



The BEGA/OGE Newsletter

ETHICALLY SPEAKING

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



As we head toward the end of FY 2019 and into the Fall, the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) is staying quite busy. The third quarterly filing period for Lobbying Activity Reports. Lobbying registrants starts on October 1, 2019, and Lobbying registrants have until October 15, 2019 to report all lobbying activities conducted between July 1, 2019 and September 30, 2019, using BEGA's Lobbying Registration and Reporting (LRR) e-filing system at <https://efiler.bega.dc.gov/LobbyistAccount/Login>.

OGE also recently launched its online ethics training program, allowing District employees and public officials to complete their training from the comfort of their own offices through PeopleSoft. To date, hundreds of District employees have taken advantage of this online opportunity, and we anticipate that its popularity will only grow as more people learn of its existence. Thanks again to OGE's outstanding Training Coordinator, Ashley Cooks, for all the time and effort she devoted to ensure the successful launch of our online training module!

On the training front, BEGA is hosting its annual Ethics Day event on Thursday, October 3, 2019 at One Judiciary Square. All sessions are open to District employees and some sessions are open to the general public, as explained in greater detail later in this newsletter. Additionally, I'm looking forward to participating in the Oversight Symposium being conducted by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) on Tuesday, October 8, 2019 in the Jack Morton Auditorium at The George Washington University.

Lastly, we are looking for opportunities to expand BEGA's outreach efforts and educate more of the District's residents about our agency's mission and operations. If you know of any community organizations around the District that would like to learn more about BEGA, please contact our Training Coordinator at ashley.cooks@dc.gov to schedule our team to bring our Road Show outreach program to one of your organization's upcoming meetings.

Regards,
Brent Wolfingbarger, Director

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BOARD OF ETHICS AND
GOVERNMENT
ACCOUNTABILITY

Brent Wolfingbarger,
Director

Rochelle Ford,
General Counsel (Acting)

Address:
441 4th Street NW
Suite 830 South
Washington, DC 20001

Telephone: 202-481-3411

BEGA Website: bega.dc.gov



BEGA Happenings

The Board of Ethics and Government Accountability will hold its annual Ethics Day on October 3, 2019. This year's theme is *Cultivating an Ethical Government*. The training is free, and open to all District employees. The general public is invited to join us for the FOIA and Parliamentary Procedures sessions.

The training will begin immediately following our October Board meeting. Board meetings are held monthly in our hearing room at 441 4th St NW, Suite 540S. They are open to the public. Join us as we discuss the status and work of the agency!

Ethics Day will commence with a Meet and Greet, complete with light food and beverages. Afterwards, there will be individual "break out" sessions in different classrooms. Feel free to attend a single course, or join us for the entire day. A complete course list with descriptions and times is below. Be sure to register using Eventbrite [here](#).

Upcoming Events

The following events will take place on Ethics Day on Thursday, October 3, 2019 at One Judiciary Square

Ethics Introduction - State of the Agency - An overview of recent OGE activities, including advisory opinions, notable ethics cases, and pending legislation.

Time & Location: 12:30 – 1:00 p.m. – Room 540S

Presenter: Brent Wolfingbarger, OGE Director

Ethics Investigations Process - This session will outline how ethics investigations are conducted from start to finish.

Time & Location: 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. - Room 1114

Presenters: Ronald Cook, Ileana Corrales, and Ralph Bradley, OGE Investigators

Professional Ethics: A Preventive Maintenance Approach - A unique program designed to help employees re-think about ethics and ethics risks. The primary focus will be on helping to recognize a range of overlooked or ignored ethics 'red flags' that are hiding in plain sight.

Time & Location: 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. – Room 1117

Presenter: Christopher Bauer, Ethics and Compliance Consultant

Leveraging Existing Organizational Infrastructure to Drive the Ethics Message - This entirely interactive session will help employees to use their existing role, resources, and level of experience - however much or little that is - to drive the ethics message with the folks with whom they work.

Time & Location: 2:00 -3:00 p.m. – Room 1117

Presenter: Christopher Bauer, Ethics and Compliance Consultant

Legal Ethics for Government Attorneys, co-sponsored by the D.C. Bar Association (Fully Accredited Course)

This session is a fully accredited course that will provide training for government attorneys on the legal ethics rules set forth in the D.C. Rules of Professional Conduct.

