
From: Diaz-Greco, Gilma M. (COE)
Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2014 1:43 PM
To: Sanchez, Rodzandra (COE)
Subject: FW: INQ - Ellen Book, CALM co-founder (political activity by county employees, lobbyist registration)

INQ 14-73

-----Original Message-----

From: Ethics (COE)
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2014 5:02 PM
To: 'Floridabook'; Ethics (COE)
Cc: Diaz-Greco, Gilma M. (COE); Sanchez, Gerald (CAO)
Subject: RE: INQ - Ellen Book, CALM co-founder (political activity by county employees, lobbyist registration)

That is correct. The only exception to that is where the employee is appearing for the purpose of requesting a grant and is receiving no compensation or reimbursement. In the latter situation, they are exempted from being classified as lobbyists.

Joe Centorino

-----Original Message-----

From: Floridabook [<mailto:floridabook@gmail.com>]
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2014 9:01 PM
To: Ethics (COE)
Cc: Diaz-Greco, Gilma M. (COE); Sanchez, Gerald (CAO)
Subject: Re: INQ - Ellen Book, CALM co-founder (political activity by county employees, lobbyist registration)

One more clarification please:

Do I understand this correctly, no county employee can represent CALM (as a third party) when speaking to Commissioners?

Ellen

Sent from my iPhone

> On Mar 21, 2014, at 4:52 PM, "Ethics (COE)" <ethics@miamidade.gov> wrote:

>

> Ms. Book:

>

> In response to your questions below, please be advised as follows:

>

> There is no ethical problem with county employees being involved in advocating for a political action committee such as CALM as volunteers on their own personal time. I have attached a memo that has been distributed in the past regarding political activities of public employees that describes the limitations on such activities. I suggest that you forward it to any county employees who may be involved in CALM's efforts. Use

of county time or resources in furtherance of such activities could amount to Exploitation of Official Position under Section 2-11.1 (g) of the County Ethics Code.

>
> County employees appearing as individuals representing only themselves may advocate their positions before County agencies, and need not register as lobbyists, pursuant to Section 2-11.1(s)(3)(b). However, Section 2-11.1(m)(2) would prohibit county employees from engaging in any discussions whatsoever with officials, directors or staff of the county on behalf of a third party, even if they did register as lobbyists. Therefore, it would be important in any contact with the County that county employees not engage in any "lobbying" type activity as a representative, paid or unpaid, of another person or entity, and to be careful to state that they are representing only themselves. Non-county employees who hold official positions with CALM as officers or directors and appear without special compensation or reimbursement before the County as representatives of and on behalf of CALM should register as lobbyists, but are not required to pay registration fees per Section 2-11.1(s)(4).

>
> Sincerely,
> Joseph M. Centorino
> Executive Director and General Counsel Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics
> and Public Trust
> 305-579-2594

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> -----Original Message-----
> From: Ellen Book [<mailto:floridabook@gmail.com>]
> Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2014 4:33 PM
> To: Ethics (COE)
> Subject: Request for Ethics Commission letter of opinion

>
> Dear Members of the Ethics Commission,
>
> I wish to have the commission's written opinion about the rights of Miami-Dade County employees to operate and advocate for a Political Action Committee.

>
> All of the county employees who participate will be volunteers using their non-work, personal time.

>
> All of the county employees who participate will not receive personal compensation by any entity or organization. There is no third party involvement.

>
> The intent of this Political Action Committee called Community Advocates for Libraries in Miami (CALM) will be to educate the community about library issues, contact county leaders, and support candidates and elected officials who support fully funding libraries.

>
> Please see <http://www.calmiami.org/> for the background.

>
> Question 1: Does this raise any ethical conflicts or objections?
> Question 2: Do CALM members need to register as lobbyists?

>

> Thank you for your insight,
>
> Ellen Berger, CALM Co-Founder
> Calmmiami@gmail.com
>
> <publicemployeepoliticalactivitymemo2012.docx>