoided and that will instead need to be managed will most often be conflicts arising from a lobbyist's relationships.

With regards to a lobbyist's personal activity or involvement with a political party, lobbyists are reminded that, under the Integrity Act, they:

- must not perform a substantial role in the election campaign of a political party (section 58)
- must inform the Integrity Commissioner if they intend to perform a substantial role in the election campaign of a political party (section 66A).

Also, lobbyists who are former representatives, within 2 years after becoming a former representative, must not carry out lobbying activity for a client if the activity relates to their official dealings from the 2 years immediately before becoming a former representative (section 62).

Lobbyists, like any other member of the community, can be a member of a political party, and participate in party meetings, functions and events. If this results in a close professional or personal relationship with a representative, the lobbyist needs to be mindful of both:

- the representative's obligations in relation to conflicts of interest arising from close relationships (refer also to paragraph 14)
- perceptions of improper influence if the lobbyist seeks to lobby a representative they have a close connection to through their shared interest in the political party (refer also to paragraph 16).

Simply being a member of a political party and participating in its processes and events (e.g. putting forward, discussing or voting on motions at a party conference) is not of itself inconsistent with lobbyists' obligations under this standard.

As explained above, this standard is more concerned with close relationships that may become relevant to lobbying activity a lobbyist intends to conduct. For example, a lobbyist, through their political party activities, a sporting club or other social events in their private capacity, may develop a close friendship with a person who later becomes a local councillor that the lobbyist is engaged to lobby.

Identifying conflicts of interest

Paragraph 30: Lobbyists will actively identify and assess conflicts of interest as soon as they arise.

Guidance
When assessing conflicts of interest in relation to lobbying activities, lobbyists should consider the nature of the conflict (e.g. is it an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest; what is the relevant personal or business interest) and the surrounding circumstances to help determine the most appropriate way of managing the conflict.

- An **actual** conflict is where a lobbyist's personal interest and their obligations as a lobbyist are conflicting right now, that is, in a matter for which the lobbyist is currently engaged to conduct lobbying activities.
- A **potential** conflict is where a lobbyist's personal interest does not conflict with their obligations as a lobbyist in any matters for which they are currently engaged to conduct lobbying activities, but may do so in the future.
- A **perceived** conflict is where a reasonable person, who is aware of all the relevant facts, might form the view that a lobbyist's personal interest might conflict with their obligations as a lobbyist in a particular matter. This is regardless of whether this is in fact true.

Common sources of conflict
Conflicts of interest can arise in a vast array of situations and from a wide range of different interests. However, there are certain types of interests that will often raise a conflict of interest. Some common sources of conflicts where there is an interest with the representative being lobbied because of a common membership or relationship are set out below.

Memberships (political parties)	As noted in relation to paragraph 28, lobbyists may join a political party like any other member of the community, and can participate in party meetings, functions and events. These things alone will not create a conflict of interest for a lobbyist in their work. Conflicts may, however, arise due to relationships formed and interactions had through a lobbyist's party membership. More information is provided below about how different types of relationships are categorised.
Memberships (other)	Memberships of private clubs, associations and other bodies (e.g. local sporting clubs, social clubs, community associations and volunteering groups) is common. Conflicts might arise for a lobbyist from their private memberships where their work relates to the interests of the group or organisation of which they are a member and so is the representative they want to lobby. See also paragraph 16.

