



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR

WALES

Pocket Guide to the rules on:

**REGISTRATION AND DECLARATION OF
MEMBERS' FINANCIAL AND OTHER INTERESTS
(INCLUDING VOTING)**

*This pocket guide is not a substitute for the Provisions of the Government of Wales Act 1998, Standing Order 4 and its Annex, relevant Assembly resolutions or the Guidance For Assembly Members on the Registration and Declaration of Members' Financial and Other Interests adopted by the National Assembly for Wales on ****2000. Failure to comply with those provisions could attract criminal sanctions and/or referral to the Standards Committee. Members are therefore strongly advised to consult the Act, Standing Orders, Assembly resolutions and Guidance for full details and exemptions.*

1. REGISTRATION

You're required to register details of interests, and payment or benefits [usually to the nearest £5000] from:

- Directorships,
- Employment, Office, Profession, etc
- Companies/Bodies which have tendered, or are tendering, for contracts with the Assembly,

- **Financial sponsorships**

In addition, you must provide **the names of clients** to whom you provide services as a Member, details of any **gifts*** [over a value of £125], **hospitality or other benefits*** [over a value of £170], certain **overseas visits***, **land and property** [not any personal residential home occupied by you or your spouse] and **shareholdings** including those held on behalf of your spouse or dependent person [of over £25,000, or 1% of paid up capital]. You must also state whether you are a **member of a public body** or the **Freemasons**.

* Denotes that interests possessed by or given to an AM's spouse need also to be registered if you are aware of these interests.

If you have an indirect interest in any of the above you will have to register it. Remember... **you've got 4 weeks in which to notify any changes** in any direct or indirect interests.

2. DECLARATION

You need to declare any interests in the categories above when participating in any Assembly debates- including plenary and committee meetings if it is considered that the interest is relevant to the particular debate. You must declare before you speak in each plenary session, and either at the start of each committee meeting or at the first discussion of a new topic. The declaration must include current interests and any that you may be expecting to have in the future. Although no particular form of words is required, this is a useful model:

"Chair (or Mr. or Deputy Presiding Officer, as the case may be). I wish to declare an interest in the matter under discussion. I am a farmer whose land would be affected by the scheme (or as the case may be). Details are recorded in the register of members' interests."

3. VOTING

The Standards Committee has endorsed the following advice based on standing order 4.7: You should not vote if the decision might result in a direct financial advantage to you "greater than that which might accrue to persons affected by the decision generally". This means that:

- a) You should be able to vote if you are satisfied that your interest would only be an indirect one; as would be the case if a member of your family would be the only direct beneficiary.
- b) Even if you were a direct beneficiary, you should be able to vote unless a greater benefit might result to you than to the generality of people affected.

4. PARTICIPATION

Having an interest in a relevant matter doesn't prevent you from participating but you should declare it [see above].

.....and finally:

Advice/Help *If you would like further advice or help,*

or details of the rules on paid advocacy which are not covered here, please contact:-

Barbara Wilson - Deputy Clerk & Clerk to Standards Committee (extn. 8231)

Julie Grant - Head of Members' & Central Services Branch and Deputy Clerk to the Committee (extn. 8228).

Jill Thomas - Registrar of Members' Interests, Table Office (extn. 8207)