



# LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS ETHICS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

## SUMMARY OF THE LOUISIANA CAMPAIGN FINANCE DISCLOSURE ACT (UPDATED THROUGH THE 2025 REGULAR SESSION)

### CANDIDATES

**Note:** This outline was produced by the Louisiana Ethics Administration Program, Post Office Box 4368, Baton Rouge, LA 70821; 225-219-5600; [www.ethics.la.gov](http://www.ethics.la.gov). It is intended as a summary of reporting requirements. It does not purport to fully state the law. For further information, reporting forms, and schedules of reporting and filing dates for particular elections, please refer to R.S. 18:1481 et seq. (Revised September 2025)

#### **I. Introduction to the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act (CFDA)**

##### **Purpose:**

1. Prevent the appearance of political corruption and promote transparency in elections
2. Ensure a knowledgeable electorate and promote confidence in elected officials
3. Provide public disclosure of the financing of election campaigns
4. Regulate certain campaign practices<sup>1</sup>

##### **Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure:**

1. Prepares and distributes forms for use by candidates, committees, and other persons
2. Makes reports available to the public through the Board's website at [ethics.la.gov](http://ethics.la.gov)
3. Enforces CFDA filing requirements and prohibitions
4. Issues advisory opinions interpreting the CFDA

#### **II. Persons Required to File Disclosure Reports**

A "candidate" is any person who seeks nomination or election to public office, except for federal offices or political party offices. An individual shall be deemed to seek nomination or election to such office if he:

1. Received a contribution or made an expenditure.
2. Qualified for election to public office.
3. Was selected as party nominee pursuant to R.S. 18:410.6.<sup>2</sup>

##### **Who is Required to File CFDA Reports?**

1. Each **Candidate** for a **Major**<sup>3</sup> office, which includes:
  - a. Each statewide elected office:  
Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Treasurer, Commissioner of Agriculture, Commissioner of Insurance
  - b. Public Service Commissioner, Supreme Court Justice, Court of Appeal Judge, BESE

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<sup>1</sup> R.S. 18:1482

<sup>2</sup> R.S. 18:1483(3)

<sup>3</sup> R.S. 18:1483(13)

- c. District Court Judges elected parish-wide in Orleans;
  - d. Any other office with an election district containing a population in excess of 250,000.  
\*Includes offices elected parish-wide in East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Orleans, and St. Tammany; District Attorneys in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> Judicial Districts; District Court Judges in the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Districts;
2. Each Candidate for a **District**<sup>4</sup> office:
    - a. Office of a member of the Louisiana Legislature
    - b. All offices elected parish-wide (except in East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Orleans, and St. Tammany)
    - c. All offices elected in more than one parish (unless the population exceeds 250,000)
    - d. All offices elected in a district with a population in excess of 35,000 (but less than 250,000),  
\*Includes offices elected citywide in the cities of Alexandria, Bossier City, Kenner, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Monroe, and Shreveport, and offices elected in East Baton Rouge that are not parish-wide.
    - e. District court judgeships (except those in Orleans Parish or in districts over 250,000); family court, juvenile, and city court judgeships; city court marshals and city court constables.
    - f. Offices elected in a city or parish election in a parish with a municipality with a population of 300,000 or more (Orleans Parish).
    - g. Offices to a board or governing authority which has within its jurisdiction a municipality with a population of 225,000 or more (East Baton Rouge Parish).
  3. Each Candidate for "**Any Other**" office (i.e., any office not considered a Major or District office) who makes **expenditures**<sup>5</sup> in excess of \$5,000; **or** receives **contributions**<sup>6</sup>, other than from the candidate's personal funds, totaling in excess of \$5,000<sup>7</sup>.
  4. Each **Committee**<sup>8</sup> which knows or anticipates that it will receive contributions or loans from any source, make expenditures, or transfer funds during a calendar year in excess of \$1,000 must submit a Statement of Organization along with a \$100 filing fee and file reports accordingly.

\*For further details regarding committees, including the various types of committees, see the Summary of Acts for Committees on the Board's website at [ethics.la.gov](http://ethics.la.gov).

