

1 AN ACT relating to legislative ethics.

2 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

3 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS 6.601 TO 6.849 IS CREATED TO  
4 READ AS FOLLOWS:

5 *(1) A legislator, legislative agent, or the director of the Legislative Research*  
6 *Commission shall not engage in discrimination or sexual harassment of any*  
7 *legislator, legislative agent, or employee of the legislative branch of state*  
8 *government.*

9 *(2) Violation of this section by a legislator, legislative agent, or the director of the*  
10 *Legislative Research Commission is ethical misconduct.*

11 ➔SECTION 2. A NEW SECTION OF KRS 6.601 TO 6.849 IS CREATED TO  
12 READ AS FOLLOWS:

13 *As used in Sections 1 and 2 of this Act:*

14 *(1) "Discrimination" means any direct or indirect act or practice of exclusion,*  
15 *distinction, restriction, segregation, limitation, refusal, denial, or any other act or*  
16 *practice of differentiation or preference in treatment of any person, or the aiding,*  
17 *abetting, inciting, coercing, or compelling that is unlawful under KRS Chapter*  
18 *344; and*

19 *(2) (a) "Sexual harassment" means any sexual advance, request for sexual favors,*  
20 *or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature if:*

21 *1. Submission to the advances, requests, conduct, or communication is*  
22 *an explicit or implicit term or condition of obtaining or retaining*  
23 *employment;*

24 *2. Submission to or rejection of the advances, requests, conduct, or*  
25 *communication affects decisions concerning a person's employment;*

26 *3. The conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of*  
27 *unreasonably interfering with a person's ability to perform his or her*

1 job functions or of creating a hostile work environment; or  
2 4. The conduct or communication is sexual harassment as described in  
3 KRS Chapter 344, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, state or  
4 federal case law, or enforced in policy or regulation by the federal  
5 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or the Kentucky  
6 Commission on Human Rights.

7 (b) "Sexual harassment" includes such conduct or communication as:

- 8 1. Unwanted sexual contact or conduct of any kind, including sexual  
9 flirtations, touching, advances, actions, propositions, intercourse, or  
10 assault;  
11 2. Unwelcome verbal communication of a sexual nature, including lewd  
12 comments or innuendo, sexual jokes or references, or offensive  
13 personal references;  
14 3. Sexually demeaning, insulting, intimidating, or suggestive comments  
15 or behavior directed at a person or in the presence of any person in a  
16 public or private setting;  
17 4. The display in the workplace of sexually demeaning, insulting,  
18 intimidating, or suggestive objects, pictures, or photographs;  
19 5. Sexually demeaning, insulting, intimidating, or suggestive written,  
20 recorded, or electronically transmitted messages; or  
21 6. Other sexual conduct or communication not specifically described but  
22 which is substantially similar to the conduct or communication  
23 described in this subsection.

24 (c) A single incident described in this subsection may constitute sexual  
25 harassment, if it is linked to an employment benefit or is severe.

26 ➔SECTION 3. A NEW SECTION OF KRS 6.601 TO 6.849 IS CREATED TO  
27 READ AS FOLLOWS:

1 *If a provision of KRS 6.601 to 6.849 is designated as a misdemeanor or a felony, an*  
2 *alleged violation of the provision may be adjudicated by the commission as ethical*  
3 *misconduct.*

4 →Section 4. KRS 6.686 is amended to read as follows:

5 (1) (a) The commission shall have jurisdiction to investigate and proceed as to any  
6 violation of this code upon the filing of a complaint. The complaint shall be a  
7 written statement alleging a violation against one (1) or more named persons  
8 and stating the essential facts constituting the violation charged. The  
9 complaint shall be made under oath and signed by the complaining party  
10 before a person who is legally empowered to administer oaths. The  
11 commission shall have no jurisdiction in *the* absence of a complaint. A  
12 member of the commission may file a complaint.

13 (b) Within ten (10) days of the filing of a complaint, the commission shall cause a  
14 copy of the complaint to be served by certified mail upon the person alleged to  
15 have committed the violation.

16 (c) Within twenty (20) days of service of the complaint the person alleged to have  
17 committed the violation may file an answer with the commission. The filing  
18 of an answer is wholly permissive, and no inferences shall be drawn from the  
19 failure to file an answer.

