

Frequently Asked Question:
Lobbying Registration Requirements in Montgomery County

Are you a lobbyist? A lobbyist is: “an individual or organization who spends money or is compensated to influence legislative, executive, or administrative action by a County agency.”

Are you required to register as a lobbyist? In general, any individual or organization must register as a lobbyist if that individual or organization:

- Spends more than \$500 or receives more than \$500 to communicate with a public employee to influence legislative action by a County agency; or
- Spends more than \$500 on meals, beverages, transportation, lodging, services, special events or gifts to influence executive or administrative action by a County agency.

Who is not required to register? Persons making communications as requested by the County; drafting bills; persons communicating as official acts of Federal, state, or local government; press working on news stories; communications to protect the right to practice a religion; certain witnesses appearing for a lobbyist; and communications for a organization that exclusively lobbies for counties or municipalities.

Are non-profits, nongovernmental organizations and unions required to register? If the lobbyist is or represents an organization that is a Section 501(c)(3) organization under the Internal Revenue Code, no registration is required if: (A) the representation promotes the exempt purposes of the organization; (B) the organization gave gifts totaling less than \$500 to public employees in a year; **AND** (C) the representative is paid or spends less than \$1,000 in a year to influence executive, administrative, and legislative actions.

Where can I learn more? Registration is accomplished through an online registration and activity reporting system. General Instructions are found at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ethics/lobby/generalinstructions.html>

Should you have any questions regarding the requirement to register as a lobbyist, please contact the Montgomery County Ethics Commission at 240-777-6670 or at Ethics.Commission@montgomerycountymd.gov.