

FAQs
Two-Year Rule

- **What is the “two-year rule”?**
 - Section 2-11.1 (q) (“two-year rule”) of the County Ethics Code prohibits former local government employees from lobbying their former County or municipal employers for two years following the termination of their employment.

- To whom does the two-year rule apply?
 - Applies to the following municipal and County personnel:
 - Elected officials: mayor, commissioner, councilperson
 - Staff members of elected officials
 - County or city manager
 - all County and municipal employees

- **Which date is used to calculate the two-year rule?**
 - The two-year period is calculated beginning on the day after the last day that the employee receives benefits or compensation from the County or municipality, such as payments for accrued vacation time, sick time, insurance, etc.

- **As a former County or municipal employee, may I work for a consultant, vendor, or contractor that does business with my former County or municipal employer?**
 - Yes, a former employee may obtain work with contractors, consultants, vendors, etc., of their former County or municipal employer. However, the two-year rule prohibits former employees from **lobbying** their County or municipal employer for two years following the termination of their employment.

- **What constitutes prohibited lobbying under the two-year rule?**
 - Lobbying activities are interpreted very broadly under the two-year rule. Individuals formerly employed by the County or a municipality within the past two years are prohibited from performing activities intended to influence *any official determination, regardless of whether the determination will foreseeably be decided or recommended* by any of the County’s or city's commissions, boards, committees, or the County or city manager. Unlike the general lobbyist ordinance, the two-year rule expands the definition of lobbying to include advocating for decisions that may be made at the sole discretion of individual County or municipal personnel, not necessarily by a voting body.

- **May a former employee represent third parties at publicly noticed quasi-judicial proceedings?**
 - Yes, an exception to the two-year lobbying prohibition allows former employees to represent third parties at publicly noticed quasi-judicial proceedings.

- **May I lobby a different governmental entity than the one I worked for during the two-year period?**
 - Yes, a former employee is free to lobby any other local, state, or federal government immediately following his or her departure from government service, except for the government entity that employed him or her.

- **Does the two-year rule apply to a former County or municipal employee who now works for a governmental entity, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity, or educational institution?**
 - No, an exception to the two-year rule allows former employees now employed by governmental entities, 501(c) (3) entities, or educational institutions to lobby their former employers during the two-year post-employment period on behalf of their employing entity.