

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION--CITIZEN ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Public Disclosure Act (CH 42.17 RCW) requires candidates for public office to file statements with the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) reporting their campaign expenses and sources of funds. Elected officials are also required to file an annual statement with the Disclosure Commission declaring: their income, assets, and liabilities (in categories); their real estate holdings and transactions; and their affiliations. Copies of officeholder disclosure statements are on file with the PDC, and are available to the public. PDC statements are available at the Auditor's Election Office at the Givens Community Center.

Conflict of Interest Doctrine (CH 42.23 RCW) prohibits elected officials from entering into contracts which may be made for the benefit of their office, or accepting, directly or indirectly, any compensation, gratuity or reward in connection with such contract from any other person beneficially interested in the contract.

The Appearance of Fairness Doctrine (CH 42.36 RCW) goes beyond a conflict of interest to prohibit participation in a decision where there appears to be a conflict of interest by restricting the communication and activities of elected officials when acting in a quasi-judicial capacity.

During the pendency of any quasi-judicial proceeding, no member of a decision-making body may engage in *ex parte* communications with opponents or proponents with respect to the proposal which is the subject of the proceeding unless that person:

- Places on the record the substance of any written or oral *ex parte* communications concerning the decision of action; and
- Provides a public announcement at each hearing where action is considered or taken on the subject to which the communication related. The official must disclose the content of this communication and inform parties as to their right to rebut the substance of that communication.