

- Ethics Officer's March 2007 Monthly Report

Summary

This report provides a general update on the progress and activities for the Ethics Office for March 2007.

Attachments

None

Detailed Report

Activities

1. Kirk O. Hanson, Executive Director, Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University and faculty for Ethics and Leadership Camp: A National Program for Local Elected Officials, will speak at the Ethics Dinner-Discussion, Monday, April 9, 2007. The title of his speech is: *Managing Under the Microscope: Doing the Public's Business with Transparency and Integrity*.
2. The Employee Ethics Manual is in progress.
3. The Administrative Assistant attended in-house training on teamwork.
4. The Ethics Office staff conducted Day 1 employee orientations for twelve new hires and Day 2 orientations for seven employees.
5. The Ethics Educator made one in-house visit to Water Resource Management at Headquarters, meeting with 35 employees and traveled to our Sacramento office, meeting with 8 employees.
6. The Ethics Office Web site logged 985 visitors from March 1-31, 2007.

Logged Questions and Matters of Concern

1. **February 22, 2007 – Issue: Employee Relations**
An employee expressed concern through The Network that another employee was continuing to work despite a recent criminal conviction. This matter was investigated through MWD Security and it was found that the employee was arrested, but has not been convicted of a crime. In addition, the employee has informed his/her supervisor. Management is aware of this matter. (210)
Disposition: Closed
2. **March 2, 2007 – Issue: Outside Employment**
An employee requested review of an outside employment contract to ensure that the outside employment meets the requirements of the MWD operating policy. The language was reviewed and the outside employment found to be within policy. (212)
Disposition: Closed
3. **March 5, 2007 – Issue: Favoritism**
An anonymous employee asked if it is an ethical violation for a supervisor to date a subordinate. That, in itself, is not a violation of policy. However, a relationship of this nature can lead to disruptions in the work group. Management has been alerted to the situation. (213)
Disposition: Closed

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4. **March 5, 2007 – Issue: Misuse of Funds**
An employee noticed a difference between what a Web site listed as a registration fee and the amount that Metropolitan paid. A review by the General Manager’s office showed that the higher fee paid by Metropolitan included multi-year dues. (214)
Disposition: Closed
5. **March 5, 2007 – Issue: Wage/Hour Issues**
An employee expressed concern that another employee was not working full-time despite being in a full-time position. The employee’s supervisor has been contacted and an explanation requested. (215)
Disposition: Pending
6. **March 13, 2007 – Issue: Employee Relations**
A probationary employee who was dismissed during the probationary period requested reinstatement. No violation of policy was found. (216)
Disposition: Closed
7. **March 13, 2007 – Issue: Contractor Relations**
An anonymous caller expressed concern that a contractor with sensitive information had engaged in off-shore development of Metropolitan materials using pirated software. The matter was reviewed. It was determined that (1) the contractor did not have sensitive information, (2) there are signed security and non-disclosure documents on file, (3) there was no restriction as to where the software was developed, and (4) the terms of our contract hold Metropolitan indemnified against all claims regarding the contractor’s purported use of pirated software. (217)
Disposition: Closed
8. **March 20, 2007 – Issue: Outside Employment**
An employee asked for guidance in offering private consulting services outside the purview of Metropolitan. The matter was reviewed. It was determined that the proposed outside employment did not constitute a conflict of interest.
Disposition: Closed
9. **March 21, 2007 – Issue: Nepotism**
A question was received from a manager regarding two relatives who currently report to the same supervisor. As the employment arrangements were made prior to Metropolitan’s current nepotism policy, the matter is considered “grandfathered” and will not be addressed. Previous situations that are in violation of Metropolitan’s current policy will be addressed only if the situation is found to create morale problems in the workplace.
Disposition: Closed
10. **March 22, 2007 – Issue: Outside Employment**
An employee expressed concern that an upcoming political appointment might create a conflict of interest. The matter was reviewed. It was determined that there would be no conflict of interest.
Disposition: Closed
11. **March 22, 2007 – Issue: Gifts**
An employee asked for guidelines regarding gifts from consultants and vendors. This information was provided.
Disposition: Closed