

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION  
ADVISORY OPINION  
S.E.C. 2007-05

September 27, 2007

Whether Georgia law requires a member of a 'council' to file a personal financial disclosure statement pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 21-5-50.

**ADVISORY OPINION:**

Under O.C.G.A. § 21-5-50, public officers must file a personal financial disclosure statement annually. Public officer is defined in O.C.G.A. § 21-5-3 to include, among others, "[T]he executive director of each state board, commission, or authority and the members thereof."

Although the term "council" is not specifically found in O.C.G.A. § 21-5-3, members of state councils perform similar functions as those persons who serve as members of boards, commissions, or authorities. For example, councils obtain state funding which council members disseminate to organizations or individuals, and councils make decisions in general that impact the citizens of the State of Georgia.

The public has a right to know of any financial or personal interest held by a council member which might create a conflict of interest in the decision making authority afforded a council member. Therefore, members of state councils must electronically file a Personal Financial Disclosure Statement in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 21-5-50.

*Prepared by Kay Baker*