

House Rules Resolution - Lobbyist Ethics Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Angela Romero

LONG TITLE**General Description:**

This resolution modifies House rules related to lobbyist ethics.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- defines terms;
- prohibits a volunteer lobbyist from certain House spaces under certain circumstances;
- prohibits a lobbyist, volunteer lobbyist, or government official from:
 - participating in the prioritization of legislation for floor action or referral to a standing committee; and
 - using a representative's, elected or appointed state official's, state employee's, or legislative employee's identification badge; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Legislative Rules Affected:

AMENDS:

HR2-4-101

HR2-4-101.2

HR2-4-101.3

HR2-4-101.4

HR5-1-101

HR5-2-101

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the state of Utah:

Section 1. **HR2-4-101** is amended to read:

HR2-4-101 . Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

- (1) "Department head" means the same as that term is defined in Utah Code Section 63A-17-807 or a department head's designee.
- (2) "Former legislator" means ~~[a person]~~ an individual who is not a current member of the Legislature, but who served in the Utah House or Utah Senate at one time.
- (3)(a) "Guest" means an individual who is afforded access to the House space under a provision of this chapter, who is not an individual described in Subsection (3)(c) or a special guest as described under HR2-4-101.2(5).
- (b) "Guest" includes:
 - (i) the governor, the lieutenant governor, the state attorney general, the state treasurer, the state auditor, and governor's staff; and
 - (ii) a former legislator who is an individual described in Subsection (3)(b)(i).
- (c) "Guest" does not mean a legislator, a member of House or Senate staff, a member of professional legislative staff, a House intern, ~~[or a lobbyist]~~ a lobbyist, or a volunteer lobbyist.
- (4) "House conference rooms" means one of the conference rooms adjacent to the House lounge, speaker's office, or the majority caucus room.
- (5) "House halls" means the passageways that allow access to:
 - (a) the House chamber;
 - (b) the House lounge;
 - (c) the House offices; or
 - (d) any other nonpublic areas adjoining the House chamber.
- (6) "House intern" means an individual who is:
 - (a) an official participant in the student intern program sponsored by the Utah Legislature and administered by the Office of Legislative Services; and
 - (b) is assigned to a representative.
- (7) "House offices" means:
 - (a) Representatives' offices adjacent to the House chamber;
 - (b) Representatives' offices on the third and fourth floors of the capitol building;
 - (c) Representatives' offices in the House building; and
 - (d) kitchens, restrooms, elevators, and any auxiliary rooms in the nonpublic areas connected with the offices listed above.
- (8) "House or Senate staff" means an individual who is employed directly by the House or Senate.

- (9)(a) "House space" means the House chamber, House lounge, House offices, House halls, and House conference rooms.
- (b) "House space" does not mean the common public space outside the House chamber.
- (10) "Immediate family" means any parent, spouse, child, grandparent, grandchild, great-grandparent, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, or nephew of a member of the House, provided that the individual is not a lobbyist or volunteer lobbyist.
- (11) "Lobbying" means communicating with a legislator for the purpose of influencing the passage, defeat, amendment, or postponement of legislative action.
- (12) "Lobbyist" ~~[means an individual who is required to register as a lobbyist by Utah Code Section 36-11-103]~~ means the same as that term is defined in HR5-1-101.
- (13) "Professional legislative staff" means an individual employed by ~~[one of the Legislature's profession-based staff offices, namely the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel, the Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, the Office of the Legislative Auditor General, or the Office of Legislative Services]~~ :
- (a) the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel;
- (b) the Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst;
- (c) the Office of the Legislative Auditor General; or
- (d) the Office of Legislative Services.
- (14) "Volunteer lobbyist" means the same as that term is defined in HR5-1-101.

Section 2. **HR2-4-101.2** is amended to read:

HR2-4-101.2 . Admittance to House floor -- Prohibition against lobbying.

- (1) Subject to the requirements of this rule, while the House is convened in annual general session or special session, only the following individuals are permitted on the House floor:
- (a) a legislator;
- (b) a member of House or Senate staff;
- (c) a member of professional legislative staff;
- (d) a House intern;
- (e) a former legislator who is not:
- (i) a lobbyist;
- (ii) a volunteer lobbyist; or
- ~~[(ii)]~~ (iii) the governor, lieutenant governor, state attorney general, state treasurer, or state auditor;
- (f) a guest; and

(g) a department head.

