



COOK COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS

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GUIDANCE REGARDING NEWSLETTERS, BROCHURES, PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The Cook County Board of Ethics compiled the following information regarding the creation and distribution of newsletters, brochures, public service announcements, and promotional materials by Cook County employees, appointees, and officials. Please carefully read and follow this guidance, and do not hesitate to contact the Board of Ethics for advisement or with any clarifying questions.

County funds may NEVER be used to purchase any printed promotional material (including mail, newsletter, brochures) during the following time periods:

- **Primary election:** beginning January 1 of the year in which a primary election occurs through one day after the election.
- **General election:** beginning September 1 of the year in which a general election occurs through one day after the election.

Exception: Mailings are permitted if they relate to:

1. Property tax bill,
2. Notice of property tax assessment,
3. Notice of voter registration or polling place information, or
4. A brochure mailed to a constituent in response to that constituent's inquiry concerning the needs of that constituent or questions raised by that constituent.

Use of Personal Likeness

It is unacceptable to use the "proper name or image of any elected official" on promotional materials, including, but not limited to:

- Bumper stickers,
- Commercial billboards,
- Stickers,
- Lapel pins and buttons,
- Magnets,
- Sports teams,
- Items of clothing or apparel,
- Calendars,
- Vehicles,
- Parade floats, and
- Equipment.

County officials may include their image on items that are related to a legitimate government purpose.

Use of County Funds Outside of Prohibited Time Period

County funds may be used to purchase items when used in furtherance of a person's official County duties or governmental and public service functions.

Examples of acceptable use of county funds include:

- Tablecloths,
- Table banners,
- Signs to identify County offices, or
- Communications with County residents in furtherance of official County duties (e.g., newsletter or flyer).