

1.1 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 10A.01, is amended by adding a subdivision
1.2 to read:

1.3 Subd. 16c. **Expert witness.** "Expert witness" means an individual preparing or delivering
1.4 testimony or a report consisting of information, data, or professional opinions on which the
1.5 individual has particular expertise gained through formal education, professional or
1.6 occupational training, or experience in a field in which the individual is or has been
1.7 employed.

1.8 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective June 1, 2025.

1.9 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 10A.01, subdivision 21, is amended to read:

1.10 Subd. 21. **Lobbyist.** (a) "Lobbyist" means an individual:

1.11 (1) engaged for pay or other consideration of more than \$3,000 from all sources in any
1.12 year:

1.13 (i) for the purpose of attempting to influence legislative or administrative action, or the
1.14 official action of a political subdivision, by communicating with public or local officials;
1.15 or

1.16 (ii) from a business whose primary source of revenue is derived from facilitating
1.17 government relations or government affairs services if the individual's job duties include
1.18 offering direct or indirect consulting or advice that helps the business provide those services
1.19 to clients; or

1.20 (2) who spends more than \$3,000 of the individual's personal funds, not including the
1.21 individual's own traveling expenses and membership dues, in any year for the purpose of
1.22 attempting to influence legislative or administrative action, or the official action of a political
1.23 subdivision, by communicating with public or local officials.

1.24 (b) "Lobbyist" does not include:

1.25 (1) a public official;

1.26 (2) an employee of the state, including an employee of any of the public higher education
1.27 systems;

1.28 (3) an elected local official;

1.29 (4) a nonelected local official or an employee of a political subdivision acting in an
1.30 official capacity, unless the ~~nonelected official or employee of a political subdivision spends~~
1.31 ~~more than 50 hours in any month attempting to influence legislative or administrative action,~~

2.1 ~~or the official action of a political subdivision other than the political subdivision employing~~
2.2 ~~the official or employee, by communicating or urging others to communicate with public~~
2.3 ~~or local officials, including time spent monitoring legislative or administrative action, or~~
2.4 ~~the official action of a political subdivision, and related research, analysis, and compilation~~
2.5 ~~and dissemination of information relating to legislative or administrative policy in this state,~~
2.6 ~~or to the policies of political subdivisions~~ local official or employee spends more than 50
2.7 hours in any month attempting to influence legislative or administrative action or the official
2.8 action of a metropolitan governmental unit, other than a political subdivision employing
2.9 the official or employee, by communicating with public or local officials;

2.10 (5) a party or the party's representative appearing in a proceeding before a state board,
2.11 commission, or agency of the executive branch unless the board, commission, or agency is
2.12 taking administrative action;

2.13 (6) an individual while engaged in selling goods or services to be paid for by public
2.14 funds;

2.15 (7) a finance professional subject to Security Exchange Commission regulation who
2.16 works with a registered lobbyist and a principal to the extent the finance professional is
2.17 participating in conduit financing through a political subdivision;

2.18 (8) a news medium or its employees or agents while engaged in the publishing or
2.19 broadcasting of news items, editorial comments, or paid advertisements which directly or
2.20 indirectly urge official action;

2.21 ~~(8) a paid expert witness whose testimony is requested by the body before which the~~
2.22 ~~witness is appearing, but only to the extent of preparing or delivering testimony~~ (9) an expert
2.23 witness who communicates with public or local officials, other than the Public Utilities
2.24 Commission, if the communication occurs at a public meeting or is made available to the
2.25 general public;

2.26 ~~(9)~~ (10) a party or the party's representative appearing to present a claim to the legislature
2.27 and communicating to legislators only by the filing of a claim form and supporting documents
2.28 and by appearing at public hearings on the claim; or

2.29 ~~(10)~~ (11) an individual providing information or advice to members of a collective
2.30 bargaining unit when the unit is actively engaged in the collective bargaining process with
2.31 a state agency or a political subdivision.

3.1 (c) An individual who volunteers personal time to work without pay or other consideration
 3.2 on a lobbying campaign, and who does not spend more than the limit in paragraph (a), clause
 3.3 (2), need not register as a lobbyist.

3.4 (d) An individual who provides administrative support to a lobbyist and whose salary
 3.5 and administrative expenses attributable to lobbying activities are reported as lobbying
 3.6 expenses by the lobbyist, but who does not communicate or urge others to communicate
 3.7 with public or local officials, need not register as a lobbyist.

3.8 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective June 1, 2025.

3.9 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 10A.01, subdivision 22, is amended to read:

3.10 Subd. 22. **Local official.** "Local official" means a person who holds elective office in a
 3.11 political subdivision or who is appointed to or employed in a public position in a political
 3.12 subdivision in which the person has:

3.13 (1) the authority to make, ~~to recommend,~~ major decisions regarding the expenditure or
 3.14 investment of public money;

3.15 (2) the responsibility to make recommendations to a chief executive or the governing
 3.16 body about major decisions regarding the expenditure or investment of public money; or

3.17 (3) the authority to vote ~~on~~ as a member of the governing body; on major decisions
 3.18 regarding the expenditure or investment of public money.

