

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 160

BY REPRESENTATIVE DICKERSON

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

ETHICS: Provides relative to ethics complaints

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 42:1141(B)(1) and to enact R.S. 42:1153(C), relative to  
3 enforcement of laws within the jurisdiction of the Board of Ethics; to provide relative  
4 to ethics complaints; to provide for the investigative powers of the Board of Ethics;  
5 to provide for the procedure for making complaints; to provide for penalties; and to  
6 provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 42:1141(B)(1) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 42:1153(C)  
9 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §1141. Complaints and investigations

11 \* \* \*

12 B.(1)(a) The Board of Ethics shall consider any signed sworn complaint  
13 from any elector, hereinafter referred to as complainant, concerning a violation of  
14 this Chapter which is within its jurisdiction or the regulations or orders issued by the  
15 Board of Ethics, or may, by a two-thirds majority vote of its membership, consider  
16 any non-sworn complaint concerning a matter which it has reason to believe may be  
17 a violation of this Chapter. Additionally, the board may consider any matter ~~which~~  
18 ~~it has reason to believe may be a violation of any other provision of law within its~~  
19 ~~jurisdiction as provided in this Subsection or as may be otherwise provided by law.~~

20 A certified copy of the vote; a detailed explanation of the matter, including the  
21 specific factual allegations upon which the board based its decision to investigate;

1 and a copy of any complaint received by the board, ~~from which the name of the~~  
2 ~~complainant has been redacted~~, shall be sent by certified mail to the accused and the  
3 complainant within ten days after the vote occurs or after receipt of a signed sworn  
4 complaint. The chairman of the Board of Ethics may assign a matter to the  
5 appropriate panel for investigation, in which case the panel shall conduct a private  
6 investigation to elicit evidence upon which the panel shall determine whether to  
7 recommend to the board that a public hearing be conducted or that a violation has not  
8 occurred.

9 (b) Any sworn or non-sworn complaint shall be made in writing and shall  
10 contain the full name of the complainant. The complainant shall file a complaint in  
11 person with the Board of Ethics at the offices of the ethics administration. When  
12 filing a complaint, the complainant shall present a valid driver's license, passport, or  
13 other government-issued identification.

14 (c) The board shall provide a person who has filed a non-sworn complaint  
15 with only a notification stating the final disposition of the complaint.

16 \* \* \*

17 §1153. Penalties

18 \* \* \*

19 C. Attorney fees shall be assessed against a complainant who knowingly and  
20 willfully files a false ethics complaint pursuant to R.S. 42:1141(B).

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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 160 Original

2025 Regular Session

Dickerson

**Abstract:** Provides relative to ethics complaints, investigative powers of the Board of Ethics, and penalties for making a false ethics complaint.

Present law (R.S. 42:1141(B)) provides that the Board of Ethics (Board) shall consider any sworn complaint concerning a violation of present law (Code of Governmental Ethics). Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that after a two-thirds majority vote of its membership, the Board may consider any matter which it believes to be a violation of the Code of Governmental Ethics.

Proposed law specifies that the matter must be in a non-sworn complaint for the board to vote to consider it.

Present law provides that the Board may consider any matter that it reasonably believes is in violation of any other provision of law within its jurisdiction as provided in present law or as otherwise provided by law.

Proposed law provides instead that the Board may consider any matter as may be otherwise provided by law.

Present law additionally requires the Board to send by certified mail a copy of the complaint, the vote, and the factual allegations upon which the Board based its decision to investigate to both the accused and the complainant. Provides that the name of the complainant be redacted.

Proposed law provides instead that the name of the complainant not be redacted when the copy of the complaint is sent to the accused. Otherwise retains present law.

Present law provides that the Board may use panels to conduct investigations and hearings concerning alleged violations of laws within its jurisdiction. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that the Board provide only a notification stating the final disposition of the complaint to the complainant that has filed a non-sworn complaint. Proposed law retains present law.

Proposed law provides that a complaint shall be made in writing and contain the full name of the complainant. Requires the complainant to file the complaint in person with the Board at the offices of the ethics administration. Requires the complainant to provide a valid driver's license, passport, or other government-issued identification.

Present law (R.S. 42:1153) provides penalties for violations of any provision of law that is within the jurisdiction of the Board.

Proposed law retains present law and additionally provides that attorney fees shall be assessed against a complainant who knowingly and willfully files a false ethics complaint.

(Amends R.S. 42:1141(B)(1); Adds R.S. 42:1153(C))