5. Any **Person**,<sup>9</sup> other than a candidate or committee, who makes expenditures in excess of \$1,000.<sup>10</sup>
6. Any **Person**, including a committee, who solicits or receives any contribution or makes any expenditure in support of or opposition to a **proposition** or question submitted to the voters if the aggregate amount of contributions or expenditures equals or exceeds \$5,000.<sup>11</sup>

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4 R.S. 18:1483(7)

5 R.S. 18:1483(9)

6 R.S. 18:1483(6)

7 R.S. 18:1484 – effective 6/20/2025

8 R.S. 18:1483(17), (25) and 18:1491

9 R.S. 18:1483(16)

10 R.S. 18:1501.1

11 R.S. 18:1486

7. Any **Person**, including a committee, who solicits or receives any contribution or makes any expenditure in support of or opposition to the **recall of a public officer**, if the aggregate amount of contributions or expenditures equals or exceeds \$5,000.<sup>12</sup>

**Note:** The use of public funds to urge a voter to vote for or against a candidate or proposition is prohibited. Public funds may be used to disseminate factual information relative to a proposition. (See R.S. 18:1465)

### III. Recordkeeping Requirements

The candidate or his campaign treasurer must keep records of receipts and disbursements for two years after the final report is filed.<sup>13</sup>

Records of committees or other persons supporting propositions must be maintained for six years.<sup>14</sup>

Candidates must designate a bank, savings and loan association, credit union, or money market mutual fund as a campaign depository. All receipts must be deposited into an account maintained at the depository, and all expenditures (except for petty cash) should be made by check drawn on the account or by electronic funds transfer. The memo line of the check should indicate the objects or services for which it is drawn.<sup>15</sup>

**Petty Cash Exception:** A petty cash fund may be maintained. No expenditure in excess of \$200 may be made from the fund, and no expenditure shall be made from the petty cash fund for any personal services, except tips for the serving of food and drink. A complete record shall be kept of all expenditures made from a petty cash fund, and a receipt shall be kept in any case in which a receipt would be provided in the usual course of business. Petty cash expenditures must be itemized as all other expenditures on the disclosure forms.<sup>16</sup>

Records are required to be kept of every contribution, including the sale of tickets to testimonials or other fundraising events. The date, amount, and name and address of the contributor must be recorded and reported.<sup>17</sup> Candidates have 10 days after the receipt of a contribution to decide whether that contribution will be accepted and deposited.<sup>18</sup> This 10-day period does not apply during the 20-day period immediately preceding the election day when special reports are due.

**Exception:** Records are not required to be kept of the name and address of individual purchasers of campaign paraphernalia and raffle tickets for \$50 or less. The total amount received and deposited from campaign paraphernalia and raffle ticket sales must be reported. Paraphernalia and raffle ticket sales are still contributions; successive single sales may not be used to avoid the recordkeeping requirements.<sup>19</sup>

Cash contributions are subject to a \$200 per person limit during the calendar year. The cash contributor must be given a receipt containing the name, address, and signature of the contributor. The candidate must keep a copy of the receipt.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> R.S. 18:1486

<sup>13</sup> R.S. 18:1495.3(I)

<sup>14</sup> R.S. 18:1501.1(A)

<sup>15</sup> R.S. 18:1495.2(C)(1)

<sup>16</sup> R.S. 18:1495.2(D)

<sup>17</sup> R.S. 18:1495.3(B)

<sup>18</sup> LAC 52:I.1617.

<sup>19</sup> R.S. 18:1495.3(B)(2)

<sup>20</sup> R.S. 18:1505.2(C)

Records are required to be kept of every expenditure, including those made by a public relations firm, advertising agency, or agent. The date, amount, name, and address of the recipient must be recorded and reported. The public relations firm, advertising agency, or agent must collect the information required to complete the candidate's report and furnish it on a timely basis.<sup>21</sup> The public relations firm, advertising agency, or agent is prohibited from accepting payment from a third party to place an advertisement that purports to be paid for by a candidate or his committee.<sup>22</sup>

Each person who makes an expenditure for the purpose of canvassing shall submit in writing to the candidate or committee on whose behalf the expenditure was made the name, address, and last four digits of the social security number of the canvasser.<sup>23</sup>

