

1 Introduced by Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs

2 Date:

3 Subject: Executive; governmental ethics; State Ethics Commission; State Code
4 of Ethics

5 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require that
6 certain county officers both running for and holding office file financial
7 disclosures. It will create penalties for delinquent disclosures for candidates
8 for State office, county office, State Senator, and State Representative. This
9 bill will grant the State Ethics Commission powers to perform supplemental
10 investigations and hearings and to issue warnings, reprimands, and
11 recommended actions. It will create a full-time, exempt Legal Counsel
12 position in the State Ethics Commission and reclassify the Executive Director
13 of the State Ethics Commission from a part-time to a full-time, exempt State
14 employee. This bill will add a member to the State Ethics Commission to be
15 appointed by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

16 An act relating to the State Ethics Commission and the State Code of Ethics

1 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

2 * * * Candidate Financial Disclosure Requirements * * *

3 Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 2414 is amended to read:

4 § 2414. CANDIDATES FOR STATE AND LEGISLATIVE OFFICE;

5 DISCLOSURE FORM

6 (a) Each candidate for State office, county office, State Senator, or State
7 Representative shall file with the officer with whom consent of candidate
8 forms are filed, along with ~~his or her~~ the candidate's consent, a disclosure form
9 prepared by the State Ethics Commission that contains the following
10 information in regard to the previous calendar year:

11 (1) ~~Each each~~ source, but not amount, of personal income of the
12 candidate and of ~~his or her~~ the candidate's spouse or domestic partner, and of
13 the candidate together with ~~his or her~~ the candidate's spouse or domestic
14 partner, that totals more than \$5,000.00, including any of the sources meeting
15 that total described as follows:

16 (A) employment, including the employer or business name and
17 address and, if self-employed, a description of the nature of the self-
18 employment ~~without needing to disclose any individual clients, including the~~
19 names of any clients who had business before any municipal or State office,
20 department, or agency during the previous 12 months, and the names of clients

1 from whom the candidate or candidate’s spouse or domestic partner has
2 received \$10,000.00 or more in the previous 12 months; and

3 (B) investments, described generally as “investment income,”
4 including individual stock holdings or investments valued at \$10,000.00 or
5 more at any point in the previous 12 months, which shall be listed individually,
6 as shall municipal bonds issued in the State of Vermont, regardless of total
7 value;

8 (2) Any any board, commission, or other entity that is regulated by law
9 or that, receives funding from the State, or makes decisions about the
10 allocation or disbursement of State funds on which the candidate served for
11 any part of the previous 12 months and the candidate’s position on that entity;

12 (3)(A) Any any company of which the candidate or his or her the
13 candidate’s spouse or domestic partner, or the candidate together with his or
14 her the candidate’s spouse or domestic partner, owned more than 10 percent;
15 and

16 (B) the details of any loan made to any applicable company in
17 subdivision (A) of this subdivision (3) that is not a commercially reasonable
18 loan made in the ordinary course of business;

19 (4) any company of which the candidate or the candidate’s spouse or
20 domestic partner, or the candidate together with the candidate’s spouse or
21 domestic partner, had an ownership or controlling interest in any amount, and

1 in the previous 12 months the company had business with any municipal or
2 State office, agency, or department;

3 (5) ~~Any~~ any lease or contract with the State held or entered into by:

4 (A) the candidate or ~~his or her~~ the candidate's spouse or domestic
5 partner; or

6 (B) a company of which the candidate or ~~his or her~~ the candidate's
7 spouse or domestic partner, or the candidate together with ~~his or her~~ the
8 candidate's spouse or domestic partner, owned more than 10 percent.; and

9 (6) the full name of the candidate's spouse or domestic partner.

10 (b) In addition, if a candidate's spouse or domestic partner is a lobbyist, the
11 candidate shall disclose that fact and provide the name of ~~his or her~~ the
12 candidate's spouse or domestic partner and, if applicable, the name of ~~his or~~
13 ~~her~~ the candidate's lobbying firm.

14 (c) In addition, each candidate for State office shall attach to the disclosure
15 form described in subsection (a) of this section a copy of ~~his or her~~ the
16 candidate's most recent U.S. Individual Income Tax Return Form 1040;
17 provided, however, that the candidate may redact from that form the following
18 information:

19 (1) the candidate's Social Security number and that of ~~his or her~~ the
20 candidate's spouse, if applicable;

1 (2) the names of any dependent and the dependent’s Social Security
2 number; ~~and~~

3 (3) the signature of the candidate and that of ~~his or her~~ the candidate’s
4 spouse, if applicable;

5 (4) the candidate’s street address; and

6 (5) any identifying information and signature of a paid preparer.

