



City of Tampa
Ethics Office
2021 Annual Report

The Ethics Office

The duties of the Ethics Office and the Ethics Officer were created as a result of the revised City of Tampa Code of Ethics, effective January 1, 2004. The duties and responsibilities of the office are set forth in Division 7 as well as other sections of the Code of Ethics.

The Ethics Office is a part of the Department of Human Resources with existing staff absorbing the additional work tasks to administer the ordinance. Other departments continue to have substantial responsibility for enforcement of various aspects of the ordinance. This includes the Purchasing, City Clerk, and Legal departments.

Accomplishments

Highlights of the accomplishments of the Ethics Office for the reporting period (June 2020-June 2021) are as follows:

➤ **Financial Disclosure**

- ✧ Designed and distributed the Financial Disclosure forms for the July 15, 2020 reporting for calendar year 2019. These two forms, City Form 6 for elected officials and City Form 1 for appointed employees (both current and those who separated but worked in 2019), were sent with instructions directly to the persons required to complete them. Newly appointed employees complete the form as part of their employee orientation in order to comply with the Code. All Financial Disclosure forms have been filed in the employee's or elected official's personnel file. All but one City Form 6 reports were received in a timely manner from elected officials. All City Form 1 reports were received in a timely manner from designated current employees.
- ✧ Preparation for the July 15, 2020 disclosure was completed with distribution of the updated forms in mid-May.
- ✧ Newly appointed employees complete the Financial Disclosure form as part of their employee orientation in order to comply with the Code. All forms have been filed in the employee's personnel file.

➤ **Real Estate Disclosure**

- ✧ Newly appointed employees complete the Real Estate Disclosure form as part of their employee orientation in order to comply with the Code. All forms have been filed in the employee's personnel file.
- ✧ Based on the prior determination from the Legal Department defining which Boards or Commissions of the city include "appointed officials" required to complete the Real Estate disclosure requirement, the Ethics Office is notified of new appointments in order to distribute and obtain completed disclosure forms. All forms are maintained by the Ethics Office. A review of any outstanding forms is done on a monthly basis to ensure compliance.

➤ **Approval of Non-City Employment/Private Business Entity**

- ✧ The Request for Approval of Non-City Employment/Private Business Entity form is provided to all new employees as part of their employee orientation and replaces the prior disclosure form.
- ✧ As specified in the ordinance, employees who do not receive approval from their department director for their Request for Approval of Non-City Employment/Private Business Entity form receive an appeal hearing with the Ethics Commission. The Ethics Office continues to be responsible for the scheduling of the hearings and presenting information to the Commission as part of the appeal process.

➤ **Ethics Commission Support**

- ✧ Commission Meetings - The Ethics Commission held one meeting during this period. The Ethics Office supported the Ethics Commission with the drafting and issuance of all meeting agendas, public notice of the Commission meetings, meeting minutes, and correspondence. The Ethics Office also drafted the Ethics Commission's 2020 Annual Report for their approval.
- ✧ Updated Ethics Notebooks for each Commissioner - These notebooks contain a copy of the Code of Ethics, the annotated version, copies of referenced state laws, related legal opinions, and other material as needed for their responsibilities. The Commissioners each have a notebook at the Ethics Office in addition to their personal copy to avoid the need for them to retrieve and bring the notebook to Commission meetings. Any newly issued legal opinions were provided to each commissioner during the 2020-2021 reporting period.
- ✧ Commission Rules & Regulations - The Ethics Office continues to maintain the Commission's Rules & Regulations, updated immediately upon amendment, on the City's INET and the City's web site. On October 15, 2015, the Ethics Commission amended the Rules & Regulations, Article G, Section 2, whereby the reporting period for the annual reports remains June 1 to June 1; however, the

reports are to be sent to the Mayor and Tampa City Council by October 1 of each year. The change in the reporting date to October 1 allows the Ethics Commission to meet, review, and approve the drafted report after June 1 and send it in a timely manner by October 1.

- ✧ Ethics Complaints – The Ethics Office is responsible for the processing and investigation of ethics complaints. No complaints were received during the 2020-2021 reporting period.
- ✧ Advisory Opinions – The Legal Department provided the Ethics Office with seven advisory opinions during this reporting period.
- ✧ The Ethics Office assisted the Ethics Commission in facilitating Ordinance No. 2017-61 which updates the authority for appointments to the Ethics Commission. The ordinance was passed by Tampa City Council on April 20, 2017, changing the task of the two appointments from the Chief Judge of the 13th Judicial Circuit to the President of the Hillsborough County Bar Association. William Levens was sworn in as the newest member of the Ethics Commission.

➤ **Lobbyist Disclosure**

- ✧ On November 3, 2016, an amendment to the Ethics Ordinance was passed, Ordinance No. 2016-161, revising the definition of lobbying and creating a new registration system for lobbyists and visitors. On February 2, 2017, the new electronic lobbyist registration and visitor log went live. The Ethics Office provided training on the electronic process to all Department Directors and Ethics Liaisons for purposes of training those affected personnel as specified in the amendment.
- ✧ The Ethics Office will continue to report the progress of tracking the Lobbyist Annual Financial Disclosure Reports via the electronic lobbyist registration system and will provide follow-up correspondence to those lobbyists with delinquent reports.

➤ **Ethics Training**

- ✧ Since May 11, 2009, the Ethics in Government training has been provided to all new employees in “Successful Beginnings,” the City of Tampa’s employee orientation program. This training is considered mandatory and a certificate of completion is issued to each participant and maintained in the personnel file.
- ✧ Ethics in Government training is now available as on-line training for all new employees and contains a new opener with new material.

- ✧ Leadership Enhancement and Development (LEAD) is a six session course for City supervisors and managers. The Ethics Office delivers an interactive presentation on Ethics in the Workplace and the City of Tampa's Ethics Ordinance during the first of the six sessions. For this reporting period, no training sessions were able to be scheduled.