Spouses	Generally speaking, a lobbyist will have a pecuniary interest in their spouse's earnings, assets and financial prospects. For the purposes of assessing conflicts of interest, any financial gain or loss that a lobbyist's spouse would stand to receive or incur should, in effect, be treated as if the lobbyist themselves would receive or incur it.
Close family and dependents	Close family members (excluding spouses) and dependents include children, the spouse of a child, parents, grandparents and siblings. It also includes any other family member where there is an enduring close relationship marked by feelings of loyalty and trust, as well as mutual respect and affection (e.g. a cousin). Contact may be frequent but does not need to be — the focus is on the closeness and intensity of the relationship.
Distant relatives	A distant relative is one who is not in a category listed above and with whom a person seldom has contact. An example might be a cousin who lives in another state or overseas where the lobbyist has only had contact with them a handful of times. An actual conflict of interest is less likely to exist with these sorts of relationships, but a perceived conflict will usually still arise.
Close friends	Close friendships are marked by close personal bonds, feelings of loyalty and trust, as well as mutual respect and affection. They will involve personal time spent in each other's company, often one-on-one, and will include the sharing of sensitive personal information from time to time (e.g. discussing personal illnesses or hardships). These are current relationships that tend to be longstanding ones, though they do not necessarily need to involve frequent contact.
Casual friends or acquaintances	These are relationships that are positive and may be longstanding, but do not have the familiarity of close friendships. Casual friendships and acquaintanceships will usually have all or most of the following features: • You socialise irregularly (e.g. you only meet for coffee a few times a year). • Your socialising is casual and may occur mostly in group settings, not one-on-one. • You seldom, if ever, meet in personal settings (e.g. you do not routinely visit each other's residences to socialise). • You have seldom, if ever, interacted with each other's families. • You seldom, if ever, share sensitive personal information with each other. These types of relationships are less likely to give rise to a conflict of interest.

Business partners	This is where a lobbyist has a current business relationship with another person, whether or not they are true 'partners'. Examples will be directors in the same private company, directors of separate companies that jointly own a business, or sole traders collaborating on a joint venture. Business partners might be financially interested in each other's general success, as it could affect the time and resources they are able to commit to any shared business or joint venture.
Other professional relationships	These are relationships with a person with whom the lobbyist works or interacts with in a professional setting, other than a business partner. The closest of these will generally be with people who work in the same business or organisation, but this category also includes people who work in another business and alongside the lobbyist on joint/ collaborative projects, as well as colleagues from the broader industry that a lobbyist has a significant interaction with.
Former relationships	Former relationships, either friendships or with colleagues, are where contact has ceased (other than incidental or chance interactions) and there was no acrimonious breakdown in the relationship. Generally, this will occur when two people naturally drift apart. Typically, there will be lingering positive feelings from former relationships that might still create a perceived conflict. A rule of thumb is that conflicts will cease after two years have passed since the end of the relationship (assuming contact is not renewed), but each case will depend on its own circumstances.

Conflict scenarios for lobbyists

While conflicts of interest may arise in a wide range of scenarios, the following are examples of what are likely to be the most common types of conflicts for lobbyists:

- A lobbyist holds shares in a company, the value of which might be affected by a matter they have been retained to lobby government about. Consistent with paragraph 20b, an interest of this nature should be disclosed to the representative if it is relevant to a decision you are asking them to make that would impact the company.
- A lobbyist is communicating with a Minister about a government decision on behalf of a client, and the lobbyist has a conflict relationship with the Minister's chief of staff as they are close personal friends with the chief of staff.

Disclosing conflicts of interest

Paragraph 31: Where a lobbyist has a conflict of interest in relation to a matter about which they are lobbying, or expect to lobby, a representative, the lobbyist must promptly disclose the conflict of interest to:

a. another person within their entity who is an officer of the entity, where applicable
b. any representative they are lobbying or expect to lobby in relation to the matter.

Guidance

When disclosing a conflict of interest, lobbyists should provide information about each of the following.

1. **The matter to which their conflict relates**
   This may be obvious to a representative being lobbied about the matter. However, it is also necessary to ensure that, where applicable, an officer of a lobbyist's entity is aware of what the affected matter is so that they are able to properly discharge their obligations under the Code.

2. **The nature of their interest in the matter and how it gives rise to a conflict**
   Identifying the nature of a lobbyist's interest will not typically require the lobbyist to exhaustively disclose all details about it. A representative or officer of the lobbyist's entity only needs enough information to allow them to properly understand the kind of interest the lobbyist has and how it gives rise to a conflict.

