



Chicago Board of Ethics  
740 N. Sedgwick, Ste. 500  
Chicago, IL 60654  
312-744-9660

## NOTICE TO CITY PERSONNEL OF ETHICS RULES CONCERNING POST-CITY EMPLOYMENT

The Governmental Ethics Ordinance, Chapter 2-156 of the Municipal Code of Chicago, contains post-employment restrictions that apply to all former employees and officials of the City.

For example, as a former employee of the City, you are required to comply with section 2-156-070, entitled "Use or Disclosure of Confidential Information," and section 2-156-100, entitled "Post-Employment Restrictions on Assistance and Representation."

This summary outlines some of the restrictions that apply once you leave City service. To the extent this summary differs from the language of the Ordinance, the language of the Ordinance is controlling.

The post-employment restrictions are:

1. You are permanently prohibited from using or disclosing confidential information gained in the course of, or by reason of, your position with the City.
2. For one (1) year after leaving City service, you cannot, **assist or represent\*** any person other than the City in any business transaction involving the City, if you participated personally and substantially in the subject matter of the transaction during City service.

**\*Represent** involves a wide range of activities. The term has been interpreted to mean: making appearances before City agencies on behalf of others; making telephone contact with City employees and officials on behalf of others; signing or submitting proposals, contracts or other documents to City agencies; making contact with employees or officials on behalf of others; as well as acting as a spokesperson for another, or seeking to communicate and promote the interests of one party to another.

Assist involves any work at all, including "behind-the-scenes" work, such as counseling clients, or co-workers or staff of a new employer, reviewing internal memoranda, or attending internal meetings with respect to City business transactions.

3. You are permanently prohibited from assisting or representing any person other than the City on any contracts over which you exercised **contract management authority**\* during your City service. This prohibition lasts for the entire term of a City contract.

\***Contract management authority** means personal involvement in or direct supervisory responsibility for the formulation or execution of a City contract, including without limitation the preparation of specifications, evaluation of bids or proposals, negotiation of contract terms or supervision of performance.

4. You are **permanently** prohibited from assisting or representing any person other than the City in any judicial or administrative proceeding involving the City, if during your City service:

- (a) you were counsel of record; or
- (b) you participated personally and substantially in the proceeding.

5. Department heads and non-clerical employees of the Mayor's Office may not, for two (2) years after leaving City service, **\*lobby** any City department, employee or official.

\***Lobby** means acting on behalf of another person, like an employer or client, to influence City decisions. Lobbying means making contact with City employees or officials by telephone, in person, letter, memorandum, email, text, etc. However, the Board has determined that certain actions that do not involve direct contact are lobbying, such as sitting in a phone call with City employees or officials and coaching co-workers in real time as to what to say, while being on "mute." However, certain activities are not considered lobbying, such as acting on behalf of non-profit organizations that do not have for-profit members, or representing clients in adversarial hearings. Please contact the Board of Ethics for more specific information and confidential guidance.

6. Other Executive branch Shakman-exempt employees, and appointed officials, may not, for two (2) years after leaving City service, **\*lobby** a department or agency in which they served.

7. Please note that these restrictions do not prohibit you from accepting employment with anyone; however, they may restrict what you can do in your new employment.

8. Please also note that there is a **GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT EXCEPTION**: these restrictions do not apply to former City officials or

employees who become employed by and act on behalf of another government agency.

9. Please also note that the Board recognizes a **“trade-skill exception”**: the Ordinance’s goals are **not** furthered by prohibiting former City employees from performing trade skills they’ve developed and acquired, where no specialized knowledge of City-specific standards or regulations is involved.

The Board has applied this to electricians, machinists and opticians, for example. But whether any proposed post-City work falls into this exception is a determination that must be made by the Board of Ethics based on the specific facts.

10. Every City contract must include a provision that requires compliance with Chicago's Governmental Ethics Ordinance. Therefore, if your new employer has an interest in matters involving the City, it is imperative that you and your employer understand what, if any, post-employment restrictions apply to you. **Severe fines, cancellation of contracts, and nullification of regulatory decisions can result from violations of these revolving door restrictions.**

This summary is only an overview intended to help current and former City employees develop a basic understanding of their responsibilities under the Ordinance. For authoritative guidance on specific questions, consultation with the Board of Ethics is recommended. The Board will maintain the confidentiality requirements of the Ordinance. For assistance or personalized guidance, call (312) 744-9660.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT BY EMPLOYEE/OFFICIAL:** I hereby acknowledge that:

1. I received a copy of the foregoing “NOTICE TO CITY PERSONNEL OF ETHICS RULES CONCERNING POST-CITY EMPLOYMENT, and
2. I understand that I can view and download the complete text of the City’s Governmental Ethics Ordinance by accessing the website of the Board of Ethics at [www.cityofchicago.org/Ethics/](http://www.cityofchicago.org/Ethics/).

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_