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Pay-to-Play in New Jersey: Do You Know How to Play by the Rules?

By: [Rebecca Moll Freed](#) & [Avi D. Kelin](#)

Although most of the country is focused on the presidential election and, according to the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission database, only two candidates have formally declared a run for Governor, now is the time for companies to focus on their New Jersey political-activity compliance. This week marks the start of the 18-month period before the inauguration of New Jersey's next governor.

Under the State's stringent pay-to-play laws, a contribution made during this period may jeopardize your company's eligibility for contracts with the State of New Jersey for up to 5½ years. This means that, as of July 16, 2016, if your company or even one covered individual (including officers, shareholders, equity partners or their spouses, civil-union partners and resident children) contributes more than \$300 to a gubernatorial candidate or certain other political recipients, your company could be declared ineligible for contracts with the State of New Jersey through January of 2022!

Focusing on political-activity compliance is important for all companies, but it is especially important if your company has recently gone through a merger, conducted a re-organization, hired new officers or partners, promoted individuals within your company to new roles or simply needs a refresher. If you have no policy in place, it is not too late to adopt one before New Jersey's gubernatorial election kicks into full swing and you find yourselves ineligible to compete for government-contracting opportunities.

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