   Example: A lobbyist has a friend who is a staff member of the representative they want to lobby. This could create a perception that the lobbyist could be given favourable access or preferential treatment due to the friendship.

   Depending on the closeness and intensity of the friendship with the staff member and the staff member's role and responsibilities, it could be sufficient for the lobbyist to just declare the friendship to both their entity and the representative.

Paragraph 32: Disclosures must:

a. be made in writing
b. be made before any lobbying activity or further lobbying activity takes place in relation to the matter
c. include a description of the conflict, its potential impact and how the lobbyist proposes to manage the conflict.

[No additional guidance at this time]

Managing conflicts of interest

Paragraph 33: Where a lobbyist has a conflict of interest in relation to a matter about which they are lobbying, or expect to lobby, a representative, the lobbyist:

a. must develop a plan to manage the conflict of interest in a way that demonstrates integrity, transparency and respect for public institutions
b. must obtain the informed consent of each affected client, in writing, before proceeding or continuing with lobbying activity for the client
c. must remove themselves from the matter if the conflict of interest cannot otherwise be managed appropriately.

Guidance

All conflicts of interest, as required by paragraph 31 of the Code, must be disclosed by a lobbyist promptly upon the lobbyist becoming aware of them. Some conflicts may be minor enough that disclosure (and the consent of the client) is all that is required to manage the conflict.

However, there will be cases where additional strategies may be required to appropriately manage a lobbyist's conflict of interest, including removing the lobbyist from the matter if their conflict cannot be appropriately managed in any other way. Some general strategies beyond simple disclosure that can be implemented, either individually or in combination, to manage a lobbyist's conflict of interest are:

- **Abstention/recusal**: This is where a lobbyist decides to take no further part in a matter and personally refrains from conducting work, engaging in discussions and accessing materials associated with the matter. For single-person entities that do lobbying work, this would effectively require the business to stop work for any affected matter or client, depending on the conflict. In larger businesses, the lobbyist may request another registered lobbyist in their entity be the contact point with the representative.
- **Quarantine**: This is a more stringent strategy than abstention/recusal that can only be implemented by an entity with multiple employees. It involves the lobbyist being removed from the affected matter or matters with the assistance of others within their entity. The lobbyist is excluded from meetings and discussions about the matter, and has their access to documents associated with the matter (both hardcopy and electronic) restricted. This strategy can either be implemented as soon as a lobbyist identifies that a conflict has arisen, or put in place proactively where a lobbyist is aware that a conflict will, or is likely to, arise in the future.

What strategies will be appropriate to implement will depend heavily on the type of conflict and the risks it poses. If in doubt, it is best practice for lobbyists to err on the side of caution and adopt more risk averse strategies.

Record keeping

Paragraph 34: Lobbyists must make accurate records of all actions taken in relation to identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest. These records:

a. must be retained for 5 years from the date they are made
b. must be made available for review by the Integrity Commissioner if required.

Guidance

This paragraph requires lobbyists to record the actions they take in relation to identifying conflicts of interest as required by paragraph 30, disclosing conflicts of interest as required by paragraphs 31 and 32, and managing conflicts of interest as required by paragraph 33. Lobbyists are not required to record any action taken by or information received from a client, except insofar as it is necessary to ensure the lobbyist's description of their own actions is accurate.

The purpose of the record keeping requirement is to enable the Integrity Commissioner to assess lobbyists' compliance with the other requirements of the conflicts of interest policy where any concerns about non-compliance arise. Commercial-in-confidence or confidential information received from a client is not likely to be relevant to a lobbyist's obligations under this paragraph, but even where it is, lobbyists are not expected to include any specific commercial-in-confidence or confidential information in the records they make for the purposes of complying with this paragraph.

Accountability

Paragraph 35: Individual lobbyists are personally responsible for identifying, disclosing, managing and recording conflicts of interest in accordance with this policy.

