

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)
Specific Project Expenditure Report
Updated 12-18-08

WHAT IS A SPECIFIC PROJECT EXPENDITURE REPORT (SPR)?

In summary the Specific Project Expenditure Report (SPR) is a report of all lobbying expenditures incurred by the principal and his/her agent and the principal's lobbyist, contractors, and consultants, if applicable, for certain projects or issues that will come before the Board or County Commissioners (BCC). Projects that are specifically exempt from the SPR requirement include ministerial items, resolutions, agreements in settlement of litigation matters in which the County is a party, ordinances initiated by county staff, and some procurement items. Professional fees paid by the principal to his/her lobbyist for the purpose of lobbying need not be disclosed on this form. (Reference s.2-354, County Code)

WHAT IS LOBBYING?

The County Code defines "Lobbying" to mean communicating directly with the County Mayor, any member of the BCC, or with the member of a County procurement committee **or** communicating indirectly with the Mayor or any other member of the BCC by directing the communication to a staff member of the Mayor or member of the BCC, the County Administrator, any deputy or assistant county administrator, the County Attorney, any county department director, or any county division manager.

In all cases, Lobbying is activity which seeks to encourage the approval, disapproval, adoption, repeal, rescission, passage, defeat or modification of any ordinance, resolution, agreement, development permit, other type of permit, franchise, vendor, consultant, contractor, recommendation, decision or other foreseeable action of the BCC and will include all communication whether oral, written or electronic and whether initiated by the lobbyist or by the person being lobbied. (Reference s. 2-351, County Code) Lobbying does not include the act of appearing before a Sunshine Committee, such as the Development Review Committee or the Roadway Agreement Committee.

WHO FILES THE SPR?

The principal or his/her authorized agent will complete the SPR. Section 2-351, County Code, defines a Principal as the person, partnership, joint venture, trust, association, corporation, governmental entity or other entity which has contracted for, employed, retained, or otherwise engaged the services of a lobbyist. Principal may also include those persons, partnerships, joint ventures, trusts, associations, corporations, limited liability corporations, or other entities where they or their employees do not qualify as a lobbyist but do perform lobbying activities on behalf of a business in which they have a personal interest. For purposes of filing an SPR, principal does not include governmental entities.

WHAT IS AN EXPENDITURE?

Section 112.3125, Florida Statutes, defines "Expenditure" to mean "a payment, distribution, loan, advance, reimbursement, deposit, or anything of value made by a lobbyist or principal for the purpose of lobbying. The term "expenditure" does not include contributions or expenditures reported pursuant to chapter 106 or federal election

law, campaign-related personal services provided without compensation by individuals volunteering their time, any other contribution or expenditure made by or to a political party, or any other contribution or expenditure made by an organization that is exempt from taxation under 26 U.S.C. s. 527 or s. 501(c)(4).” Professional fees paid by the principal to his/her lobbyist for the purpose of lobbying need not be disclosed on this form. (Reference s.2-354, County Code)

HOW DO I FILE THE SPR?

The BCC requests only one original, signed, cumulative SPR be filed that documents all lobbying expenditures incurred for each specific project or item that will come before the BCC. The SPR must be prepared and contain the original signature of the principal or his/her authorized agent, must be filed with the County Department processing your application, and will remain a part of the application packet for your project or item. (Reference s. 2-354(b), County Code)

WHEN DO I FILE THE SPR?

In most cases the SPR will be collected with your other application forms. The final, cumulative SPR should be filed with the County Department processing your application no less than seven (7) days prior to the scheduled BCC agenda date. (Reference s. 2-354(b), County Code)

CAN I UPDATE THE SPR?

Yes, you may. In fact, all updates to the SPR remain a continuing obligation of the principal or his/her authorized agent and, where an additional expenditure is incurred subsequent to the initial filing of the SPR, an amended SPR should be filed prior to the scheduled BCC meeting. An amended SPR should be filed with the County Department where the original application, including SPR, was filed.

If additional expenditures occur after the final amended SPR is filed and within 7 days of your BCC hearing date, an update to the SPR must then be verbally presented to the BCC if your item is a discussion item or is set for a public hearing. If your item is on the consent agenda and an update occurs within 7 days of the BCC meeting, the item will be pulled from the consent agenda to be considered at a future meeting. (Reference s. 2-354(b), County Code)

WHERE DO I FILE THE SPR AND SUBSEQUENT UPDATES?

The SPR and any update to the SPR should be filed with the County Department processing your application. The SPR and any updates must be filed no less than 7 days prior to your BCC hearing date. (Reference s. 2-354(b), County Code)

CONCLUSION:

We hope you find this FAQ useful to your understanding of the SPR. The County Attorney’s staff is unable to render legal advice to constituents; however, constituents are encouraged to seek legal advice on matters of the law from their own legal counsel.