7 (d)(1) A senatorial district clerk or representative district clerk who
8 receives a disclosure form under this section shall forward a copy of the
9 disclosure to the Secretary of State within three business days ~~of~~ after
10 receiving it.

11 (2)(A) The Secretary of State shall post a copy of any disclosure forms
12 and tax returns ~~he or she~~ the Secretary receives under this section on ~~his or her~~
13 the Secretary’s official State website. The forms shall remain posted on the
14 Secretary’s website until the date of the filing deadline for petition and consent
15 forms for major party candidates for the statewide primary in the following
16 election cycle.

17 * * *

18 (e) As used in this section:

19 (1) “County office” means the office of county treasurer, sheriff, or
20 State’s Attorney.

1 (2) “Domestic partner” means an individual with whom the candidate
2 has an enduring domestic relationship of a spousal nature, ~~as long as~~ provided
3 the candidate and the domestic partner:

4 * * *

5 ~~(2)~~(3) “Lobbyist” and “lobbying firm” ~~shall~~ have the same meanings as
6 in 2 V.S.A. § 261.

7 * * * In-Office Financial Disclosure Requirements * * *

8 Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 1201 is amended to read:

9 § 1201. DEFINITIONS

10 As used in this chapter:

11 (1) “Candidate” and “candidate’s committee” have the same meanings
12 as in 17 V.S.A. § 2901.

13 (2) “Commission” means the State Ethics Commission established
14 under subchapter 3 of this chapter.

15 (3) “Confidential information” means information that is exempt from
16 public inspection and copying under 1 V.S.A. § 315 et seq. or is otherwise
17 designated by law as confidential.

18 (4) “Conflict of interest” means a direct or indirect interest of a public
19 servant or such an interest, known to the public servant, of a member of the
20 public servant’s immediate family, or of a business associate, in the outcome
21 of a particular matter pending before the public servant or the public servant’s

1 public body, or that is in conflict with the proper discharge of the public
2 servant’s duties. “Conflict of interest” does not include any interest that is not
3 greater than that of other individuals generally affected by the outcome of a
4 matter.

5 (5) “County officer” means an individual holding the office of county
6 treasurer or State’s Attorney.

7 (6) “Domestic partner” means an individual in an enduring domestic
8 relationship of a spousal nature with the Executive officer or the public
9 servant, provided the individual and Executive officer or public servant:

10 (A) have shared a residence for at least six consecutive months;

11 (B) are at least 18 years of age;

12 (C) are not married to or considered a domestic partner of another
13 individual;

14 (D) are not related by blood closer than would bar marriage under
15 State law; and

16 (E) have agreed between themselves to be responsible for each
17 other’s welfare.

18 ~~(5)~~(7) “Executive officer” means:

19 (A) a State officer; or

20 (B) under the Office of the Governor, an agency secretary or deputy
21 or a department commissioner or deputy.

1 ~~(6)~~(8) “Governmental conduct regulated by law” means conduct by an
2 individual in regard to the operation of State government that is restricted or
3 prohibited by law and includes:

4 (A) bribery pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 1102;

5 (B) neglect of duty by public officers pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 3006
6 and by members of boards and commissions pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 3007;

7 (C) taking illegal fees pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 3010;

8 (D) false claims against government pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 3016;

9 (E) owning or being financially interested in an entity subject to a
10 department’s supervision pursuant to section 204 of this title;

11 (F) failing to devote time to duties of office pursuant to section 205
12 of this title;

13 (G) engaging in retaliatory action due to a State employee’s
14 involvement in a protected activity pursuant to chapter 27, subchapter 4A of
15 this title;

16 (H) a former legislator or former Executive officer serving as a
17 lobbyist pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 266(b); ~~and~~

18 (I) a former Executive officer serving as an advocate pursuant to
19 section 267 of this title; and

20 (J) creating or permitting to persist any unlawful employment
21 practice pursuant to 21 V.S.A. § 495.

1 ~~(7)~~(9) “Immediate family” means an individual’s spouse, domestic
2 partner, or civil union partner; child or foster child; sibling; parent; or such
3 relations by marriage or by civil union or domestic partnership; or an
4 individual claimed as a dependent for federal income tax purposes.

5 ~~(8)~~(10) “Lobbyist” and “lobbying firm” have the same meanings as in
6 2 V.S.A. § 261.