[No additional guidance at this time]

Paragraph 36: Lobbying entities are expected to establish, where appropriate, internal procedures for identifying, disclosing, managing and recording conflicts of interest. These procedures should support individual lobbyists to comply with the requirements of this policy.

Example

Procedures could address where, when and how conflicts of interest will be recorded and who in the entity may approve a conflict of interest management plan.

Directives

Directive 03/26: Registered lobbyists to only use official business channels when undertaking lobbying activities

Guidance
This directive only applies to lobbying activity as defined and regulated under the Integrity Act.

It does not apply to conduct that is exempted from being a lobbying activity under section 43 of the Integrity Act. That includes "participating in an incidental meeting with a representative beyond the control of the representative", otherwise known as incidental lobbying. An example of this, as provided in section 43 of the Integrity Act, is where a Minister or the Leader of the Opposition is speaking at a conference attended by a lobbyist and that lobbyist has an unscheduled discussion with the lobbyist.

Frequently asked questions

Am I still allowed to meet with representatives in person?
Yes. Directive 03/26 does not prevent you from undertaking lobbying activities with representatives in person.

What if a representative has given me their personal email address and said I can use it to contact them for lobbying? Can I do this or not?
If they have expressly authorised you to contact them at that email address in relation to lobbying, you will not be in breach of the directive. However, it is not good practice. Note also that many representatives have obligations that prohibit them from using non-business channels such as private email accounts. This includes all Queensland Government Ministers and Assistant Ministers.

After a meeting, a representative sends me a text message and asks me to reply to that number with some more information about my client's proposal. I'm not sure if it's the representative's work phone number or not. Can I use it?
Yes. Even if it is not the representative's work phone number, this would be considered an example of another platform that the representative has expressly authorised you to contact them on.

Does this directive mean I can't contact a representative who I'm friends with through private channels?
This directive only applies to lobbyists when undertaking lobbying activities. It does not apply to lobbyists when contacting a representative in a personal capacity.

Directive 04/26: Registered lobbyists to make disclosures in first communication with a representative

Guidance
This directive only applies to lobbying activity as defined and regulated under the Integrity Act.

When making a communication with a representative that is not a lobbying activity or part of a lobbying activity, lobbyists do not need to comply with this directive. For example, if a lobbyist writes to a newly appointed Minister to congratulate them on their new appointment, without referencing a particular client or writing on behalf of a client, this would not be a lobbying activity and the lobbyist would not need to comply with this directive — the lobbyist would not, for instance, have to list all of their clients and the matters upon which they are representing the clients in that communication to the Minister.

Lobbyists should also note that this requirement resets each time the lobbyist communicates with a representative about a new issue. For example, in January a lobbyist may request a meeting with a Minister about a request for a grant. The lobbyist complies with their obligations under this directive at that time. Later in August, the lobbyist contacts the same Minister about the same client, but this time to request an exemption from the application of a particular requirement that is discretionary and that the Minister may waive. When the lobbyist contacts the Minister in August, they must again comply with the requirements in this directive.

Directive 06/26: Registered lobbyists to give the Integrity Commissioner specified information about lobbying activities

Giving information about certain activities

Guidance
Lobbyists will sometimes undertake activities with representatives where it may not be clear if the activity is a "lobbying activity" that the lobbyist needs to give the Integrity Commissioner information about. To help determine whether an activity is a lobbying activity and therefore needs to be notified to the Integrity Commissioner, lobbyists can:

- Consider the information about what is a lobbying activity in section 42 of the Integrity Act — generally, any communication with a government or Opposition representative that seeks to influence government or Opposition decision-making will be a lobbying activity that needs to be notified to the Integrity Commissioner.
- Consider the information about what is *not* a lobbying activity in section 43 of the Integrity Act — an activity that is listed here is not a lobbying activity and does not need to be notified to the Integrity Commissioner.