20 (d) Not later than ten (10) days after the commission receives the answer, or the  
21 time expires for the filing of an answer, the commission shall initiate a  
22 preliminary inquiry into any alleged violation of this code. If the commission  
23 determines *upon the affirmative vote of at least five (5) members, at either a*  
24 *regularly scheduled meeting, or a teleconference meeting called upon the*  
25 *chair's oral or written notice to all members of the Commission,* that the  
26 complaint fails to state a claim of an ethics violation, the complaint shall be  
27 dismissed.

1 (e) Within thirty (30) days of the commencement of the inquiry, the commission  
2 shall give notice of the status of the complaint and a general statement of the  
3 applicable law to the person alleged to have committed a violation.

4 (f) A complaint may be filed against a former legislator, a former legislative  
5 agent, or a former employer of a legislative agent within one (1) year of the  
6 date he or she left office or terminated lobbying registration, if the alleged  
7 violation occurred within one (1) year prior to the date he or she left office  
8 or terminated lobbying registration. These limitations of one (1) year shall  
9 not apply if a complaint alleges a violation of KRS 6.757.

10 (g) The applicable criminal statutes of limitation shall not apply to ethical  
11 misconduct under KRS 6.601 to 6.849.

12 (2) All commission proceedings, including the complaint and answer and other records  
13 relating to a preliminary inquiry, shall be confidential ~~until a final determination is~~  
14 ~~made by the commission~~, except:

15 (a) The commission may turn over to the Attorney General, the United States  
16 Attorney, Commonwealth's attorney, or county attorney of the jurisdiction in  
17 which the offense allegedly occurred, evidence which may be used in criminal  
18 proceedings; ~~and~~

19 (b) If the complainant or alleged violator publicly discloses the existence of a  
20 preliminary inquiry, the commission may publicly confirm the existence of the  
21 inquiry and, in its discretion, make public any documents which were issued  
22 to either party; and

23 (c) An allegation of discrimination or sexual harassment by an employee of the  
24 legislative branch of state government shall be communicated by the  
25 executive director of the commission or his or her designee to the chief  
26 human resources officer of the Legislative Research Commission no later  
27 than one (1) business day after receipt of the allegation. Any allegation or

1                   *complaint referred to or received by the Legislative Research Commission*  
2                   *from the commission or directly from an individual, and any records related*  
3                   *to an inquiry into the allegation or complaint, shall be confidential.*

4       (3) The commission shall afford a person who is the subject of a preliminary inquiry an  
5       opportunity to appear in response to the allegations in the complaint. The person  
6       shall have the right to be represented by counsel, to appear and be heard under oath,  
7       and to offer evidence in response to the allegations in the complaint.

8       (4) If the commission determines by the answer or in the preliminary inquiry that the  
9       complaint does not allege facts sufficient to constitute a violation of this code, the  
10      commission shall immediately terminate the matter and notify in writing the  
11      complainant and the person alleged to have committed a violation. The commission  
12      may confidentially inform the alleged violator of potential violations and provide  
13      information to ensure future compliance with the law. If the alleged violator  
14      publicly discloses the existence of such action by the commission, the commission  
15      may confirm the existence of the action and, in its discretion, make public any  
16      documents that were issued to the alleged violator.

17      (5) If the commission, during the course of the preliminary inquiry, finds probable  
18      cause to believe that a violation of this code has occurred, the commission shall  
19      notify the alleged violator of the finding, and the commission may, upon majority  
20      vote:

21      (a) Due to mitigating circumstances such as lack of significant economic  
22      advantage or gain by the alleged violator, lack of significant economic loss to  
23      the state, or lack of significant impact on public confidence in government,  
24      confidentially reprimand, in writing, the alleged violator for potential  
25      violations of the law and provide a copy of the reprimand to the presiding  
26      officer of the house in which the alleged violator serves, or the alleged  
27      violator's employer, if the alleged violator is a legislative agent. The

1 proceedings leading to a confidential reprimand and the reprimand itself shall  
 2 remain confidential except that, if the alleged violator publicly discloses the  
 3 existence of such an action, the commission may confirm the existence of the  
 4 action and, in its discretion, make public any documents which were issued to  
 5 the alleged violator; or

6 (b) Initiate an adjudicatory proceeding to determine whether there has been a  
 7 violation.

