

New Part 153 to Title 19 of the NYCRR is added as follows:

This Part shall be known as “Political Consultant Filings”.

153.1 Definitions

For the purposes of this Part, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- (a) “Address” shall mean business address, except that in the case of an individual with no business address then address shall mean home address.
- (b) “Client” shall mean a person or entity who in the preceding calendar year retained or hired the political consultant relating to matters before any state or local government agency, authority or official, including services, advice or consultation relating to any state or local government contract for real property, goods or services, an appearance in a ratemaking proceeding, an appearance in a regulatory matter, or an appearance in a legislative matter other than matters described in subparagraph (E) of the second undesignated paragraph of subdivision (c) of section one-c of the legislative law.
- (c) “Department” shall mean the Department of State.
- (d) “Government employee” shall mean any employee of the State, a county, city, town, village, or any other political subdivision or civil division of the State, or a county, city, town, village. “Government employee” shall also include any employee of a public authority, commission or public benefit corporation.
- (e) “Political consultant” shall mean a person who holds himself or herself out to persons in this state as a person who performs political consulting services in a professional capacity and who is usually compensated, excluding reimbursement for expenses, for such services. “Political consultant” shall not include a government employee while acting in his/her official capacity, except when such employee also engages in outside political consulting services, in which case such outside activities would be subject to the reporting requirements of this Part.
- (f) “Political consulting services” shall mean services provided by a political consultant to or on behalf of an elected public official in New York state or to or on behalf of a candidate for elected office in New York state, or to or on behalf of a person nominated for elected public office which services: (1) assist or are intended to assist in a campaign for nomination for election or election to office in New York state, including fundraising activities, voter outreach, composition and distribution of promotional literature, advertisements, or other similar communications, as set forth in section 14-106 of the election law; or (2) consist of political advice to an elected public official or candidate for elected public office in New York state or person nominated for elected public office; provided, however, that political consulting services shall not include bona fide legal work directly related to litigation or legal advice with regard to securing a place on the ballot, the petitioning process, the conduct of an election, or which involves the election law. “Political consulting services” shall not include activities that are solely ministerial in nature that do not include any substantive advice or counseling, such as canvassing.
- (g) “Professional capacity” shall mean activities offered or undertaken for a fee or other valuable consideration.
- (h) “Official capacity” shall mean activities conducted within a government employee’s official duties or responsibilities.

(i) "Reporting period" shall mean the six month period within a calendar year starting January first and ending June thirtieth or the six month period within a calendar year starting July first and ending December thirty-first.

(j) "Telephone number" shall mean business telephone number, except that in the case of an individual with no business telephone number then telephone number shall mean home telephone number.

153.2 Registration of certain service providers

Every political consultant shall, within ten days of the close of the applicable reporting period, unless otherwise directed by the Department, file with the Department the registration form prescribed by this Part.

153.3 Registration form

(a) Every political consultant shall file with the Department a registration form which shall include the following information:

(1) the name, address, and telephone number of the political consultant;

(2) the name, address, and telephone number of each sitting elected public official, candidate for elected public office, and person nominated for elected public office who the political consultant provided political consulting services to;

(3) the name, address, and telephone number of each client who retains or hires a political consultant in the preceding calendar year provided, that in the event the client is an entity, at least one natural person who has a controlling interest in such entity shall be identified;

(4) a brief description of the nature of the political consulting services provided to each identified client; and

(5) such other information as directed by the Department.

153.4 Civil penalties

(a) Notwithstanding any other law or rule to the contrary, the Department shall, before imposing any civil penalty, notify the political consultant in writing that the registration form required by this Part was not filed and shall afford the political consultant an opportunity to be heard in person or by counsel at an administrative hearing. Such notification shall be served personally or by certified mail to the political consultant's last known address or in any manner authorized by the civil practice law and rules.

(b) Administrative hearings held pursuant to this Section shall be conducted by the Department's Office of Administrative Hearings pursuant to Part 400 of Title 19 of the NYCRR and subject to the rules provided therein.

(c) Any notice issued pursuant to this Section shall be served at least ten days prior to the date set for the administrative hearing.