(2)(a) While the House is convened in annual general session or special session, a representative may invite one guest who is not a lobbyist or volunteer lobbyist to accompany the representative on the House floor, provided that:

(i) the guest sits next to the representative;

(ii) the representative ensures that the guest does not impede staff work, distract from the work of the House, or encroach on a neighboring representative's desk;

(iii) the guest complies with the requirements of this rule, HR2-4-102, and HR2-4-103; and

(iv) no representative objects.

(b) A representative may have no more than one guest on the House floor at any one time.

(c) An individual described in Subsections (1)(e) through (g) is prohibited from lobbying on the House floor.

(3) While the House is convened in annual general session or special session, a lobbyist or volunteer lobbyist is not permitted on the House floor.

(4) The speaker or the speaker's designee may authorize special guests to be present in the House chamber or on the House floor.

(5)(a) A representative sponsoring a piece of legislation being debated by the House may, with the permission of the speaker, invite one department head with expertise on the legislation to assist the sponsor during the course of debate.

(b) A representative who invites a department head to assist the representative under Subsection (5)(a) shall ensure that the department head:

(i) does not engage in lobbying while on the House floor; and

(ii) promptly exits the House floor when the House moves to another item of business.

Section 3. **HR2-4-101.3** is amended to read:

HR2-4-101.3 . Admittance to the House lounge.

(1) While the House is convened in annual general session or special session only the following individuals are permitted in the House lounge:

(a) a legislator;

(b) a member of House or Senate staff;

(c) a member of professional legislative staff;

(d) a member of the representative's immediate family;

(e) a House intern;

(f) a former legislator who is not:

(i) a lobbyist;

(ii) a volunteer lobbyist; or

[(ii)] (iii) the governor, lieutenant governor, state attorney general, state treasurer, or state auditor; and

(g) a lobbyist, volunteer lobbyist, or guest as provided in Subsection (2).

(2)(a) A representative may invite a small number of lobbyists, volunteer lobbyists, or guests to meet with the representative in the House lounge for the purpose of educating the lobbyists, volunteer lobbyists, or guests about the legislative process or to discuss specific legislative issues.

(b) The representative shall ensure that the lobbyists, volunteer lobbyists, and guests leave the House space when the meeting is over.

Section 4. **HR2-4-101.4** is amended to read:

HR2-4-101.4 . Admittance to the House offices, conference rooms, and halls.

(1) While the House is convened in annual general session or special session only the following individuals are permitted in the House offices:

(a) a legislator;

(b) a member of House or Senate staff;

(c) a member of professional legislative staff;

(d) a House intern;

(e) a member of the representative's immediate family;

(f) a former legislator who is not:

(i) a lobbyist;

(ii) a volunteer lobbyist; or

[(ii)] (iii) the governor, lieutenant governor, state attorney general, state treasurer, or state auditor; and

(g) a lobbyist, volunteer lobbyist, or guest, as provided in Subsection (3).

(2) An administrative assistant who is not a House intern is permitted in:

(a) the office of the representative who is employing the administrative assistant;

(b) the common areas of the House offices;

(c) a conference room in the House space, when meeting to discuss legislative business with a representative; and

(d) the office of another representative with the consent of that representative.

(3)(a) A representative may invite a small number of lobbyists, volunteer lobbyists, or

168 guests to meet with the representative in the representative's House office or a House
169 conference room to discuss specific legislative issues.

170 (b) The representative shall ensure that the lobbyists, volunteer lobbyists, and guests
171 leave the House space when the meeting is over.

172 (4)(a) While the House is convened as a body on the House floor, and except as
173 provided in Subsection (4)(b), only the following individuals are allowed in the
174 House halls:

175 (i) a legislator;

176 (ii) a member of House or Senate staff;

177 (iii) a member of professional legislative staff;

178 (iv) a House intern;

179 (v) an administrative assistant who is not a House intern; and

180 (vi) a former legislator who is not:

181 (A) a lobbyist;

182 (B) a volunteer lobbyist; or

183 ~~[(B)]~~ (C) the governor, lieutenant governor, state attorney general, state treasurer,
184 or state auditor.

185 (b) Immediate family of a representative, a lobbyist, a volunteer lobbyist, a guest, an
186 administrative assistant who is not a House intern, or any other authorized individual
187 who is in transit to the House chamber, House lounge, or House offices may pass
188 through the House halls when traveling to and from an authorized destination.