**Every transaction involving receipts or disbursements must be reported, regardless of amount.**<sup>24</sup>

A committee is required to clearly indicate that its contribution to a candidate or a candidate's committee is from a committee either by a designation on the check or by a separate notification attached to the contribution.<sup>25</sup>

#### IV. Report Filing Requirements

A specific reporting schedule is available for each election at the [Louisiana Ethics Administration Program: Campaign Finance Portal](http://ethics.la.gov). (ethics.la.gov)

\*Candidates for the Offices of Public Service Commission, Supreme Court Justice, BESE will follow a separate party-primary filing schedule. See website for details.

**All candidates for a major or district-level office** are required to electronically file campaign finance disclosure reports through the Board's LEADERS program, which can be accessed at ethics.la.gov. To begin filing electronically, a password and identification number must be applied for at least five business days prior to a reporting deadline.<sup>26</sup>

For **Any Other** candidates, reports are filed when received electronically through the LEADERS program, by fax or upload to the Ethics website, when postmarked or receipted on a return receipt request if sent by United States Mail, when received, or when deposited for delivery with a commercial delivery service as indicated on a receipt. Electronic filing for all other candidates is encouraged.<sup>27</sup>

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21 R.S. 18:1495.3(H)

22 R.S. 18:1505.3(D)

23 R.S. 18:1501.1(A)(2)

24 R.S. 18:1495.5

25 R.S. 18:1491.4(D)(3)

26 R.S. 18:1485(C)

27 R.S. 18:1485(A)

## V. Types of Reports

See Candidate's Filing Schedule at [Louisiana Ethics Administration Program: Campaign Finance Portal](#) for filing deadline dates for each election.

**ANNUAL REPORTS:** Filed for each candidate no later than February 15th of each year, and are complete as of the preceding December 31st. The reports are used when a candidate begins participating in an election set for a future calendar year.<sup>28</sup>

**Exception:** An annual report is not due (1) if another required report was filed any time after the preceding December 10 and prior to the February 15<sup>th</sup> due date, or (2) if the candidate/committee has received no contributions, made no expenditures, and received or made no loans during the reporting period.<sup>29</sup>

**180TH DAY PRIOR TO THE PRIMARY ELECTION (180-P):** Filed **only** by **major** office candidates and their committees.<sup>30</sup>

**90TH DAY PRIOR TO THE PRIMARY ELECTION (90-P):** Filed **only** by **major** office candidates and their committees.<sup>31</sup>

**Exceptions:** Candidates for the party-primary Offices of Public Service Commission, Supreme Court Justice, and BESE do **NOT** file 180-P or 90-P reports. See Party Primary Filing Schedule for complete filing requirements for these offices.

**30TH DAY PRIOR TO THE PRIMARY ELECTION (30-P):** Filed by **ALL** candidates.<sup>32</sup>

**10TH DAY PRIOR TO THE PRIMARY ELECTION (10-P):** Filed by **ALL** candidates.<sup>33</sup>

**10TH DAY PRIOR TO THE GENERAL ELECTION (10-G):** Filed by **ALL** candidates.<sup>34</sup>

\*Final report required for candidates with no outstanding debts or loans or surplus funds, and not participating in the general election.

**40TH DAY AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION (40-G):** Filed only by candidates participating in the general election.<sup>35</sup>

\* Final report required if there are no outstanding debts or loans or surplus funds.

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28 R.S. 18:1495.4(E)

29 R.S. 18:1495.4(E)

30 R.S. 18:1495.4(B)(1)

31 R.S. 18:1495.4(B)(2)

32 R.S. 18:1495.4(B)(3)

33 R.S. 18:1495.4(B)(4)

34 R.S. 18:1495.4(B)(5)

35 R.S. 18:1495.4(B)(6)

**SPECIAL REPORTS:**

Special Reports must be filed within 2 business days of the transaction; if the following transactions are made during the 20-day period immediately preceding an election:

1. A contribution or loan in excess of \$2,000 for major office candidates, or \$1,000 for district office candidates, or \$500 for any other office candidates is received and accepted during the 20-day period. **OR**
2. An expenditure in excess of \$500 is made during the 20-day period to a candidate, committee, or other person required to file disclosure reports who makes endorsements.<sup>36</sup>