7 ~~(9)~~(11) “Person” means any individual, group, business entity,
8 association, or organization.

9 ~~(10)~~(12) “Political committee” and “political party” have the same
10 meanings as in 17 V.S.A. § 2901.

11 (13) “Public servant” means an individual elected or appointed to serve
12 as a State officer, an individual elected or appointed to serve as a member of
13 the General Assembly, a State employee, an individual appointed to serve on a
14 State board or commission, or an individual who in any other way is
15 authorized to act or speak on behalf of the State.

16 ~~(11)~~(14) “State officer” means the Governor, Lieutenant Governor,
17 Treasurer, Secretary of State, Auditor of Accounts, or Attorney General.

18 Sec. 3. 3 V.S.A. § 1202 is amended to read:

19 § 1202. STATE CODE OF ETHICS; APPLICABILITY

20 (a) Unless excluded under this section, the Code of Ethics applies to all
21 ~~individuals elected or appointed to serve as officers of the State, all individuals~~

1 ~~elected or appointed to serve as members of the General Assembly, all State~~
2 ~~employees, all individuals appointed to serve on State boards and~~
3 ~~commissions, and individuals who in any other way are authorized to act or~~
4 ~~speak on behalf of the State. This code refers to them all as public servants.~~

5 * * *

6 Sec. 4. 3 V.S.A. § 1203 is amended to read:

7 § 1203. CONFLICT OF INTEREST; APPEARANCE OF CONFLICT OF
8 INTEREST

9 (a) Conflict of interest; appearance of conflict of interest.

10 (1) In the public servant's official capacity, the public servant shall
11 avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. The
12 appearance of a conflict shall be determined from the perspective of a
13 reasonable individual with knowledge of the relevant facts.

14 (2) Except as otherwise provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this
15 section, when confronted with a conflict of interest, a public servant shall
16 recuse themselves from the matter and not take further action.

17 (3) ~~As used in this section, "conflict of interest" means a direct or~~
18 ~~indirect interest of a public servant or such an interest, known to the public~~
19 ~~servant, of a member of the public servant's immediate family or household, or~~
20 ~~of a business associate, in the outcome of a particular matter pending before~~
21 ~~the public servant or the public servant's public body, or that is in conflict with~~

1 ~~the proper discharge of the public servant’s duties. “Conflict of interest” does~~
2 ~~not include any interest that is not greater than that of other individuals~~
3 ~~generally affected by the outcome of a matter. [Repealed.]~~

4 * * *

5 Sec. 5. 3 V.S.A. § 1211 is amended to read:

6 § 1211. EXECUTIVE OFFICERS; ANNUAL DISCLOSURE

7 (a) Annually, each Executive officer and county officer shall file with the
8 State Ethics Commission a disclosure form that contains the following
9 information in regard to the previous 12 months:

10 (1) ~~Each~~ each source, but not amount, of personal income of the officer
11 and of ~~his or her~~ the officer’s spouse or domestic partner, and of the officer
12 together with ~~his or her~~ the officer’s spouse or domestic partner, that totals
13 more than \$5,000.00, including any of the sources meeting that total described
14 as follows:

15 (A) employment, including the employer or business name and
16 address and, if self-employed, a description of the nature of the self-
17 employment ~~without needing to disclose any individual clients, including the~~
18 names of any clients who had business before any municipal or State office,
19 department, or agency during the previous 12 months, and the names of clients
20 from whom the officer or officer’s spouse or domestic partner has received
21 \$10,000.00 or more in the previous 12 months; and

1 (B) investments, described generally as “investment income,”
2 including individual stock holdings or investments valued at \$10,000.00 or
3 more at any point in the previous 12 months, which shall be listed individually,
4 as shall municipal bonds issued in the State of Vermont, regardless of total
5 value;

6 (2) ~~Any~~ any board, commission, or other entity that is regulated by law
7 ~~or that~~, receives funding from the State, or makes decisions about the
8 allocation or disbursement of State funds on which the officer served for any
9 part of the previous 12 months and the officer’s position on that entity;

10 (3)(A) ~~Any~~ any company of which the officer or ~~his or her~~ the officer’s
11 spouse or domestic partner, or the officer together with his or her the officer’s
12 spouse or domestic partner, owned more than 10 percent; and

13 (B) the details of any loan made to any applicable company in
14 subdivision (A) of this subdivision (3) that is not a commercially reasonable
15 loan made in the ordinary course of business;

16 (4) any company of which the officer or the officer’s spouse or domestic
17 partner, or the officer together with the officer’s spouse or domestic partner,
18 had an ownership or controlling interest in any amount, and in the previous
19 12 months the company had business with any municipal or State office,
20 agency, or department;

21 (5) ~~Any~~ any lease or contract with the State held or entered into by:

1 (A) the officer or ~~his or her~~ the officer's spouse or domestic partner;

2 or

3 (B) a company of which the officer or ~~his or her~~ the officer's spouse
4 or domestic partner, or the officer together with ~~his or her~~ the officer's spouse
5 or domestic partner, owned more than 10 percent; and

6 (6) the full name of the officer's spouse or domestic partner.

