

WISCONSIN LOBBYING OR NOT: COMMON SCENARIOS

Factual Background	Lobbying Or Not?
You communicate with a legislator’s chief of staff in order to secure an amendment to a pending bill on behalf of a client for compensation.	Lobbying, as this is an effort to influence legislative action. Exception-if you communicate with the legislator that represents the district you reside in.
You communicate with the Governor’s chief of staff and ask for a pending regulation to be modified on behalf of a client for compensation.	Lobbying, as this is an effort to influence administrative rulemaking.
You communicate with a contact at Department of Natural Resources and inquire about the status of a grant on behalf of a client.	Not lobbying, as seeking a grant is not lobbying under the Lobbying Law.
You communicate with a contact at the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority to request information about complying with a particular law on behalf of a client.	Not lobbying, as requesting information regarding compliance with a law is considered communicating on a routine, ministerial matter.
You request information regarding a matter before an Administrative Law Judge on behalf of a client.	Not lobbying, as requesting the status of an administrative matter is considered communicating on a routine, ministerial matter.
An organization circulates a mailer to the general public urging people to contact their legislator to vote “No” on a particular bill.	This type of grass roots lobbying alone will not trigger registration requirements, but if you are registered as a lobbyist, you must report this as “other lobbying expenses”
An organization circulates a mailer to the general public urging voters to vote “No” on a public question on the ballot at the next general election.	Not lobbying, but will be considered a political communication for campaign finance purposes and may require registration and reporting depending on amount spent.

NOTE: With each advocacy communication, an organization must determine whether the communication constitutes lobbying for Wisconsin disclosure purposes but also whether the communication constitutes lobbying for IRS 990 purposes.

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