

ETHICS FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS
FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICEHOLDERS, CANDIDATES,
AND DESIGNATED CITY OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES

[Ordinance 0086-2016](#)

Effective September 29, 2016

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Who is required to file financial disclosure statements with the Columbus City Clerk?

A: Columbus City Code (“CCC”) Section [2321.56](#) requires municipal officeholders, municipal candidates, and individuals appointed to fill a vacancy for an unexpired term in elective office to file financial disclosure statements with both the Ohio Ethics Commission and the Columbus City Clerk.

In addition, Executive Order [2016-01](#) and the Ethics Policies of all other municipal office holders require certain designated City officials and employees to file financial disclosure statements with the Columbus City Clerk only.

Q: What are the deadlines for filing financial disclosure statements with the Ohio Ethics Commission and the Columbus City Clerk?

A: Filing deadlines and locations are dependent upon the individual making the filing. (See [Financial Disclosure Deadlines Calendar](#)).

Q: What forms do individuals required to file financial disclosure statements use?

A: The City uses the same form issued by the Ohio Ethics Commission *and* a one-page City of Columbus [Financial Disclosure Addendum](#). Both of these forms are available [here](#).

Q: What is the purpose of the City of Columbus Financial Disclosure Addendum form?

A: The form is compliant with CCC 2321.56(B)(1), which requires filers to include a brief description of each gift or aggregate of gifts from any one source valued at over \$75.00 if the gift was received from one of the following sources:

1. Any person with whom the office holder or designated employee, or office holder’s or designated employee’s immediate family¹, does business;
2. Any person who is a creditor of over one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or a debtor of over one thousand dollars (\$1,000), of the office holder or designated employee;
3. Any person with whom the office holder or designated employee has an investment, other than a primary residence or real property held primarily for personal recreation, of over one thousand dollars (\$1,000);
4. Any person that has another fiduciary relationship, such as co-owner or proprietorship of a corporation, trust, business trust, partnership, or association with an office holder or designated employee.

¹ “Immediate family” means a spouse residing in the person’s household and any dependent child. *Ohio Revised Code Section [102.01\(D\)](#).*

Q: What time periods do the financial disclosure statements cover?

A: The annual financial disclosure statement required by the Ohio Ethics Commission, generally due in the spring of each year, and filed with both the Ohio Ethics Commission and the Columbus City Clerk, covers the previous calendar year (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31).

The semiannual financial disclosure statement required by the Columbus City Code, generally due in November each year, and filed with only the Columbus City Clerk, covers the first half (Jan. 1 – June 30) of the current calendar year. If you have filed the required annual statement and have nothing new to report on the semiannual report required by the City you must still file the semiannual statement.

Q: Is there a fee to file a financial disclosure statement with the Columbus City Clerk?

A: No. While there is a \$35.00 fee to file with the Ohio Ethics Commission, there is no fee to file with the Columbus City Clerk.

Q: How can I file the financial disclosure statement with the Columbus City Clerk?

A: All financial disclosure statements and City of Columbus Financial Disclosure Addendums must be filed electronically via email at EthicsFilings@columbus.gov.

Q: Are financial disclosure statements public records? Will they be available on the City's website?

A: While all filed financial disclosure statements and City of Columbus Financial Disclosure Addendums are public records, and will be made available in response to a public records request, they are not available on the City's website.

Q: What does the City Clerk do with the ethics financial disclosure statements after they are filed?

A: CCC 2321.56(C)(4) requires the City Clerk to review all filed financial disclosure statements to determine whether all the required information has been provided and to maintain a file of all submitted financial disclosure statements as a record of the City.

However, if the City Clerk determines that the financial disclosure statement does not contain all of the required information or that a person who is required to file a financial disclosure statement has not done so by the deadline, the City Clerk will notify that person in writing. That individual then has 15 days to file their initial or amended statement. If they do not file within 15 days of receiving the notice, the City Clerk will send a *second* written notification and will *also* notify the City Attorney. If the individual still fails to file a statement or an amended statement within 15 days, the City Attorney will take appropriate action as authorized by CCC 2321.56.

Q: What are the penalties for failing to comply with C.C. 2321.56?

A: Failure to file a financial disclosure statement by the deadline is a misdemeanor of the third degree. Filing a false financial disclosure statement is a misdemeanor of the first degree.

Q: Who may I contact if I need additional information?

A: If you have any questions, you may contact Renata Ramsini, Chief Ethics Officer, at (614) 645-7673 or RJRamsini@columbus.gov.