

Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board Appointments

The Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board oversees Minnesota's laws on campaign finance and disclosure, lobbyist reporting, economic interest statements, and conflicts of interest. These laws generally apply to state and certain local public officials, candidates for state offices, organizations engaged in campaign activity, and individuals employed to lobby the legislature, an administrative agency, or certain local governments on behalf of a client or principal association.

How are board members appointed and approved?

The board consists of six members, appointed by the governor. After appointment, an appointee must be approved by three-fifths of the total membership of the House and three-fifths of the total membership of the Senate, acting separately.

Nominees are typically selected through the state's open appointments process. The chair and the vice chair of the board are elected, from its own membership, by the board itself.

Historically, the committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate with responsibility for elections have conducted public hearings to review the qualifications of each nominee and recommend whether the nomination should be confirmed.

What is the deadline for approving appointments?

Appointments may be made by the governor at any time when there is or will be a vacancy. The deadline for approval by the legislature is the earlier of 45 legislative days after appointment, or adjournment sine die. A legislative day is a day that either the House or Senate meets in session during a biennium.

- If either house fails to act on approval of an appointee within that time period, the appointment terminates the day after the 45th legislative day or adjournment sine die, whichever applies.
- If either house votes not to confirm an appointment, the appointment terminates the day after the vote not to confirm.

What are the membership requirements for the board?

The board members must meet the following requirements:

- Two members must be former legislators of different parties
- Two must be persons who have not been public officials as defined by law, held any political party office other than precinct delegate, or been elected to a partisan office in the three years before the appointment

- Two must support different political parties
- Overall, no more than three board members may support the same political party
- No board member may be a lobbyist while serving on the board

Board members (and all board employees) are subject to the same restrictions in law on political activities that apply to other state employees. In addition, a member or board employee may not be a candidate for (or holder of) an elected public office for which party designation is required, or a candidate for or office holder of an office at the national, state, congressional district, legislative district, county, or precinct level in a political party.

How long do board members serve?

Board terms are four years and end the first Monday in January.

How are vacancies handled?

Vacancies are filled by appointment for the duration of the time left in the term. The new appointee must meet the criteria met by the departed member. The approval process for individuals filling vacancies is the same as for members appointed to a full term.

Do board members receive compensation?

Members receive \$55 per day if authorized by the board, plus expenses authorized by the Commissioner of Management and Budget's plan.

Members who are full-time state or local government employees may not receive the daily payment and may receive child care reimbursement only for time outside normal work hours. These individuals must not suffer loss in compensation or benefits as a result of board service and may receive expense reimbursement from the board unless compensated by another source.

May board members be removed?

The governor may remove a member during a term: (1) for cause, after notice and hearing; or (2) after the member misses three consecutive meetings.

For more information: Contact legislative analyst Matt Gehring at 651-296-5052.

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