**SUPPLEMENTAL REPORTS:**

Required to be filed annually by February 28th, complete through the preceding December 31, if the last report of a candidate for an election shows outstanding debts or loans or surplus funds.<sup>37</sup>

**Exception:** A supplemental report need not be filed if the candidate is not elected to any office and shows outstanding debts and loans or a surplus totaling less than \$5,000.<sup>38</sup>

**WITHDRAWN AND UNOPPOSED CANDIDATES:**

The final report of a candidate who withdraws or is unopposed is the next report due after the date that the candidate officially withdraws from the election, through the Secretary of State, or becomes unopposed.<sup>39</sup>

**PROPOSITION ELECTIONS:**

Any person, including a committee, who receives contributions or makes expenditures in an aggregate amount of \$5,000 or more in support of or in opposition to a proposition or question submitted to the voters. Reports are required 30 days prior to the election, 10 days prior to the election, and 40 days after the election. Special reports are required for any contribution or expenditure in excess of \$5,000 during the 20-day period immediately preceding the election.<sup>40</sup>

**RECALL ELECTIONS:**

Any person, including a committee, who receives contributions or makes expenditures in an aggregate amount of \$5,000 in support of or in opposition to the recall of a public officer. A statement of organization is required within 3 days of the filing of the recall petition. Reports are due 45 days, 135 days, and 200 days after the filing of the recall petition. If the recall effort is successful, the rules for proposition elections then apply.<sup>41</sup>

**AFFIDAVITS IN LIEU OF REPORTS:**

Candidates for major or district offices, and committees supporting such candidates, may file an affidavit in lieu of each report required above, if: they do not spend over \$10,000 and do not receive contributions from one source, including the use of the candidate's personal funds, totaling in excess of \$500.<sup>42</sup>

A separate affidavit is required for each report. Once a candidate exceeds either of the threshold amounts, he may not return to filing affidavits for that election. Candidates for "any other offices" may never file an affidavit in lieu of reports.

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36 R.S. 18:1495.4(C)  
 37 R.S. 18:1495.4(D)  
 38 R.S. 18:1495.4(D)(3)  
 39 R.S. 18:1495.4(B)(7)  
 40 R.S. 18:1486(A)(1) & (C)(1)  
 41 R.S. 18:1486(A)(2) & (C)(2)  
 42 R.S. 18:1495.6

## VI. Contribution Limits (R.S. 18:1505.2(H) & (K))

Contributions, in-kind contributions, loans, endorsements or guarantees on loans, and transfers of funds are all counted towards the contribution limits.

### Exceptions:

1. A candidate's personal funds are not subject to the limits.
2. Loans obtained by the candidate made in the ordinary course of business, on a basis which assures repayment, at the usual and customary interest rate from a state bank, a federally chartered depository institution, a depository institution with insured accounts, a licensed lender or an insurance company do not count towards the limits. However, a loan from such an institution shall be considered a "loan" by each endorser or guarantor in the proportion of their liability, and the endorsement or guarantee is subject to the contribution limit.
3. Party committees may receive up to \$250,000 from any person per calendar year, up to \$400,000 in a four-year period.

	To a major office candidate or candidate committee per election <sup>1</sup>	To a district office candidate or candidate committee per election <sup>1</sup>	To an any other office candidate or candidate committee per election <sup>1</sup>	To a committee between 1/1/23 and 12/31/26
An individual may give <sup>2</sup>	\$12,000	\$6,000	\$2,000	\$100,000/calendar year \$250,000/four-year period
A Family Member of Candidate may give	\$12,000	\$6,000	\$2,000	\$100,000/calendar year \$250,000/four-year period
A Legal Entity may give <sup>3</sup>	\$12,000	\$6,000	\$2,000	\$100,000/calendar year \$250,000/four-year period
Committees may give	\$12,000	\$6,000	\$2,000	\$12,000/6,000/2,000 <sup>5</sup> *Leadership committees may receive \$25,000/calendar year <sup>43</sup>
Big Committee <sup>4</sup> may give	\$24,000	\$12,000	\$4,000	\$24,000/12,000/4,000 <sup>5</sup> *Leadership committees may receive \$25,000/calendar year <sup>43</sup>
Democratic or Republican Party or committees may give	no limits	no limits	no limits	no limits

<sup>1</sup> The open or party-primary, second party-primary, general, and tie-breaker elections are each considered separate elections.

