

- Ethics Officer's October 2008 Monthly Report

Summary

This report provides a general update on the progress and activities for the Ethics Office for October 2008.

Attachments

None

Detailed Report

Activities

1. The Ethics Officer is working with the Human Resources Group to include questions related to employees' knowledge of Ethics Office procedures on an upcoming survey. The Ethics Office will develop a separate survey for director and member agency perceptions.
2. The Ethics Office continues to work with management to prepare the 2009 SB 60 report.
3. The Ethics Officer is in the process of revising Operating Policy H-03 Ethics Policy – Involvement in Community or Political Activities with External Affairs and the Legal Department.
4. The Ethics Officer is developing revisions for the Administrative Code regarding Ethics Office investigation and enforcement processes.
5. The Ethics Educator attended an ethics presentation at Weymouth regarding research ethics for laboratory workers.
6. The Audit and Ethics Committee met on October 28, 2008.
7. The final AB 1234 training workshop for Officers and Directors, The Power and Privilege of Public Office, was held on October 28, 2008. Seventeen Board members and twenty-two Officers attended.
8. The Ethics Office staff conducted Day 1 employee orientation for 15 new hires and Day 2 orientation for 6 employees.
9. The Ethics Office Web site logged 965 visitors from October 1-31, 2008.

Logged Questions and Matters of Concern

1. **January 22, 2008 – Issue: Director Staff Concerns**
A concern was received regarding director involvement with business outreach. The Intake Committee convened February 26, 2008 to review the matter and the matter was forwarded to the Inquiry & Review Committee. The investigation is completed. Inquiry & Review Committee's and the Ethics Officer's reports will be given at the Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday, November 25, 2008 (continued from October 28, 2008). (275)
Disposition: Pending.
2. **July 17, 2008 – Issue: Wage/Hour Issues**
A concern was received from a former employee regarding termination and loss of service hours. Human Resources has completed its investigation. Human Resources sent a letter on September 11, 2008 to the former employee which addressed all of the alleged concerns. (298)
Disposition: Closed
3. **August 13, 2008 – Issue: Misuse of Position**
A concern was received at the Ethics Office regarding alleged retaliation by a manager. The parties met in September and the Ethics Officer continues to monitor the situation on a monthly basis. (305)
Disposition: Pending

Board Report (Ethics Officer's October 2008 Monthly Report)

4. **September 11, 2008 – Issue: Falsification of Company Records**
An employee expressed concern that an employee may have received a certification for which he/she was not qualified. The certifying agency reviewed the employee's application and determined that he/she was qualified for the certification. (310)
Disposition: Closed
5. **September 25, 2008 – Issue: Misuse of MWD Resources**
An anonymous concern was received from the hotline regarding a Metropolitan employee who is allegedly harassing a member of the public while in a company vehicle. The matter was investigated and vehicle misuse could not be verified. Further information was requested from the caller and the caller was provided contact information for MWD Security. (315)
Disposition: Pending
6. **October 9, 2008 – Issue: Policy Issues**
An anonymous concern was received through the hotline that managers were using company vehicles for personal use. The matter was reviewed with the supervisor and no vehicle misuse was found. The caller provided additional dates of alleged misuse and the supervisor has again been asked to investigate the matter. (318)
Disposition: Pending
7. **October 10, 2008 – Issue: Theft of Time**
An anonymous concern was received through the hotline that a Metropolitan employee was making personal visits in the caller's neighborhood during the workday using a Metropolitan vehicle. An investigation of the matter could not provide evidence for the caller's claims. The caller was requested to provide more detailed information. (319)
Disposition: Pending
8. **October 20, 2008 – Issue: Conflicts of Interest/Commitment**
A query was received regarding whether a recent subcontractor of one of the submitting firms could be an evaluator for proposals. As the person was a "recent" subcontractor, he/she should not participate as part of the evaluation team as there could be an appearance of a conflict of interest. (320)
Disposition: Closed
9. **October 22, 2008 – Issue: Gifts**
An employee requested guidance regarding Metropolitan's gift policies. Small tokens of friendship are allowed provided they have low monetary value, do not target a specific employee and/or are impractical to return. (321)
Disposition: Closed
10. **October 24, 2008 – Issue: Retaliation**
An employee expressed concern regarding alleged retaliation by his/her supervisor. As management has previously investigated and addressed the allegations, the matter was referred to Metropolitan's Human Resources Group. (322)
Disposition: Closed
11. **October 27, 2008 – Issue: Conflicts of Interest/Commitment**
A query was received regarding whether an employee should be allowed to serve on an evaluation panel as he/she had previously worked for one of the firms submitting a RFQ. The employee should not serve on the evaluation panel because of the appearance of a conflict of interest. (323)
Disposition: Closed