7 (b) In addition, if an Executive officer's or county officer's spouse or
8 domestic partner is a lobbyist, the officer shall disclose that fact and provide
9 the name of ~~his or her~~ the officer's spouse or domestic partner and, if
10 applicable, the name of ~~his or her~~ the officer's lobbying firm.

11 (c)(1) Disclosure forms shall contain the statement, "I certify that the
12 information provided on all pages of this disclosure form is true to the best of
13 my knowledge, information, and belief."

14 (2) Each Executive officer and county officer shall sign ~~his or her~~ the
15 officer's disclosure form in order to certify it in accordance with this
16 subsection.

17 (d)(1) ~~An~~ Each Executive officer and county officer shall file ~~his or her~~ the
18 officer's disclosure on or before January 15 of each year or, if ~~he or she~~ the
19 officer is appointed after January 15, within 10 days after that appointment.

20 (2) ~~An officer who filed this disclosure form as a candidate in~~
21 ~~accordance with 17 V.S.A. § 2414 in the preceding year and whose disclosure~~

1 ~~information has not changed since that filing may update that filing to indicate~~
2 ~~that there has been no change.~~ [Repealed.]

3 (e) [Repealed.]

4 * * * Delinquent Disclosures for Candidates for State Office, County Office,
5 State Senator, and State Representative * * *

6 Sec. 6. 17 V.S.A. § 2415 is added to read:

7 § 2415. FAILURE TO FILE; PENALTIES

8 (a) If any disclosure required of a candidate for State office, county office,
9 State Senator, or State Representative by section 2414 of this title is not filed in
10 the time and manner set forth in sections 2356, 2361, and 2402 of this title, the
11 candidate for State office, county office, State Senator, or State Representative
12 shall be addressed as follows:

13 (1) The State Ethics Commission, after notification by the Office of the
14 Secretary of State of the names of delinquent filers, shall issue a notice of
15 delinquency to the candidate for State office, county office, State Senator, or
16 State Representative for any disclosure required of a candidate for State office,
17 county office, State Senator, or State Representative by section 2414 of this
18 title that is not filed in the time and manner set forth in sections 2356, 2361,
19 and 2402 of this title.

20 (2) Following notice of delinquency sent by the State Ethics
21 Commission to the candidate for State office, county office, State Senator, or

1 State Representative, the candidate shall have five working days from the date
2 of the issuance of the notice to cure the delinquency.

3 (3) Beginning six working days from the date of notice, the delinquent
4 candidate for State office, county office, State Senator, or State Representative
5 shall pay a \$10.00 penalty for each day thereafter that the disclosure remains
6 delinquent; provided, however, that in no event shall the amount of any penalty
7 imposed under this subdivision exceed \$1,000.00.

8 (4) The State Ethics Commission may reduce or waive any penalty
9 imposed under this section if the candidate for State office, county office, State
10 Senator, or State Representative demonstrates good cause, as determined by
11 the State Ethics Commission and in the sole discretion of the State Ethics
12 Commission.

13 (b) The Commission shall send a notice of delinquency to the e-mail
14 address provided by the candidate for State office, county office, State Senator,
15 or State Representative in the candidate’s consent of candidate form.

16 (c) The State Ethics Commission may avail itself of remedies available
17 under the Vermont Setoff Debt Collection Act, as set forth in 32 V.S.A.
18 chapter 151, subchapter 12, to collect any unpaid penalty.

19 (d)(1) A candidate for State office, county office, State Senator, or State
20 Representative who files a disclosure with intent to defraud, falsify, conceal, or
21 cover up by any trick, scheme, or device a material fact, or with intent to

1 defraud make any false, fictitious, or fraudulent claim or representation as to a
2 material fact, or with intent to defraud make or use any writing or document
3 knowing the same to contain any false, fictitious, or fraudulent claim or entry
4 as to a material fact shall be considered to have made a false claim for the
5 purposes of 13 V.S.A. § 3016.