<sup>2</sup> A husband and wife may each make contributions to the same candidate up to the limit. However, separate checks should be used. If a single check is signed by one spouse, the other must provide an affidavit as to their intent to share in the contribution.

<sup>3</sup> Includes legal entities owned wholly or partially by candidates, except Internal Revenue Code Subchapter S corporations and limited liability companies wholly owned by the candidate. Parent corporations and their subsidiaries are subject to a single limit. A corporation is a parent if it owns 50% of another corporation.

<sup>4</sup> A committee with over 250 members who contributed over \$50 to the committee during the preceding calendar year and has been certified by the Ethics Administration as meeting that membership requirement.

<sup>5</sup> The applicable limit is determined by the level of office sought by the candidates supported/opposed by the recipient committee

## VII. Prohibited Practices (R.S. 18:1505.2)

1. The failure to file or the failure to timely file a required report results in penalties of:

Major Office = \$100 per day/maximum of \$2,500

District Office = \$60 per day/maximum of \$1,000

Any Other Office = \$40 per day/maximum of \$500<sup>44</sup>

**NOTE:** Unpaid campaign finance fines, fees, or penalties may have an adverse effect on a candidate's ability to run for public office in the future, as the Board is required to object to the candidacy of a person who has an outstanding fine, fee, or penalty equal to or in excess of \$250.<sup>45</sup>

2. No candidate shall make an expenditure from contributions for any purposes if the candidate owes a fine, fee, or penalty pursuant to the CFDA.<sup>46</sup>
3. Making contributions or loans through or in the **name of another**.<sup>47</sup>
4. Using funds from an **anonymous** source. Anonymous contributions must be transmitted to the State.<sup>48</sup>
5. Making or receiving **cash** contributions in excess of \$200 in a calendar year from a single source. Any cash contribution must be evidenced by a receipt containing the name, address, and signature or mark of the contributor.<sup>49</sup>
6. Making or receiving payments, including reimbursements of costs, for the **transportation** of any voter to a polling place or for absentee voting, unless the payment is to a licensed bus, taxi, or transportation service. Medical transportation services do not qualify to receive payments for transporting voters.<sup>50</sup>
7. Making expenditures in excess of \$200 from a petty cash fund or making cash payments for personal services, except for tips for serving food or drink.<sup>51</sup>
8. Contributions or expenditures made by a **corporation**, labor organization, or trade, business, or professional association unless specifically authorized by either (1) a vote of the board of directors or executive board, or (2) any person whom the board has specifically empowered to authorize such contributions or expenditures, or (3) a vote of the membership of the labor organization. Cash contributions in any amount by a corporation, labor organization, or trade, business or professional organization are prohibited.<sup>52</sup>

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44 R.S. 18:1505.4(A)(2)

45 R.S. 18:491

46 R.S. 18:1505.2(I)(3)

47 R.S. 18:1505.2(A)

48 R.S. 18:1505.2(B)

49 R.S. 18:1505.2(C)

50 R.S. 18:1531

51 R.S. 18:1505.2(E)

52 R.S. 18:1505.2(F)

9. No candidate shall make a contribution to any committee which was required to file a statement of organization but failed to do so.<sup>53</sup>
10. Campaign funds may not be used by any person for any personal use of the candidate or a member of his immediate family.<sup>54</sup>

The following expenses shall be presumed to be made for the personal use of the candidate and shall be prohibited, unless the candidate shows by a preponderance of the evidence that the expenditure was not for personal use:

1. Household food items or supplies,
2. Funeral, cremation, or burial expenses of the candidate or his immediate family,
3. Clothing expenses, except for items of de minimis value that are used in a campaign, or specialized apparel necessary to attend a specific fundraising event or event related to the holding of office.
4. Tuition payments
5. Dues, fees, or gratuities at a private club, social organization, recreational facility, or other nonpolitical organization, unless certain restrictions apply.<sup>55</sup>