8 (6) Any person who knowingly files with the commission a false complaint of  
 9 misconduct on the part of any legislator or other person shall be guilty of a Class A  
 10 misdemeanor.

11 **(7) Notwithstanding any other provision of KRS 61.805 to 61.850 or 61.870 to**  
 12 **61.884, proceedings conducted and documents created by the commission or the**  
 13 **Legislative Research Commission under or related to Sections 1, 2, or 4 of this**  
 14 **Act shall be confidential.**

15 ➔Section 5. KRS 6.701 is amended to read as follows:

16 (1) The commission shall establish and supervise a program of ethics education and  
 17 training, including~~[-]~~ but not limited to:~~[-]~~

18 **(a)** Preparing and publishing an ethics education manual;~~[-]~~

19 **(b)** Designing and supervising orientation courses for new legislators;~~[-]~~ and

20 **(c)** Designing and supervising current issues seminars for legislators **and**  
 21 **employees of the legislative branch of state government.**

22 (2) The commission shall establish, supervise, and conduct a program of ethics  
 23 education and training designed specifically for and made available to legislative  
 24 agents.

25 ➔Section 6. KRS 6.711 is amended to read as follows:

26 (1) The commission shall design the general curriculum of orientation courses, which  
 27 shall include but not be limited to explanations and discussions of the ethics laws,

1 administrative regulations, relevant internal policies, specific technical and legal  
2 requirements, summaries of advisory opinions, underlying purposes and principles  
3 of ethics laws, examples of practical application of the laws and principles, and a  
4 question-and-answer participatory segment regarding common problems and  
5 situations. The commission shall prepare the methods and materials necessary to  
6 implement the curriculum.

- 7 (2) The commission shall:
- 8 (a) Administer the orientation courses for legislators;
  - 9 (b) Designate instructors to conduct their courses who shall be trained by the  
10 commission; and
  - 11 (c) Notify legislators regarding attendance in these courses.
- 12 (3) The orientation courses shall be conducted for new legislators in December of each  
13 even-numbered year. Each course shall be at least two (2) hours in length and shall  
14 be designed for approval by the Kentucky Bar Association for continuing legal  
15 education~~[ethics]~~ credits which the bar association may require.
- 16 (4) To facilitate participant interaction, those portions of the courses dedicated to group  
17 participation may be closed to the public.
- 18 (5) Each legislator shall complete the initial orientation course offered under this  
19 section. Each legislator elected after the initial orientation course shall complete the  
20 next orientation course conducted. The commission may grant permission for a  
21 legislator to attend a later course for good cause shown.

22 ➔Section 7. KRS 6.716 is amended to read as follows:

- 23 (1) The commission shall design the general curriculum of a current issues seminar,  
24 which shall include, but not be limited to, discussion of changes in the ethics laws  
25 and administrative regulations, new advisory opinions, current ethical issues  
26 confronting public servants, practical application of ethics laws and principles to  
27 specific issues and situations, and development of problem-solving skills. The

1 commission shall prepare the methods and materials necessary to implement the  
2 curriculum.

3 (2) The commission shall:

4 (a) Administer the current issues seminars for legislators and training for  
5 employees of the legislative branch of state government;

6 (b) Designate instructors to conduct their current issues courses who shall be  
7 trained by the commission; and

8 (c) Notify legislators regarding attendance in these seminars.

9 (3) The current issues seminars for legislators shall be conducted in January of each  
10 year. Each course shall be at least two (2)~~three (3)~~ hours in length and shall be  
11 designed for approval by the Kentucky Bar Association for continuing legal  
12 education~~[ethics]~~ credits which the bar association may require.

13 (4) To facilitate participant interaction, those portions of the seminars dedicated to  
14 group participation may be closed to the public.

15 (5) Each legislator, after completion of an orientation training course, shall complete  
16 one (1) current issues seminar annually.

17 ➔Section 8. KRS 7.101 is amended to read as follows:

18 The Legislative Research Commission shall require all members of the General Assembly  
19 to attend a sexual and workplace harassment training course to be held at the beginning of  
20 each session of the General Assembly. The Legislative Research Commission shall  
21 coordinate the development and presentation of the training course, with the assistance  
22 of the Legislative Ethics Commission.