189 (5) An administrative assistant to a representative who is a not a House intern is not
190 permitted to use or be issued an access badge that grants access to the House floor,
191 House lounge, House offices, House conference rooms, or House hallways.

192 Section 5. **HR5-1-101** is amended to read:

193 **HR5-1-101 . Definitions.**

194 As used in this ~~[House Rule]~~ title:

195 (1)(a) "Government official" means:

196 (i) an individual elected to a position in state or local government when acting within
197 the individual's official capacity; and

198 (ii) an individual appointed to or employed in a full-time or part-time position by
199 state or local government when acting within the scope of employment or within
200 the individual's official capacity.

201 (b) "Government official" does not ~~[mean]~~ include a member of the legislative branch of

state government.

(2) "Lobbyist" ~~[has the meaning identified in Utah Code Subsections 36-11-102(11)(a) and (b)]~~ means an individual who is required to register as a lobbyist under Utah Code Title 36, Chapter 11, Lobbyist Disclosure and Regulation Act.

(3)(a) "Volunteer lobbyist" means ~~[a person not registered as a lobbyist who engages in lobbying within the meaning of Utah Code Subsection 36-11-102(10).]~~ an individual who:

(i) engages in lobbying as defined in HR2-4-101; and

(ii) is not required to register as a lobbyist under Utah Code Title 36, Chapter 11, Lobbyist Disclosure and Regulation Act.

(b) "Volunteer lobbyist" does not ~~[mean]~~ include an individual who appears on the individual's own behalf to engage in lobbying ~~[within the meaning of Utah Code Subsection 36-11-102(10)]~~ as defined in HR2-4-101.

Section 6. **HR5-2-101** is amended to read:

HR5-2-101 . Lobbyist code of ethics.

A lobbyist, volunteer lobbyist, or government official may not:

- (1) attempt to influence a representative, elected or appointed state official, state employee, or legislative employee by means of deceit or by threat of violence or economic or political reprisal against any person or property, with intent by doing so to alter or affect the representative's, elected or appointed state official's, state employee's, or legislative employee's decision, vote, opinion, or action concerning any matter that is to be considered or performed by the representative, official, or employee or the agency or body of which the representative, official, or employee is a member;
- (2) knowingly provide false information to a representative, elected or appointed state official, state employee, or legislative employee as to any material fact pertaining to any legislation;
- (3) knowingly omit, conceal, or falsify in any manner information required by the lobbyist registration and lobbyist disclosure reports;
- (4) participate in committee assignments or leadership races of the House of Representatives;
- (5) participate in the prioritization of legislation for floor action or referral to a standing committee;
- (6) cause or influence the introduction of any piece of legislation, substitute, or amendment for the purpose of afterwards becoming employed to secure its passage or defeat;

236 ~~[(6)]~~ (7) misappropriate or misuse legislative office supplies;
237 ~~[(7)]~~ (8) use legislative reproduction or facsimile machines without paying for that use;
238 ~~[(8)]~~ (9) enter or use a representative's, elected or appointed state official's, state employee's,
239 or legislative employee's office, phone, computer, identification badge, or parking space
240 without explicit permission;
241 ~~[(9)]~~ (10) attempt to remove or remove any document from any representative's or
242 legislative employee's office, desk, file cabinet, reproduction machine, facsimile
243 machine, or any other place without explicit permission;
244 ~~[(10)]~~ (11) engage in discriminatory conduct, as defined in Legislative Management
245 Committee Policy E -- Legislative Workplace Discrimination Prevention, toward a
246 representative or legislative employee;
247 ~~[(11)]~~ (12) offer employment to a representative or legislative employee that impairs the
248 representative's or legislative employee's independence of judgement as to their official
249 duties;
250 ~~[(12)]~~ (13) offer employment that would require or induce a representative or legislative
251 employee to disclose records classified as private, protected, or controlled;
252 ~~[(13)]~~ (14) use or disclose for personal financial gain any records classified as private,
253 protected, or controlled that were obtained from a representative or legislative employee
254 or conspire with any person for that purpose; or
255 ~~[(14)]~~ (15) induce or seek to induce a representative or legislative employee to commit a
256 violation of any provision of this House rule.

257 Section 7. **Effective Date.**

258 This resolution takes effect upon a successful vote for final passage.