6 (2) Pursuant to section 1223 of this title and 17 V.S.A. § 2904a,
7 complaints regarding any candidate for State office, county office, State
8 Senator, or State Representative who fails to properly file a disclosure required
9 under this subchapter may be filed with the State Ethics Commission. The
10 Executive Director of the State Ethics Commission shall refer complaints to
11 the Attorney General or to the State’s Attorney of jurisdiction for investigation,
12 as appropriate.

13 * * * State Ethics Commission Handling of Complaints * * *

14 Sec. 7. 3 V.S.A. § 1221(a) is amended to read:

15 (a) Creation. There is created within the Executive Branch an independent
16 commission named the State Ethics Commission to accept, review, investigate,
17 hold hearings, make referrals regarding, and track complaints of alleged
18 violations of governmental conduct regulated by law, of the Department of
19 Human Resources Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual, and of the State’s
20 campaign finance law set forth in 17 V.S.A. chapter 61; to provide ethics

1 training; and to issue guidance and advisory opinions regarding ethical
2 conduct.

3 Sec. 8. 3 V.S.A. § 1222 is redesignated to read:

4 § 1222. COMMISSION MEMBER ~~DUTIES AND~~ PROHIBITED
5 CONDUCT

6 Sec. 9. 3 V.S.A. § 1223 is amended to read:

7 § 1223. PROCEDURE FOR ~~HANDLING~~ ACCEPTING AND REFERRING
8 COMPLAINTS

9 * * *

10 (b) Preliminary review by Executive Director. The Executive Director
11 shall conduct a preliminary review of complaints made to the Commission in
12 order to take action as set forth in this subsection and section 1223a of this
13 title, which shall include referring complaints to all relevant entities, including
14 the Commission itself.

15 * * *

16 Sec. 10. 3 V.S.A. § 1223a is added to read:

17 § 1223a. INVESTIGATIONS, HEARINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

18 In addition to referring any complaints pursuant to subsection 1223(b) of
19 this title, the Commission may, in accordance with the provisions of this
20 section, investigate complaints; hold hearings; and issue warnings, reprimands,
21 and recommended actions. The Commission may:

1 (1) Investigate complaints referred to the Commission by the Executive
2 Director after preliminary review, pursuant to section 1223 of this title.

3 (2) Meet and hold hearings for the purpose of gathering evidence and
4 testimony. The individual against whom the complaint is brought shall have
5 the right to be heard at the hearing.

6 (3) Issue subpoenas and administer oaths in connection with any
7 investigation and hearing. Subpoenas may be issued ex parte by the Chair of
8 the Commission, the Director, or any attorney representing a party.
9 Depositions may be taken after charges upon due notice to all parties without
10 specific authorization by the Commission.

11 (4) Issue warnings or reprimands and recommend actions to be taken,
12 not inconsistent with the Vermont Constitution and laws of the State, including
13 facilitated mediation, additional training and education, referrals to counseling
14 and wellness support, or other remedial actions. In deciding this, the
15 Commission shall consider the degree of misconduct; timelines; and the
16 privacy, rights, and responsibilities of the parties.

17 (5) Notwithstanding subsection 1223(c) of this title, notify the Attorney
18 General or the State’s Attorney of jurisdiction of any alleged violations of
19 governmental conduct regulated by law or the relevant federal agency of any
20 alleged violations of federal law, if discovered in the course of the
21 Commission’s investigations.

1 (6) In addition to receiving a complaint pursuant to subsection 1223(a)
2 of this title, the Commission may investigate without receiving a complaint.

3 (7) The Commission shall notify parties, in writing, of any complaint
4 being investigated. The Commission shall also notify a complainant in writing
5 of the result of any investigation or of any issued warning or reprimand or
6 recommend action related to the complaint brought by the complainant to the
7 Commission. The complainant shall have the right to be heard in an
8 investigation resulting from the complaint brought by the complainant to the
9 Commission.

10 (8) The Commission may appoint legal counsel, who shall be an
11 attorney admitted to practice in this State, to assist with investigations;
12 hearings; and issuance of warnings, reprimands, and recommended actions.

13 (9) In any investigation or hearing under this section that addresses
14 alleged sexual misconduct by the individual against whom the complaint is
15 brought, evidence of the sexual history of the complainant of the alleged sexual
16 misconduct shall not be considered by the Commission in its issuance of any
17 warning, reprimand, or recommended action.

18 * * * State Ethics Commission Membership * * *

19 Sec. 11. 3 V.S.A. § 1221(b) is amended to read:

20 (b) Membership.

