

## LOBBYING FAQs

### WHAT IS LOBBYING?

While the definitions differ slightly among federal, state, and local governments, it is safest to use the following: attempting to influence the passage or defeat of any legislation or policy by directly communicating with any elected official, some appointed officials, or the staff of elected/appointed officials. Lobbying may include preparation or background activities such as research for the development of legislation or arguments for/against policies.

- For the federal definition refer to [2 U.S.C. § 1602](#)
- For the state definition refer to [A.R.S. § 41-1231](#)
- City/county regulations differ by municipality

### DO I HAVE TO REGISTER AS A LOBBYIST?

You must register as a lobbyist if you are communicating with members of Congress, the Executive branch, state legislators, some local government officials, and/or their staffs to influence the outcome of legislation or policy. **This is not necessary if you are only representing yourself and your opinions or views as an individual.** Similarly, registration is not required if you are providing technical information or answering questions at the request of a designated or authorized lobbyist. Each level of government has separate lobbyist registration and reporting requirements.

### MAY I LOBBY ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSITY?

No. The university has a designated lobbyist and a small number of individuals who are authorized lobbyists. **These are the only individuals authorized to lobby on behalf of the university and represent the university on legislative or policy matters.** Please be aware that each level of government has separate lobbyist registrations, regulations, and reporting requirements and **there are penalties for not complying with these laws.**

### MAY I GIVE GIFTS TO ELECTED OFFICIALS OR THEIR STAFF?

There are different regulations at the federal and state levels and further variances among cities and counties. Regulations at the federal level prohibit providing any meals or special events/entertainment to members of Congress or their staff. There are some exceptions (i.e., an allowance for public entities such as universities to provide tickets to public/university events) but caution should be exercised.

Nominal gifts are allowed, but again, caution should be exercised and **no gifts are allowed that are intended to influence official conduct**. At the state level, there is a ban on lobbyists and university employees providing entertainment for public officers or employees, nominal gifts under \$10 are allowable per calendar year, and meals are allowable but everything must be reported to the Secretary of State on the lobbyist report. **This applies whether or not the gift/meal was provided in the course of lobbying.**

\*\* Cities/counties have varying restrictions. \*\*

#### **MAY I INVITE ELECTED OFFICIALS TO SPEAK AT OR ATTEND AN EVENT?**

Inviting elected officials to speak without compensation is allowable. In some instances, it is permissible to provide entertainment that is incidental to a speaking engagement ([A.R.S. § 41-1232.08](#)). **It is recommended that you consult legal counsel and the university designated lobbyist to ensure that proper policies and reporting are followed.** Invitations to “special events” where entrance costs are covered generally require an invitation to the entire body, house, or committee, or all officials registered for/attending a conference or meeting, at the state level.

Any meals or other expenses incurred on behalf of the elected official as part of the speaking engagement or event must be reported on an individual basis to NAU’s Office of External Affairs in a timely manner as these expenses are required reportable costs by the university as a public body.

#### **MAY I CONTRIBUTE TO A CAMPAIGN?**

Yes. There are separate requirements for campaign reporting which generally fall on the candidate, with the exception of new regulations at the federal level which also require reporting of campaign contributions by registered lobbyists.