

1 (5) Sec. 9 (amending 3 V.S.A. § 1223, Commission procedure for
2 accepting and referring complaints) shall take effect on September 1, 2025;

3 (6) Secs. 10 (adding 3 V.S.A. § 1227, Commission investigations),
4 11 (adding 3 V.S.A. § 1228, Commission hearings), 12 (adding 3 V.S.A.
5 § 1229, Commission warnings, reprimands, recommended actions, and
6 agreements), and 14 (adding 3 V.S.A. § 1231, Commission public records
7 regarding complaints) shall take effect on ~~September 1, 2027~~ July 1, 2028; and

8 (7) Sec. 1 (amending 17 V.S.A. § 2414, candidate disclosures) shall take
9 effect on January 1, 2026.

10 Sec. E136.3. 2025 Acts and Resolves No. 44, Sec. 5 is amended to read:

11 Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATES

12 This act shall take effect on passage, except that:

13 (1) Sec. 1 (amending 3 V.S.A. § 1223, Commission procedure for
14 accepting and referring complaints) shall take effect on September 1, 2025, and
15 shall supersede those provisions of 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 171, Sec. 9
16 that amended 3 V.S.A. § 1223 and that conflict with the language in this act;

17 (2) Sec. 2 (amending future version of 3 V.S.A. § 1223) shall take effect
18 on ~~September 1, 2027~~ July 1, 2028; and

19 (3) Sec. 3 (amending 3 V.S.A. § 1231, Commission public records
20 regarding complaints) shall take effect on ~~September 1, 2027~~ July 1, 2028, and

1 shall supersede those provisions of 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 171, Sec. 14
2 that amended 3 V.S.A. § 1231 and that conflict with the language in this act.
3 Sec. E.136.4. 3 V.S.A. § 1225 is amended to read:

4 § 1225. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GUIDANCE ~~AND~~ ADVISORY
5 OPINIONS, AND ETHICS HANDBOOK

6 (a) Guidance.

7 (1) The Executive Director may provide guidance only to a person who
8 is or will be subject to the provisions of this chapter, upon his or her request,
9 with respect to that person’s duties regarding any provision of this chapter or
10 regarding any other issue related to governmental ethics.

11 (2) The Executive Director may consult with members of the
12 Commission and the Department of Human Resources in preparing this
13 guidance.

14 (3) Guidance provided under this subsection shall be exempt from
15 public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and shall be kept
16 confidential unless the receiving entity has publicly disclosed it.

17 (b) Advisory opinions.

18 (1) On the written request of a person who is or will be subject to the
19 provisions of this chapter, the Executive Director may issue an advisory
20 opinion to that person that provides general advice or interpretation with

1 respect to that person’s duties regarding any provision of this chapter or
2 regarding any other issue related to governmental ethics.

3 (2) The Executive Director may consult with members of the
4 Commission and the Department of Human Resources in preparing these
5 advisory opinions.

6 (3) The Executive Director may seek comment from persons interested
7 in the subject of an advisory opinion under consideration.

8 (4) The Executive Director shall post on the Commission’s website any
9 advisory opinions that ~~he or she~~ the Director issues.

10 (c) Ethics Handbook. The Executive Director shall publish an Ethics
11 Handbook that shall provide a plain language guide to a person who is or will
12 be subject to the provisions of this chapter regarding the application of the
13 State Code of Ethics. The Ethics Handbook shall include information
14 regarding all of the following as provided for under the State Code of Ethics
15 and as interpreted or applied by the Commission:

16 (1) standards of conduct;

17 (2) what constitutes a conflict of interest and how a person subject to the
18 provisions of this chapter should respond if a conflict of interest is alleged or
19 perceived;

1 (3) how to determine what is an acceptable gift, including criteria
2 applied by the Commission to determine when reviewing whether a gift is
3 acceptable for each category of acceptable gift;

4 (4) what constitutes a misuse of position, misuse of information, or
5 misuse of government resources by a person subject to the provisions of this
6 chapter and the criteria applied by the Commission to determine misuse;

7 (5) what constitutes an unauthorized commitment by a person subject to
8 the requirements of this chapter;

9 (6) what employment restrictions exist for persons subject to this
10 chapter and how such restrictions are enforced;

11 (7) the legal authority relied on by the Commission in developing the
12 information and criteria for each subdivision (1)–(6) of this subsection; and

13 (8) any other information the Executive Director determines is relevant
14 to the application of the State Code of Ethics and the operation of the
15 Commission.

16 Sec. E.136.5. PUBLICATION OF ETHICS HANDBOOK; REPORT

17 (a) The Executive Director of the State Ethics Commission shall publish
18 the Ethics Handbook required by 3 V.S.A. § 1225(c) on or before January 15,
19 2027.

20 (b) The Executive Director of the State Ethics Commission shall submit a
21 draft copy of the Ethics Handbook to the House Committee on Government

- 1 Operations and Military Affairs and the Senate Committee on Government
- 2 Operations on or before December 15, 2026.