1 (1) The Commission shall be composed of the following ~~five~~ six
2 members:

3 (A) one member, appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme
4 Court;

5 (B) one member, appointed by the League of Women Voters of
6 Vermont, who shall be a member of the League;

7 (C) one member, appointed by the Board of Directors of the Vermont
8 Society of Certified Public Accountants, who shall be a member of the Society;

9 (D) one member, appointed by the Board of Managers of the
10 Vermont Bar Association, who shall be a member of the Association; ~~and~~

11 (E) one member, appointed by the Board of Directors of the SHRM
12 (Society for Human Resource Management) Vermont State Council, who shall
13 be a member of the Council; and

14 (F) one member, appointed by the Vermont League of Cities and
15 Towns.

16 * * *

17 * * * State Ethics Commission Staffing * * *

18 Sec. 12. 3 V.S.A. § 1221(c) is amended to read:

19 (c) Executive Director.

1 (1) The Commission shall be staffed by an Executive Director who shall
2 be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Commission ~~and who shall be~~
3 ~~a part-time exempt State employee.~~

4 (2) The Executive Director shall maintain the records of the
5 Commission and shall provide administrative support as requested by the
6 Commission, in addition to any other duties required by this chapter.

7 **Sec. 13. STATE ETHICS COMMISSION; POSITIONS; APPROPRIATION**

8 (a) The position of one new, permanent, full-time, exempt Legal Counsel is
9 created in the State Ethics Commission.

10 (b) The Executive Director of the State Ethics Commission shall be
11 reclassified as a full-time, exempt State employee.

12 (c) The position of Administrative Assistant in the State Ethics
13 Commission shall be reclassified as a full-time, exempt State employee.

14 (d) The sum of \$150,000.00 is appropriated to the State Ethics Commission
15 from the General Fund in fiscal year 2025 for the creation of the position of
16 Legal Counsel in the State Ethics Commission.

17 (e) The sum of \$150,000.00 is appropriated to the State Ethics Commission
18 from the General Fund in fiscal year 2025 for the reclassification of the
19 position of Executive Director in the State Ethics Commission.

1 (f) The sum of \$57,000.00 is appropriated to the State Ethics Commission
2 from the General Fund in fiscal year 2025 for the reclassification of the
3 position of Administrative Assistant in the State Ethics Commission.

4 * * * Ethics Data Collection * * *

5 Sec. 14. 3 V.S.A. § 1226 is amended to read:

6 § 1226. ETHICS DATA COLLECTION; COMMISSION REPORTS

7 (a) Annually, on or before November 15, the following entities shall report
8 to the State Ethics Commission aggregate data on ethics complaints not
9 submitted to the Commission, with the complaints separated by topic, and the
10 disposition of those complaints, including any prosecution, enforcement action,
11 or dismissal:

12 (1) the office of the Attorney General and State’s Attorneys’ offices, of
13 alleged violations of governmental conduct regulated by law and associated
14 crimes and including campaign finance requirements;

15 (2) the Department of Human Resources, of complaints alleging conduct
16 that violates the ethical provisions of the Department of Human Resources
17 Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual or of the State Code of Ethics;

18 (3) the Senate Ethics Panel, of alleged unethical conduct committed by
19 State Senators;

20 (4) the House Ethics Panel, of alleged unethical conduct committed by
21 State Representatives;

1 (5) the Judicial Conduct Board, of alleged unethical conduct committed
2 by a judicial officer; and

3 (6) the Professional Responsibility Board, of alleged unethical conduct
4 committed by an attorney employed by the State;

5 (7) the Office of the State Court Administrator, of complaints alleging
6 conduct that violates the ethical provisions of the Judicial Branch Personnel
7 Policy or of the State Code of Ethics, including for attorneys employed by the
8 State.

9 (b) Annually, on or before January 15, the State Ethics Commission shall
10 report to the General Assembly regarding the following issues:

11 (1) Complaints.

12 (A) The number and a summary of the complaints made to ~~it~~ the
13 Commission, separating the complaints by topic, and the disposition of those
14 complaints, including any prosecution, enforcement action, or dismissal. This
15 summary of complaints shall not include any personal identifying information.

16 (B) The number and a summary of the complaints data received by
17 the Commission pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

18 * * *

19 * * * Effective Dates * * *

20 Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE DATES

- 1 This act shall take effect on passage, except that Sec. 1 (amending
- 2 17 V.S.A. § 2414) shall take effect on January 1, 2026.