Some general guidance about whether certain types of activities are lobbying activities for which information needs to be given to the Integrity Commissioner is provided in the table below. Overall, lobbyists should consider why they are communicating with the representative, including the following questions:

- Am I doing this on behalf of a specific client or clients?
- Have I been engaged by those clients to attempt to influence the representative's decision, even if the actual request for the decision will be in a subsequent meeting or communication?
- Is this communication part of a strategy to promote the expertise or experience of my client so that the representative is more likely to make a favourable decision for the client at a later date?

Activity type	Is it a lobbying activity for which information needs to be given to the Integrity Commissioner?
Invitations to site openings e.g. A lobbyist, on behalf of a client, invites a representative to attend a ribbon-cutting event for the opening of a new factory.	It depends on the purpose of the invitation. This could be a lobbying activity if the lobbyist's contract with the client is to continue to attempt to influence the representative at a later time in relation to a particular issue.
Congratulatory letters e.g. A lobbyist, on behalf of a client, sends a letter to a new Minister congratulating them on their appointment.	Generally no, if the letter is merely to congratulate the representative. If the letter includes any information that promotes the client's interests, then this would be considered a lobbying activity and information about the correspondence would need to be given to the Integrity Commissioner.
Industry updates e.g. A lobbyist, on behalf of a client, sends a quarterly update to relevant Ministers with information about the latest developments, market trends and regulatory changes within the client's sector.	Generally no, if the update is provided for the representative's general information only. However, if the update includes information that promotes the client's interests, then this would be considered a lobbying activity and information about the correspondence would need to be given to the Integrity Commissioner.
Regulatory risk reports e.g. A lobbyist, on behalf of a client, writes to a Director-General to outline an emerging regulatory issue affecting the client and highlight relevant risks and implications.	It depends on the purpose of the report. If the report is provided for the representative's general information only, then this would not be considered a lobbying activity. If the report is provided to encourage the representative to

Activity type	Is it a lobbying activity for which information needs to be given to the Integrity Commissioner?
	consider or take some action (e.g. policy or practice changes), then this would be considered a lobbying activity and information about the correspondence would need to be given to the Integrity Commissioner.

If a lobbyist is unsure about whether a certain activity is one they need to give the Integrity Commissioner information about, they should email the OQIC's lobbying team (lobbyist@integrity.qld.gov.au) for specific guidance.

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to give the Integrity Commissioner information about a meeting request when no specific lobbying happens in the request?
Yes. Any request for a meeting with a representative which is intended to lead to a meeting that will involve lobbying forms part of a lobbyist's overall effort to influence decision-making. Providing information about these requests maximises transparency of lobbying activities and means lobbyists' obligations are clear and unambiguous.

I requested a meeting with a particular representative but was directed to contact a different representative in the organisation about meeting. Do I need to give the Integrity Commissioner information about both meeting requests or just the first one?
You need to give the Integrity Commissioner information about both requests.

Do I need to give the Integrity Commissioner information about emails I have sent and received to obtain a representative's contact details?
Communications solely concerned with obtaining contact details or identifying an appropriate contact person in a department, agency or other office (e.g. emails between a lobbyist and a Minister's office limited to obtaining the chief of staff's email address) do not need to be notified to the Integrity Commissioner. This ensures that the Queensland Lobbying Register reflects substantive efforts to lobby representatives rather than repetitive or administrative communications.

Timeframes for giving information

Frequently asked question

What counts as a business day?
A business day is any weekday (Monday to Friday) that is not a national or Queensland public holiday. Relevant public holidays are listed at www.qld.gov.au/recreation/travel/holidays/public.

Giving information about commercial-in-confidence activities

Guidance
When lobbyists select 'Commercial-in-confidence' as the purpose of a lobbying activity, they are required to provide a further description of the activity in a free text field. Completing this field correctly is important to ensure lobbyists meet their obligations under Directive 06/26.

