

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS TO G.L. c. 268A

- Amendments to G.L. c. 268A and 268B will be effective as of September 29, 2009.
- Penalties for bribery will be increased as follows: up to a \$100,000 fine, or imprisonment in state prison for up to 10 years, or in a jail or house of correction for up to 2 ½ years, or both.
- Civil penalties for ethics violations will be increased from \$2,000 per violation to \$10,000 per violation.
- Under G.L. c. 268A, § 23, public employees may not present false or fraudulent claims to their employers for any payment or benefit of substantial value.
- It will be a violation of G.L. c. 268A, § 23 for a public employee to fraudulently cause any other person to:
 1. solicit or receive anything of substantial value for an officer or employee, which is not otherwise authorized by statute or regulation, for or because the officer or employee's official position; or
 2. use or attempt to use their official position to obtain for an officer or employee or others unwarranted privileges or exemptions of substantial value which are not properly available to similarly situated individuals; or
 3. present a false or fraudulent claim to his employer for any payment or benefit of substantial value.
- Educational Requirement – Summaries of the Law
 - The Ethics Commission will prepare summaries of G.L. c. 268A for state, county and municipal employees. The summaries will be published on <http://www.mass.gov/ethics>.
 - Every state, county and municipal employee must be provided with a copy of the Commission's summary of G.L. c. 268A within 30 days of becoming a public employee, and on an annual basis thereafter.
 - Every public employee will be required to sign a written acknowledgement that he has been provided with such a summary.
 - City/Town Clerks will provide the summaries to municipal employees and municipal employees will file their acknowledgement with the City/Town Clerk.
- Educational Requirement – Online Training
 - The Ethics Commission will prepare online training programs which will be published on <http://www.mass.gov/ethics>.
 - All municipal employees shall complete online training within 30 days of becoming a municipal employee, and every 2 years thereafter.
 - Upon completing the online training the employee shall notify his appropriate employer and notification of completion of the online training program shall be retained for 6 years by the employer.
- Municipal Liaison
 - Each municipality, acting through its City Council, Board of Selectmen, or Board of Aldermen, shall designate a senior level employee of the municipality as its liaison to the Ethics Commission.
 - The municipality shall notify the Ethics Commission in writing of any change to such designation within 30 days of such change.
 - The Ethics Commission shall disseminate information to the designated liaisons and conduct educational seminars for designated liaisons on a regular basis on a schedule to be determined by the Commission in consultation with the municipalities.