11. Campaign funds may not be used to purchase immovable property or a motor vehicle.<sup>56</sup>
12. Contributions received in excess of the limits provided above shall be returned by the candidate to the contributor by check drawn on the campaign account.<sup>57</sup>
13. **Excess Funds** may be maintained in a segregated fund for use in future political campaigns or for any lawful purpose related to the following: supporting or opposing a proposition; supporting or opposing a recall petition; contributing to a gubernatorial transition and inauguration; contributing to an independent expenditure only committee; donations to a nonprofit organization; lobbying; social and issue advocacy.<sup>58</sup>
14. Only the candidate assessed a campaign finance fine can pay the fine using personal funds, contributions made to the candidate, the candidate's principal campaign committee, or an elected official's leadership committee. (Third parties cannot pay campaign finance fines or penalties.) The Supervisory Committee may prohibit the use of campaign funds to pay fines or penalties for intentional or egregious violations of the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act.<sup>59</sup>
15. Campaign funds cannot be used to pay for fines or penalties assessed pursuant to the Code of Governmental Ethics.<sup>60</sup>

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53 R.S. 18:1505.2(F)

54 R.S. 18:1505.2(I)(1)(b)(ii)

55 R.S. 18:1505.2(I)(2)(b)

56 R.S. 18:1505.2(I)(6)

57 R.S. 18:1505.2(I)(7)

58 R.S. 18:1505.2(I)(1)(a) & (b)(iii)

59 R.S. 18:1505.2(O)

60 R.S. 18:1505.2(I)(4)

16. No person shall coerce or attempt to coerce another person to give or withhold a contribution, or directly or indirectly affect an individual's employment based on a contribution or the failure to make a contribution.<sup>61</sup>
17. A candidate's immediate family member may not be paid for services provided to the candidate's campaign, unless it is to a business in which an immediate family member has any ownership interest, and provided that all of the following apply:
- (1) The business is a bona fide business that has been doing business regularly in the state for at least 12 months, providing goods/services related to the payment/expenditure, and, at the time payment/expenditure is made, and the business either:
    - (a) has been registered and in good standing with the secretary of state for at least 12 months and provides goods or services related to the payment or expenditure, or
    - (b) held an occupational license for at least 12 months that was duly issued by the appropriate local governmental subdivision;
  - (2) the payment or expenditure is made solely for campaign purposes; and,
  - (3) the payment or expenditure is made through an arm's length transaction in which the value of the goods or services furnished is commensurate with the consideration provided. An "immediate family member" is a candidate's children, his brothers and their spouses, his sisters and their spouses, his parents, his spouse, and the parents of his spouse.<sup>62</sup>
18. Persons substantially interested in the **gaming industry** are prohibited from making contributions and loans to candidates and committees that support or oppose candidates.<sup>63</sup> Any contribution received in violation of this prohibition shall be turned over by the candidate to the state within 10 days of receipt. The contributor is subject to civil penalties up to \$10,000, criminal penalties, and forfeiture of any gaming license. For a list of prohibited contributors, see R.S. 18:1505.2(L)(3).

## VIII. Advisory Opinions and Complaints

Any person requiring clarification of the CFDA's application to any activity that they plan to undertake may request an advisory opinion from the Board. The requesting party must have a demonstrable interest in the application of the CFDA and must include his name, address, and signature on the request. The Board will not issue advisory opinions as to past conduct.

Complaints regarding violations of the CFDA must be received in writing, shall be made upon personal knowledge or upon information in belief, and shall contain the name of the complainant, the identity of the person alleged to have violated the CFDA, and a clear recitation of facts describing the violation pursuant to R.S. 18:1511.4(A).

For instructions on requesting an advisory opinion or filing a complaint, see [ethics.la.gov](http://ethics.la.gov).

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<sup>61</sup> R.S. 18:1505.2(D)

<sup>62</sup> R.S. 18:1505.2(I)(5)

<sup>63</sup> R.S. 18:1505.2(L)