

# TAC Boards and the State Ethics Commission

Local officials serving on a transportation planning organization's executive/advisory committee are referred to as **TAC Members**. The transportation legislation which created the 37 North Carolina Metropolitan or Rural Planning Organizations (MPOs or RPOs) can be found at N.C.G.S. § 136-200.2(g) (MPO) and N.C.G.S. § 136-211(f) (RPO).

TAC members and alternates of all MPOs and RPOs are required to file **initial** and **annual** financial and real estate disclosures called the **Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) form** and **Real Estate Disclosure (RED) form**. These two forms are filed with the Ethics Commission at the time of initial appointment. Thereafter both forms are filed during the annual filing season which runs concurrent to tax season--**Jan to April 15<sup>th</sup>**. Be advised that failure to file these forms may result in fines of up to \$500 annually.

Because TAC members are not covered persons under the Ethics Act, they are not required to receive the education portion of the State Ethics Act requirements. Some local officials receive ethics courses through the UNC School of Government, which is separate and distinct from the Ethics Education of the State Ethics Commission.

Additional information can be found on our website: [Home Page | Ethics Commission \(nc.gov\)](#)

## **FILING OF FINANCIAL AND REAL ESTATE DISCLOSURES**

### **Electronic Filing**

The quickest, most secure way to file your required SEI and RED is in our [electronic filing system](#).

**Creating a New Online Account** Find the portal to create an online account here: <https://ethicssei.nc.gov/Efile/>  
Your filing account will be personal to you, so use an email address that is convenient and monitored.

The password rules for creating your filing account are: 8 character minimum, and at least one of:

- Special character such as: )(\*%&#@+
- A digit (0-9)
- An uppercase letter

**Keep a record of your email and password for future filings.** We can reset your password and tell you which email you used if you forget. *Do not make a new account if you have forgotten your previous account information!*

For creating new accounts, the system uses **email verification**—it will send a link to the email address you used to make an account. By clicking on the verification link, you activate a live account and can begin filing. The verification email from [SEI@ethics.nc.gov](mailto:SEI@ethics.nc.gov) should arrive quickly: if you do not receive the verification link, check your Junk and Spam folders. If you do not receive the verification email, contact the State Ethics Commission using the contact info below – we can manually verify your email. NOTE: the generated verification email is a bot and many government spam filters block it. Ask your IT System Administrator to accept all email originating from **@ethics.nc.gov**.

**Completing the Electronic Forms** The online filing is a smart form. If you are interrupted, the system will remember where you leave off—you can pick right up the next time you log in. The initial 8 questions are system questions to interpret whether you will file a **Long form** or a **No Change form**. New members are required to file a Long Form SEI.

### **Common obstacles:**

**CANDIDACY QUESTION:** (if activated) answer **NO** (otherwise click through by hitting NEXT in bottom right corner). NOTE: the candidacy question does not pertain to local officials or local elections.

**REASON FOR FILING:** found under the option "serving on a BOARD OR COMMISSION" -> click **+** -> then in drop down board list, choose your TAC board's name from the list. NOTE: You must choose a TAC board in order to generate your Real Estate Disclosure form.

If you serve on more than one covered board (e.g., as a community college trustee), you can and should have multiple answers under Reason for Filing.

**!! IMPORTANT !!**

You are filing disclosures with the State Ethics Commission because you sit on a TAC board, **not** because you are an elected local official. **Do not select** “Local Government Commission”, “Board of Transportation” or any other non-TAC boards under Reason for Filing **or you will be required to re-file.**

When you correctly select your MPO or RPO TAC as your Reason for Filing, the electronic system will generate a **Real Estate Disclosure form** for you to complete your filings. The RED is required filing. **If you do not know your TAC’s official name, call your TPO Planner or call us.**

**FILER INFORMATION:** You can import your information (box at top of page), then fill in the rest of the information. Each box marked with ( \* ) are required fields.

**DISCLOSURE SECTIONS:** Please read the questions carefully and answer each question correctly, fully and responsibly. You will be asked to list real estate ownership, associations, private companies, etc.

**SOURCE OF INCOME QUESTION:** the last tab under Financial Interests. Do not click “NO” unless no one in your household made reportable income the previous year. If overlooked on the filing, it will cause you to be asked to refile. Be sure to disclose responsibly.

**CONFIRMATION:** To finish filing, you must have completed the entire form and electronically signed it by checking the **two** affirmation boxes, which is signing both forms. You can be assured that you have successfully filed if 3 things happen: 1. A pop-up with a Confirmation number will appear 2. Your In-Progress SEI will now show as a Completed SEI on Home screen 3. An email with a copy of your filed SEI will be sent to you. **CONFIRMATION WILL BE VERY CLEAR.**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR TAC FILERS**

**Paper filings**

SEI and RED forms may be downloaded and completed manually. Annual forms are available in the second week of the new year. [MPO/RPO TAC Filers | Ethics Commission \(nc.gov\)](#) is the MPO/RPO page. Paper forms must be mailed (or hand delivered), and postmarked by the deadline. Use the P.O. Box address on the form.

**Evaluations**

The State Ethics Commission has the responsibility of reviewing and evaluating all financial and real estate disclosures for potential conflicts of interest. We provide an evaluation letter to you at the time of your initial filing and annually thereafter. The evaluation letter is intended to help you begin thinking in terms of potential conflicts of interest, as well as advise you on how to handle any potential conflict that may arise in the course of your public duties. Commonly noted potentialities include real estate ownership or employment and construction-associated business.

**Assistance**

The State Ethics Commission staff is here to help you fulfill your statutory obligations. If you have any questions regarding the SEI or RED, general questions on how to complete the form, or timing of filings, we will be happy to help. Contact the staff member at the bottom of this document if you need help. If you have questions regarding your ethical standards, contact Crista Cuccaro at the UNC School of Government.

Finally, the Ethics Commission thanks you for your service to your local North Carolina communities.

**Susanne L. Sing | Compliance Analyst**

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