

TEXAS ETHICS COMMISSION

The Texas Ethics Commission is authorized by the Government Code, §571.091, to issue advisory opinions in regard to the following statutes: the Government Code, Chapter 302; the Government Code, Chapter 305; the Government Code, Chapter 572; the Election Code, Title 15; the Penal Code, Chapter 36; and the Penal Code, Chapter 39. Requests for copies of the full text of opinions or questions on particular submissions should be addressed to the Office of the Texas Ethics Commission, P.O. Box 12070, Austin, Texas 78711-2070, (512) 463-5800.

Ethics Advisory Opinions

EAO-639 (revised): Whether a video recorded with students at a charter school is political advertising for the purposes of Sections 255.003 and 255.001 of the Election Code. (AOR-741).

SUMMARY

Section 255.003 applies to officers and employees of a political subdivision. For purposes of Section 255.003 of the Election Code, a charter school is not a political subdivision. Therefore, the use of a charter school's resources would not implicate Section 255.003. However, a political advertisement video recorded at a charter school would raise concerns of violations of Section 253.094 of the Election Code, and possibly Sections 36.08 and 39.02 of the Penal Code.

The Texas Ethics Commission is authorized by section 571.091 of the Government Code to issue advisory opinions in regard to the following statutes: (1) Chapter 572, Government Code; (2) Chapter 302, Government Code; (3) Chapter 303, Government Code; (4) Chapter 305, Government Code; (5) Chapter 2004, Government Code; (6) Title 15, Election Code; (7) Chapter 159, Local Government Code; (8) Chapter 36, Penal Code; (9) Chapter 39, Penal Code; (10) Section 2152.064, Government Code; and (11) Section 2155.003, Government Code.

Questions on particular submissions should be addressed to the Texas Ethics Commission, P.O. Box 12070, Capitol Station, Austin, Texas 78711-2070, (512) 463-5800.

Issued in Austin, Texas, on May 13, 2026.

TRD-202602050
Amanda Arriaga
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Texas Ethics Commission
Filed: May 15, 2026



EAO-643: Whether, under Section 572.070 of the Government Code, a state employee is required to report certain contacts with an employee of a university owned or controlled by the People's Republic of China? What are the reporting requirements for frequent contacts? (AOR-747).

SUMMARY

Advisory opinions cannot adjudicate disputed facts. For the sake of the opinion, we assume that the contacts employed by state-owned or state-controlled universities are working on behalf of foreign adversaries.

In cases of frequent contacts with the same person, one report may be submitted every thirty days covering contacts during that time.

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EAO-644: Regarding the application of the revolving door provision of Section 572.054(b) of the Texas Government Code to a former employee of Texas Department of Transportation ("TXDOT") (AOR-748).

SUMMARY

The former TXDOT employee would not be barred from representing the requestor on the indicated projects, as they are not the same "particular matter" that the employee participated in while employed by TXDOT.

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EAO-645: Does paying a social media company's users for engaging with political advertising content (viewing advertisements, watching videos, completing surveys, etc.) constitute bribery of a voter under Section 36.02(a)(1) of the Penal Code?

Does paying a social media company's users to complete a survey that includes questions about the user's voting intentions where compensation is identical regardless of the user's answers constitute prohibited vote-buying under Texas law?

What disclaimer and disclosure requirements under Chapter 255 of the Election Code apply to political advertisements posted on social media?

May candidates, political parties, and political committees use the requestor's social media platform to deliver political advertisements and compensate users for engagement with the advertisements without violating Texas election laws? (AOR-749).

SUMMARY

Paying the requestor's users for engaging with political advertising content through its advertising marketplace does not constitute bribery under Section 36.02(a)(1) of the Penal Code under the facts presented.

Payment of compensation to the requestor's users to complete a survey that includes questions about the user's voting intentions - where compensation is identical regardless of the user's answers does not constitute bribery under Section 36.02(a)(1) of the Penal Code.

Chapter 255 of the Election Code requires specific disclaimers and disclosures on political advertisements.

Use of the requestor's advertising marketplace by candidates, political parties, and political committees does not violate Section 36.02(a)(1) of the Penal Code.

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EAO-646: Whether public resources were unlawfully used for a candidate's campaign video. (AOR-750).

SUMMARY

Because all of the images used in the requestor's campaign video that relate to the school district at issue were obtained through publicly accessible means, the video does not violate Section 255.003(a) of the Election Code or Section 39.02(a)(2) of the Penal Code.

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