3.19 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective June 1, 2025.

3.20 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 10A.01, subdivision 26b, is amended to read:

3.21 Subd. 26b. **Official action of a political subdivision.** "Official action of a political
 3.22 subdivision" means:

3.23 (1) any action that requires a vote or approval by one or more elected local officials
 3.24 while acting in their official capacity; or

3.25 (2) an action by an appointed or employed local official ~~to make, to recommend, or to~~
 3.26 ~~vote on as a member of the governing body,~~ if the official uses:

3.27 (i) the authority to make major decisions regarding the expenditure or investment of
 3.28 public money;

3.29 (ii) the responsibility to make recommendations to a chief executive or the governing
 3.30 body about major decisions regarding the expenditure or investment of public money; or

4.1 (iii) the authority to vote as a member of the governing body on major decisions regarding
4.2 the expenditure or investment of public money.

4.3 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective June 1, 2025.

4.4 Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 10A.04, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

4.5 Subd. 4. **Content.** (a) A report under this section must include information the board
4.6 requires from the registration form and the information required by this subdivision for the
4.7 reporting period.

4.8 (b) A lobbyist must report the specific subjects of interest for an entity represented by
4.9 the lobbyist on each report submitted under this section. A lobbyist must describe a specific
4.10 subject of interest in the report with enough information to show the particular issue of
4.11 importance to the entity represented.

4.12 (c) A lobbyist must report every state agency that had administrative action that the
4.13 represented entity sought to influence during the reporting period. The lobbyist must report
4.14 the specific subjects of interest for each administrative action and the revisor of statutes
4.15 rule draft number assigned to the administrative rulemaking.

4.16 (d) A lobbyist must report every political subdivision that considered official action that
4.17 the represented entity sought to influence during the reporting period. The lobbyist must
4.18 report the specific subjects of interest for each action.

4.19 (e) A lobbyist must report general lobbying categories and up to four specific subjects
4.20 of interest related to each general lobbying category on which the lobbyist attempted to
4.21 influence legislative action during the reporting period. If the lobbyist attempted to influence
4.22 legislative action on more than four specific subjects of interest for a general lobbying
4.23 category, the lobbyist, in consultation with the represented entity, must determine which
4.24 four specific subjects of interest were the entity's highest priorities during the reporting
4.25 period and report only those four subjects.

4.26 (f) A lobbyist must report the Public Utilities Commission project name for each rate
4.27 setting, power plant and powerline siting, or granting of certification of need before the
4.28 Public Utilities Commission that the represented entity sought to influence during the
4.29 reporting period.

4.30 (g) A lobbyist must report the amount and nature of each gift, item, or benefit, excluding
4.31 contributions to a candidate, equal in value to \$5 or more, given or paid to any official, as
4.32 defined in section 10A.071, subdivision 1, by the lobbyist or an employer or employee of

5.1 the lobbyist. The list must include the name and address of each official to whom the gift,
5.2 item, or benefit was given or paid and the date it was given or paid.

5.3 (h) A lobbyist must report each original source of money in excess of \$500 in any year
5.4 used for the purpose of lobbying to influence legislative action, administrative action, or
5.5 the official action of a political subdivision. The list must include the name, address, and
5.6 employer, or, if self-employed, the occupation and principal place of business, of each payer
5.7 of money in excess of \$500.

5.8 (i) On each report, a lobbyist must disclose the general lobbying categories that were
5.9 lobbied on in the reporting period.

5.10 (j) A lobbyist must report each expert witness that the lobbyist requested to communicate
5.11 with public or local officials as described in section 10A.01, subdivision 21, paragraph (b),
5.12 clause (9), and each finance professional who participated in conduit financing as described
5.13 in section 10A.01, subdivision 21, paragraph (b), clause (7). The lobbyist must report the
5.14 name of the expert witness or finance professional; the employer, if any, of the expert witness
5.15 or finance professional; the government entity that received the communication from the
5.16 expert witness or finance professional; and the specific subject on which the expert witness
5.17 or finance professional communicated. The designated lobbyist must also report this
5.18 information if the expert witness or finance professional is requested to communicate by
5.19 the principal or association that the lobbyist represents.

5.20 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective June 1, 2025.

5.21 Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 10A.06, is amended to read:

5.22 **10A.06 CONTINGENT FEES PROHIBITED.**

5.23 (a) No person may act as or employ a lobbyist for compensation that is dependent upon
5.24 the result or outcome of any legislative or administrative action, or of the official action of
5.25 a political subdivision.

5.26 (b) This section does not apply to an attorney or financial professional to the extent that
5.27 the attorney or financial professional is participating in conduit financing through a political
5.28 subdivision.

5.29 (c) A person who violates this section is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

5.30 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective June 1, 2025.

