

Lobbying Procedure

Version Control

Version	Date	Revision Author	Summary of Changes
V1	12/10/2020	V. Leatham	First edition

Contents

Introduction	1
Purpose	1
Responsibility	1
What is Lobbying?.....	1
Designated Public Officials (DPOs).....	2
Relevant Matter	2
A relevant matter is one which relates to:	2
Exemptions	2
Reporting	2

Introduction

In line with Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015, all lobbying within the Diocese must be recorded and reported quarterly via Lobbying.ie

Purpose

This procedure is in place to support Parish Priests, staff and volunteers in understanding what lobbying is and the process for reporting lobbying within the Diocese.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of any member of staff, Parish Priest or volunteer who are conducting lobbying activities on behalf of the Dublin Diocese, to ensure all details relating to lobbying are reported fully and in a timely manner to the General Manager or Compliance Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the Compliance Coordinator to then submit lobbying records on Lobbying.ie.

What is Lobbying?

In simple terms, lobbying is any attempt to influence the decisions, actions or policies of government officials or regulatory agencies.

Lobbying should be recorded and reported if it meets the following criteria:

1. You are communicating either directly or indirectly with a “Designated Public Official” (DPO); and
2. That communication is about “a relevant matter”; and

3. That communication is not specifically exempt;

It should be noted that not all lobbying takes place in a formal setting. Casual run-ins, social settings, even social media may be considered lobbying if it is with a DPO and is about a relevant matter.

Designated Public Officials (DPOs)

Examples of individuals who would be considered DPOs under the Lobbying Act are:

- Ministers and Ministers of State;
- TDs and Senators;
- MEPs for Irish constituencies;
- Members of local authorities;

Also included are some:

- Special Advisers to Ministers and Ministers of State
- Public Servants in a position of Secretary General, Second Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary or Director in a public service body

This is not an exhaustive list and full details of those considered DPOs can be found on Lobbying.ie.

Relevant Matter

A relevant matter is one which relates to:

- The initiation, development or modification of any public policy or of any public programme
- The preparation or amendment of any law (including secondary legislation such as statutory instruments and bye-laws)
- The award of any grant, loan or other financial support, contract or other agreement, or of any licence or other authorisation involving public funds

Apart from the implementation of any such policy, programme, enactment or award or any matter of a technical nature only.

Exemptions

There are some exemptions that do not need to be recorded such as communications relating to:

- Private affairs
- Requesting factual information
- Policy working groups

Again, this list is not exhaustive and full details can be found on Lobbying.ie.

Reporting

Reporting of lobbying is to be completed three times per year, in January, May and September. Heads of Offices should report lobbying from their Office directly to the Compliance Coordinator. Parish Priests should report Lobbying directly to the General Manager, who will then report details to the Compliance Coordinator. The Compliance Coordinator will then report collectively on Lobbying.ie. The following schedule for reporting should be followed:

Dates Lobbying Took Place	Dates for Reporting to Compliance Coordinator
September-December	Before 10 th January
January-April	Before 10 th May
May-September	Before 10 th October

Reporting to the Compliance Coordinator should be done via email (Victoria.leatham@dublindiocese.ie) and include the following details for each act of lobbying that took place:

- Date of lobbying
- Name or names of DPOs that were lobbied
- Public policy area e.g. transport, environment
- Details of the relevant matter, including your desired outcome. e.g. name the specific policy you wished to influence or specific funding requested to be used for what purposes
- Name or names of the person lobbying (this may be yourself and/or members of your team)
- How the lobbying was carried out and how often e.g. via letter or mass communications or via three in-person meetings