

# **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE LOBBYISTS ETHICAL PRINCIPLES**

## **PREAMBLE**

The National Association of State Lobbyists (NASL) is a nonprofit association founded to further the professional standards of lobbyists, government affairs professionals and advocates who focus on the state legislative, regulatory or administrative level.

The Association is comprised of individuals who have strong track records and experience in lobbying, government affairs or advocacy at the state level, selected by their peers because of their leadership, competence and sense of responsibility as professionals.

Founded in 1998, the association's purposes are to foster best practices of lobbying and representing clients at the state level; promote the highest standards of integrity, trustworthiness and credibility in state-based advocacy; and work within our profession, and with others, to better the practices of lobbying and advocacy.

We believe these principles are critically important to our profession and the legislative and governmental processes. The members of the National Association of State Lobbyists believe that it is the responsibility of each government affairs professional or lobbyist to strive to conduct their activities with the highest standards of ethical behavior, in accordance with the following principles.

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## **PRINCIPLES OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE LOBBYISTS**

### **FULL COMPLIANCE WITH ALL APPLICABLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

- Comply with all federal and state laws, regulations and local ordinances that apply to lobbying and related government affairs activities.
- Never cause or encourage any public official, policymaker or other person to violate

- any law or rule applicable to them.
- Protect their clients from any scandal or violation.

## **INTEGRITY**

- Strive to maintain professional relationships based upon honesty and integrity.
- Never undertake or continue representations that create, or are likely to create, conflicts of interest in the absence of the knowledgeable consent of the clients involved.
- Disclose a potential conflict to a client and resolve it in a manner that is clearly understood and acceptable to the client, or withdraw from the conflicting representation.

## **TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY ARE OUR MOST IMPORTANT GOALS, AND HONEST AND ACCURATE INFORMATION OUR MOST IMPORTANT TOOLS**

- Provide accurate, current and factual information
- Accurately represent the client's positions and policies.

## **THE REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT AND ITS PROCESSES, REQUIRE INFORMED DECISION MAKERS AND FAIR PARTICIPATION BY ALL INTERESTED PARTIES**

- Strengthen and protect the integrity of the public policy process.
- Serve as a source of reliable information.
- Exhibit proper respect for our democratic institutions and processes, public officials and policymakers, and fellow government affairs professionals.
- Never undermine public confidence and trust in the governmental process.
- Assist in ensuring that decision makers have balanced information.

## **AS LEADERS IN OUR PROFESSION WE ENSURE THAT OTHERS UNDERSTAND ITS VALUE IN THE PROCESS**

- Uphold the dignity and standards of the government affairs profession.
- Defend our role as legitimate participants in the public policy process, and the right of every interested participant to exercise their right to petition government.