



Public Comment Policy for Ethics Commission Meetings

February 2026

I. Purpose

The North Dakota Ethics Commission (“Commission”) welcomes and values public input during its meetings and will host a public comment period during its regular meetings. The public comment period during the Commission’s regular meetings will create a limited public forum. This policy outlines the procedures and parameters for public comment to ensure individuals have a fair opportunity to be heard while maintaining an orderly and efficient meeting.

II. Comments

(A) All comments must:

- (1) relate to an agenda item from the current or previous Commission meeting agenda, or to the Commission’s areas of work—transparency, corruption, elections, and lobbying;
- (2) be pertinent to the work of the Commission; and
- (3) be directed to the Commission as a whole.

(B) Comments may not:

- (1) be defamatory, abusive, harassing, or unlawful;
- (2) include information that is exempt or confidential under North Dakota open records law, including confidential information that constitutes submission of a complaint to the Commission or information related to a complaint as outlined in N.D.C.C. ch. 54-66; or
- (3) interfere with the orderly conduct of the meeting.

(C) Individuals unable or unwilling to speak in person may submit written comments using the public input form on the Commission’s website, www.ethicscommission.nd.gov, or by sending an email to ethicscommission@nd.gov. If received twenty-four hours before the regular meeting, the comments will be distributed to the commissioners before the meeting. Comments submitted less than twenty-four hours before the regular meeting will be distributed to the commissioners after the meeting.

III. Public Comment Request Form

- (A) At the Commission’s discretion and as resources allow, the Commission holds regular meetings in two formats: (1) in person with a virtual option; and (2) virtually.
- (B) To allow both in-person and virtual attendees the equal opportunity to participate, each individual who wishes to provide oral public comment must submit a public comment request form prior to the meeting being called to order. The Commission

will make every effort for an individual requesting to comment to be heard at the meeting.

- (C) The public comment request form must be complete and include:
 - (1) the individual's name;
 - (2) the individual's address;
 - (3) the agenda item from the current or previous meeting agenda, or the topic within the Commission's areas of work—transparency, corruption, elections, and lobbying—the individual wishes to address; and
 - (4) information on whether the individual is requesting to comment virtually or in person.
- (D) Missing required information on the public comment request form will disqualify the individual from speaking at the meeting.
- (E) The public comment request form will request the individual's email address and phone number, which the individual may provide at the individual's discretion.
- (F) Individuals who wish to provide public comment virtually must submit the public comment request form on the Commission's website. Individuals who wish to provide public comment during an in-person meeting must submit the public comment request form on the Commission's website or on the physical form as provided by the Commission at the in-person meeting.

IV. Procedure for Public Comments

- (A) A public comment agenda item will be the third agenda item at all regular meetings of the Commission.
- (B) Each individual who submits a complete public comment request form will be allotted ten minutes to make comments, inclusive of questions from the commissioners and answers to such questions. The individual will be notified by the chair or acting chair when ten minutes have expired.
- (C) The public comment agenda item will be limited to a total of one hour, regardless of how many individuals have submitted public comment request forms.
- (D) Individuals who appear in person will be called to present public comments first, in the order that public comment request forms were submitted. Virtual attendees will be called on to present public comments in the order that public comment request forms were submitted.
- (E) Individuals will not have access to audiovisual technology belonging to the Commission or the State of North Dakota for presentation purposes. If the meeting room is equipped, individuals will have access to the publicly available microphone at in-person meetings for the purposes of providing comment.
- (F) Individuals may not yield the individual's allotted time to another individual.
- (G) The chair or acting chair may suspend the time limitations at the discretion of the chair or the acting chair.
- (H) An individual providing public comment who violates this policy forfeits the opportunity to provide public comment as determined by the chair or acting chair.