



District of Columbia

BEGA's April 2025 Newsletter*District of Columbia sent this bulletin at 04/11/2025 08:59 AM EDT*

Ethically Speaking

Board of Ethics and Government Accountability Newsletter

Volume 10, Issue 2**April 2025**

A Message From the Director

Financial Disclosure Statement season is underway, and we are so excited! By now, most filers have received notice of their filing obligation and information on how to access their account on BEGA's electronic filing system. The financial disclosure is fundamental to ensuring public trust in the government and transparency in public officials' financial interests. The purpose of the financial disclosure is to prevent public officials and



violates the financial conflicts of interest statute. It is the government's first line of anti-corruption measures. BEGA is dedicated to ensuring that the purpose of this program is fulfilled and that the District government succeeds.

employees from engaging in conduct that

Each filer must submit their complete and accurate financial statement by May 15, 2025. We welcome any questions by contacting us at bega-fds@dc.gov. Thank you in advance for your partnership in this process. A very special thank you to Ethics Counselors for heading efforts at the agency level.

New and Notable

Ask BEGA At Your Agency

Contact BEGA to schedule a time for our ethics attorneys to visit your agency and answer questions from agency employees. We can customize a training tailored to the issues that your agency faces as well as helping employees with their specific questions.

Financial Disclosure Reports Due May 15

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The 2025 Financial Disclosure season has started. Financial Disclosure Statements are due **May 15, 2025**. Requests for extensions must be received before the May 15th filing deadline. Late or non-filers may be subject to enforcement action from BEGA, including up to a \$300 fine for failure to timely file their required disclosures.

Ethics counselors who have questions about completing the Financial Disclosure Review Report (FDRR) due June 2, 2025 or the BEGA enforcement process should join the April 28, 2025 Ethics Counselor Brown Bag where we will discuss these issues.

Additional resources for filers and ethics counselors are available on [BEGA's website](#).

Upcoming Events

General Ethics Training

5/14/2025 - 1:00 pm

6/11/2025 - 1:00 pm

Board and Commission Training

4/30/25 - 11:00 am

Outside Employment Training

7/1/25 - 1:00 pm

Lobbyist Registration & Reporting and E-Filing Training

6/25/25 - 10:30 am

Ethics Counselor Brown Bag

FDRRs and Enforcement

4/28/25- 1:00 pm

How to know when you're being lobbied

5/27/25 - 1:00 pm

Enforcement Updates

24-0064-P In re V. Duckett

The Board approved a negotiated disposition with Respondent, a teacher at a DCPS elementary school, for two counts of violating DPM § 1807.1(h), representing a third party in a matter before the District. Respondent owned and operated an LLC that provided before and after school care and summer camps at DCPS schools. Respondent signed a Memorandum of Agreement with DCPS to operate before and after

school care and signed 15 Building Use Agreements with the Department of General Services to allow the programs to operate in DCPS schools. The negotiated disposition includes a \$3,000 civil penalty and ethics training

24-0103-P In re A. Caruthers

The Board approved a negotiated disposition with Respondent, an Instructional Superintendent with DCPS, for violations of DPM §§ 1807.1(b) and 1800.3(j).

Respondent was a contractor for Relay Graduate School of Education, a DCPS contractor, and provided services through Relay, working 17 hours during her tour of duty and using her District email to communicate with Relay. Respondent also negotiated for outside employment with Relay for services closely related to her official government duties. The negotiated disposition includes a \$2,500 civil penalty and ethics training.

Ethics in the News

Ethics experts have criticized statements from Commerce Secretary Howard



Lutnick, who urged people to "Buy Tesla" in an appearance on a television news program. At least one group has filed a complaint with the federal Office of Government Ethics and the Department of Commerce asking that the agencies investigate whether Secretary Lutnick's statements violate the prohibition on government officials using public office for private gain, which includes a prohibition on endorsements. In 2017, the Office of Government Ethics wrote the White House that similar statements from President Trump's adviser, Kellyanne Conway, endorsing Ivanka Trump's products appeared to violate the standards of ethical conduct for executive branch employees and urged the White House to investigate the conduct. [Read more here](#) and [here](#).

The House Ethics Committee announced that it is continuing to investigate a referral from the Office of Congressional Ethics that Representative Cory Mills may have violated House rules, standards of conduct, and federal laws. The Office of Congressional Ethics referred the matter to the House Ethics Committee after it found that there was substantial reason to believe that Representative Mills: (1) may have omitted or misrepresented required information on his financial disclosure statements' (2) may have accepted excessive contributions in the form of personal loans; (3) may have entered into, held, or enjoyed contracts with federal agencies while serving in Congress. [Read more about the matter here](#).

State and Local Ethics

New York's State Court of Appeals ruled in February that the State Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government was constitutionally created, overturning a 2023 State Supreme Court opinion. The decision stems from a suit from former Governor Andrew Cuomo against the commission and its predecessor, the Joint Commission on Public Ethics, over whether Governor Cuomo could keep a \$5.1 million advance he received for his memoir on lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic. Read more about the case [here](#).

Nevada's Commission on Ethics is investigating the director of the Governor's Office of Energy over allegations he accepted free tickets to attend Vegas Golden Knights hockey games and solicited access to a private watch party while he was responsible for negotiating a potential partnership with the team. The case has cleared a procedural hurdle and will proceed to a review by the full ethics commission. The ethics commission previously required ethics training for the executive director of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District in connection with his acceptance of Superbowl Tickets valued at \$8,600. Read more about these matters [here](#).

In 2024 government contractors in New Jersey contributed \$3.8 million to political parties at the state, county, and local level, double the \$1.6 million in contributions in 2023, the year the state changed its pay-to-play laws to allow higher limits on contributions from contractors. Prior to the legislative changes, a company with government contracts was limited to \$300 in contributions to a party. Under the new rules, state and county political parties are allowed to raise as much as \$118,500 from a contractor, and municipal parties up to \$15,000. Read more about the impact of the pay-to-play changes [here](#).

Ask BEGA



Question: I am new to DC government and have been designated as a Financial Disclosure Statement (FDS) filer for my agency. I don't have much to report; however, before my employment with the District, I received a monthly stipend of \$250 as part of a legal fellowship I completed in Maryland. Since this money was related to an academic program I completed while in law school, before working with the District and was only for \$250 a month, must I report it?

Answer: Yes, as an employee required to file a Financial Disclosure Statement, you are obligated to report any income, gift, and honorarium, you received outside of your District employment, above \$200, thus the monthly stipend must be reported. As a new employee you can be designated to file a financial disclosure statement if you have held the position, that made you eligible for designation, for more than thirty (30) days within the prior calendar year. In addition, because the financial disclosure form asks about information from the previous calendar year, an employee should report any and all income above \$200 that was generated in the prior year, even though you were not employed by the District at the time you received the income. For more information, check out BEGA's [Financial Disclosure Statement Guidance](#).



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