



● Ethics Officer's September 2011 Monthly Report

Summary

This report provides a general update on the progress and activities for the Ethics Office for September 2011.

Attachments

None

Detailed Report

Activities

1. The Ethics Office continues to work with Graphics, External Affairs, and the Legal Department on the development of Metropolitan-specific online AB 1234 training.
2. The Intake Specialist conducted a comparison of ethics office procedures as described in various sources and made needed changes to ensure consistency.
3. The Ethics Office staff conducted New Employee Orientations for three employees.
4. The Ethics Office website logged 920 visitors from September 1-30, 2011.

Matters Brought to the Attention of the Ethics Office

1. **August 31, 2011 – Issue: Favoritism**

A concern was received from an employee through the Hotline regarding the alleged favoritism of an employee. It is alleged that additional work hours are given to only one employee, when others are also qualified. The matter was investigated. The operational needs of the District and the responsibility of relevant employees were reviewed and it was found that the manner in which overtime was distributed was appropriate. (568)

Disposition: Closed

2. **September 7, 2011 – Issue: Conflict of Interest/Commitment (Employee)**

A query was received from an employee regarding a possible conflict of interest. The employee was asked to be a board member on a member agency board. With consultation with the Legal Department the employee was advised that if he/she serves on a member agency board, he/she is subject to provisions of the Government Code and must hand off any Metropolitan work that directly impacts the member agency. (569)

Disposition: Closed

3. **September 9, 2011 – Issue: Outside Employment**

A query was received from an employee regarding possible outside employment. The employee would serve as a consultant, the company does not have any contracts with Metropolitan, is not likely to have a contract with Metropolitan, and all work will be done on the employee's own time. The employee may perform work for the outside company. (570)

Disposition: Closed

4. **September 9, 2011 – Issue: Outside Employment**

A query was received from an employee regarding outside employment - what an employee can and cannot do after he/she retires from Metropolitan. The employee was advised to contact Human Resources to determine what is allowed or prohibited by CalPERS as well as relevant provisions in the Administrative Code. (571)

Disposition: Closed

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5. **September 12, 2011 – Issue: Discounts**

A query was received from an employee regarding whether it is permissible to keep frequent flyer miles accrued when on company business and if it is permissible to request a government rate at a hotel when not on company business. It has been Metropolitan's practice that employees may keep their own frequent flyer miles. Employees should separate their business and personal expenses, including hotel expenses for any non-Metropolitan portion. The employee should check with the hotel if the government rate is extended to all government employees whether they are on business or not. (572)

Disposition: Closed

6. **September 13, 2011 – Issue: Wage/Hour Issues**

A concern was received from an employee regarding whether leave donated for the Employee Emergency Leave Relief Fund is appropriately valued, based on the salary level of the employee donating and that of the employee using donated leave. This method of accounting has been considered by Human Resources, but the current method of accounting donated leave as a direct match regardless of employee salary has been found to be the most efficient method of administering the program. (573)

Disposition: Closed

7. **September 22, 2011 – Issue: Gifts**

A query was received from an employee regarding whether he/she could accept a raffle prize at a conference. The conference was free and open to the public, the raffle was held by the conference organizer and not by any particular vendor, the raffle tickets were free, tickets were available to all attendees, and the prize was a nominal amount. The employee was advised that he/she could accept the raffle prize. (574)

Disposition: Closed

8. **September 29, 2011 – Issue: Discrimination**

A concern was received from an employee regarding the Rideshare Program. However, because the concern involved discrimination, the matter was referred to the Equal Employment Opportunity section. (575)

Disposition: Closed