6.1 **Sec. 7. [10A.066] HANDBOOK FOR LOBBYING.**

6.2 (a) The board must publish on the board's website a handbook for lobbying written in
6.3 plain language. At a minimum, the handbook must clearly explain:

6.4 (1) lobbyist registration requirements, including:

6.5 (i) an explanation of when a person is required to register as a lobbyist and what specific
6.6 types of activities count toward reaching the dollar amount thresholds in section 10A.01,
6.7 subdivision 21; and

6.8 (ii) how registration requirements apply if a person is employed by a government entity;

6.9 (2) which activities and expenses do not count toward the dollar amount thresholds in
6.10 section 10A.01, subdivision 21, but are required to be reported as lobbying disbursements
6.11 on a principal's report; and

6.12 (3) any differences between lobbying the legislature, the executive branch, a political
6.13 subdivision, and the Public Utilities Commission.

6.14 (b) The board must regularly update the handbook to reflect changes to statutes and
6.15 rules. In developing and updating the handbook, the board must consult individuals who
6.16 are registered lobbyists and individuals who are not full-time lobbyists, including individuals
6.17 from nonprofit organizations and small organizations.

6.18 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment, except
6.19 that the board is not required to publish the handbook until January 15, 2026.

6.20 **Sec. 8. [10A.52] MAJOR DECISION OF NONELECTED LOCAL OFFICIALS.**

6.21 Subdivision 1. **Major decision regarding the expenditure of public money.** (a)
6.22 Attempting to influence a nonelected local official is lobbying if the nonelected local official
6.23 uses:

6.24 (1) the authority to make major decisions regarding the expenditure or investment of
6.25 public money;

6.26 (2) the responsibility to make recommendations to a chief executive or the governing
6.27 body about major decisions regarding the expenditure or investment of public money; or

6.28 (3) the authority to vote as a member of the governing body on major decisions regarding
6.29 the expenditure or investment of public money.

6.30 (b) The mere act of submitting an application for a grant or responding to a request for
6.31 proposals is not lobbying. Communications of a purely administrative or technical nature

7.1 regarding the submission of a grant application or response to requests for proposals are
7.2 not lobbying.

7.3 Subd. 2. **Actions that are a major decision regarding public funds.** A major decision
7.4 regarding the expenditure or investment of public money includes but is not limited to a
7.5 decision on:

7.6 (1) the development and ratification of operating and capital budgets of a political
7.7 subdivision, including development of the budget request for an office or department within
7.8 the political subdivision;

7.9 (2) whether to apply for or accept state, federal, or private grant funding;

7.10 (3) selecting recipients for government grants from the political subdivision; or

7.11 (4) tax abatement, tax increment financing, or expenditures on public infrastructure used
7.12 to support private housing or business developments.

7.13 Subd. 3. **Actions that are not a major decision.** A major decision regarding the
7.14 expenditure of public money does not include:

7.15 (1) the purchase of goods or services with public funds in the operating or capital budget
7.16 of a political subdivision;

7.17 (2) collective bargaining of a labor contract on behalf of a political subdivision; or

7.18 (3) participating in discussions with a party or a party's representative regarding litigation
7.19 between the party and the political subdivision of the local official.

7.20 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective June 1, 2025.

7.21 Sec. 9. **[211B.066] DISTRIBUTION OF ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS**
7.22 **AND SAMPLE BALLOTS.**

7.23 Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have
7.24 the meanings given.

7.25 (b) "Person or entity" means any individual, committee, or association as defined in
7.26 section 10A.01, subdivision 6.

7.27 (c) "Sample ballot" means a document that is formatted and printed in a manner that so
7.28 closely resembles an official ballot that it could lead a reasonable person to believe the
7.29 document is an official ballot. A document that contains the names of particular candidates
7.30 or ballot questions alongside illustrations of a generic ballot or common ballot markings is

8.1 not a sample ballot as long as the document does not closely resemble an official ballot and
8.2 would not lead a reasonable person to believe the document is an official ballot.

8.3 Subd. 2. **Requirements.** (a) Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, any person
8.4 or entity that mails an absentee ballot application or sample ballot to anyone in the state
8.5 must comply with this section. This section does not apply to a unit of government or
8.6 employee of that unit of government when discharging official election duties.

8.7 (b) The person or entity mailing the absentee ballot application or sample ballot must
8.8 include the following statement: "This mailing is not an official election communication
8.9 from a unit of government. This [absentee ballot application or sample ballot] has not been
8.10 included at the request of a government official." If a sample ballot is enclosed, the statement
8.11 must also include the following: "This is a sample ballot, not an official ballot. You cannot
8.12 cast the enclosed sample ballot."

8.13 (c) The statement required in paragraph (b) must be printed in a typeface and format
8.14 designed to be clearly visible at the time the mailing is opened. The person or entity sending
8.15 the sample ballot or absentee ballot application must include the person or entity's name
8.16 and street address in the return address position on the mailing envelope.

8.17 (d) If an absentee ballot application is included, the space on the application to indicate
8.18 the applicant's preference to join the permanent absentee voter list must be left blank and
8.19 may only be marked by the applicant.

8.20 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective January 1, 2026.