As stated in the directive, the description lobbyists provide in the free text field must be sufficient to demonstrate to the Integrity Commissioner that the activity is commercial-in-confidence without revealing specific commercial-in-confidence information. Some tips for entering a suitable description are:

- **Be specific enough to show why the activity is commercial-in-confidence.** Do not simply state that the activity is "commercial-in-confidence", "confidential" or "market sensitive" — provide some context for the activity (i.e. what is the nature of the project or proposal to which it relates) and why it is happening (i.e. what outcome is the client seeking).
- **Be general enough to avoid revealing sensitive information.** For example, avoid including product names, technical specifications, non-public financial information, or the names of confidential partners.
- **Consider whether the activity is really commercial-in-confidence.** For example, if the activity relates to a specific part of a project or agreement that has already been made public, it would not be commercial-in-confidence.

Some inadequate descriptions and some good descriptions of commercial-in-confidence activities are highlighted below.

Inadequate descriptions

- × Commercial-in-confidence discussion
- × Discussing the progress of a project
- × Providing an update on a proposal

Good descriptions

- ✓ Seeking support for a commercially sensitive pharmaceutical manufacturing initiative
- ✓ Discussing a non-public mixed-use development proposal for which planning approval is required
- ✓ Demonstrating a proprietary digital platform for government procurement consideration

A good formula for writing a suitable description is:

> Discussing a [commercially sensitive/confidential/non-public] [type of project/proposal/initiative/solution/service/technology etc.] for which [funding/support/approval/consideration/assistance etc.] is sought.

Lobbyists should remember that the free text descriptions are only provided to the Integrity Commissioner and are not published on the public lobbying register. All information entered into the free text field is reviewed by the OQIC, and the Integrity Commissioner may request further information from a lobbyist if they have any queries about the description provided or the categorisation of the activity as commercial-in-confidence.

Frequently asked questions

What does "commercial-in-confidence" mean?
"Commercial-in-confidence" refers here to lobbying activities where the purpose of the activity involves information obtained from a client that:

- is not publicly available or readily discoverable, and
- has commercial value to the client, or concerns the client's business, financial, commercial or professional affairs, and
- would be reasonably expected to cause a detriment to the client's business or the value of the information if it were to be disclosed.

Examples of this might be trade secrets (e.g. a method of manufacturing or construction the client has developed and that is not known to its competitors) or the identity of a financial backer for the client who will only provide that assistance if they remain publicly anonymous.

Why does the Integrity Commissioner need information about commercial-in-confidence activities?
This requirement addresses concerns that the 'Commercial-in-confidence' option in the Queensland Lobbying Register could be misused by lobbyists to avoid transparency. Such concerns were identified in both the 2021 Strategic Review of the Integrity Commissioner's Functions (the Yearbury Review) and the 2022 Review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector, with the Yearbury Review finding that in the 6 months from January to June 2021, 39% of lobbying activities were recorded as commercial-in-confidence.

By providing a clear description of the purpose of commercial-in-confidence activities, the Integrity Commissioner can better assess whether lobbying activities comply with the Integrity Act and the Code of Conduct, while ensuring that sensitive commercial information remains protected. This approach balances the need for accountability and integrity in lobbying with the legitimate confidentiality concerns of clients.

What sort of information am I expected to provide in the free-text field for commercial-in-confidence activities without compromising my client's interests?
The purpose of requiring further information about activities lobbyists categorise as commercial-in-confidence is to ensure that this option is not being misused to avoid transparency of lobbying activities. The further information you provide should therefore show the Integrity Commissioner why the activity is commercial-in-confidence, without revealing specific commercial-in-confidence information. The OQIC does not expect lobbyists to breach their obligations of confidence, but it must have a record against

which any compliance assessments can be made. For example, “Discussing a new resource deposit” might be an appropriate way to show that an activity is commercial-in-confidence without revealing specific details.

It is important to remember that this information is only provided to the Integrity Commissioner and is not published on the public lobbying register.