

ETHICS AT A GLANCE

Are you fundraising online for a charitable cause?



Be aware state ethics rules do apply!



Overview

Technology has expanded how charitable fundraising can be conducted—shifting fundraising for many causes to crowdfunding website platforms (e.g., GoFundMe) that allow people to donate money online to an individual or an organization. A state employee may engage in charitable fundraising—whether online or by other means—with a few caveats. Public Officers Law § 74, Public Officers Law § 73(5), and Commission regulations regarding gifts restrict an employee’s fundraising efforts.

Generally, state employees are prohibited from:

- Using their official title, position, or authority in fundraising efforts;
- Using work email accounts or computers in fundraising efforts; and
- Soliciting contributions from:
 - subordinates
 - those with a matter pending before them
 - those with official matters involving them recently

If you plan on raising money online for yourself or another, do not hesitate to contact your agency’s Ethics Officer or COELIG’s Attorney of the Day to determine how these rules may apply to your own fundraising efforts.

[More information on gift restrictions is available on COELIG’s website.](#)

Questions?

Contact us by calling 1-800-87-ETHICS (3-8442) or by e-mail at GUIDANCE@ETHICS.NY.GOV.

All guidance communications with COELIG are confidential.

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