Time & Location: 4:00 – 5:00 – Room 1117

Presenters: Erika Stillabower, Senior Legal Ethics Counsel, and Hope Todd, Director of Legal Ethics

Upcoming Events (Continued)

The following events will take place on Ethics Day on Thursday, October 3, 2019 at One Judiciary Square

Financial Disclosure Statement Training - This session will inform employees on how to comply with the rules surrounding filing financial disclosure statements and best practices.

Time & Location: 2:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Room 1113

Presenter: Asia Stewart- Mitchell, BEGA Attorney Advisor

Social Media and the Code of Conduct - This session will provide information on the ethics rules that apply to employees while they're engaging in activities on social media.

Time & Location: 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. – Room 1114

Presenter: Sonya Gomes King, BEGA Attorney Advisor

The Do's and Don'ts of Outside Employment - This session will provide information on the do's and don'ts while engaging in outside employment and activities.

Time & Location: 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. - Room 1117

Presenter: Rochelle Ford, BEGA Senior Attorney Advisor

Post-Employment - This session will provide information on the three post-employment rules set forth in the District's Code of Conduct. (Q&A included).

Time & Location: 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. - Room 1114

Presenter: Asia Stewart-Mitchell, BEGA Attorney Advisor

Parliamentary Procedure Basics and Open Meetings Act Refresher - Learn the basics of how to efficiently run meetings from a Professional Registered Parliamentarian. A brief refresher course on the D.C. Meetings Act and Open Meetings Regulations will also be provided.

Time & Location: 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. – Room 540S

Presenters: Niquelle Allen, OOG Director, and Johnnie Barton, Attorney Advisor

FOIA Forum - Hear from a panel of D.C. FOIA experts about the state of D.C. FOIA. The discussion will include presentations from FOIA experts from the Office of the Attorney General, Executive Office of the Mayor, and the Office of Open Government.

Time & Location: 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. – Room 540S

Presenters: Niquelle Allen, OOG Director

FOIAXpress Training - This session will cover the reasons why all FOIA Officers and FOIA requesters should be using FOIAXpress and Open Data systems. It will include basic demonstrations and Q&A.

Time & Location: 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. – Room 540S

Presenters: Niquelle Allen, OOG Director, Tiffany Montgomery, OOG Computer Systems Analyst, Thang Nguyen, OCTO, Alexandre Santos, OCTO

Enforcement Matters

There are no enforcement matters to report for this month.

Ethics in the News

- ❖ School residency fraud is illegal and unethical! D.C.'s Attorney General is suing 16 families for sending their children to schools in the District without paying the required non-resident tuition. Read the full story [here](#).
- ❖ The District loses its second voting representative on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA) Board of Directors amid ethics concerns. Read the full story [here](#).
- ❖ North Dakota's new Ethics Commission is meeting for the first time on September 12 after being created in 2018 through a State constitutional initiative. Read the full story [here](#).
- ❖ Canada's ethics commissioner issued a report concluding that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau violated the country's conflict of interest rules. Read the full story [here](#).



ETHICS TIPS!

With presidential debates and caucuses coming soon, remember that as a District employee you are prohibited from engaging in political activity while on duty, wearing official government insignia, in a District government building, or while using a government vehicle.

If you have any questions about these or other government ethics gifting matters, contact the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability at 202-481-3411 or bega@dc.gov.

Report an Ethics Violation

BEGA HOTLINE: (202) 535-1002

Complete and submit the online [Complaint Form](#).

[Download \[pdf\]](#) the Complaint Form and email to bega@dc.gov.

You may also mail your complaint to:

BEGA
441 4th Street, N.W.
Suite 830 South
Washington, D.C. 20001

When reporting a government ethics violation to the BEGA, you may remain anonymous if you wish. However, you are encouraged to identify yourself so that we may follow-up on your call, if necessary, and obtain additional information that will aid us in our investigation. If you give your name, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent allowed by law. It is impermissible for a government employer to retaliate against an employee for reporting information to the BEGA. If you believe that by making a report to the BEGA you may be at risk of reprisal, inform the BEGA of this fact.

When reporting information to the BEGA, be as specific and provide as much detail as possible – the who, what, where, when and why of the matter. The more information you provide, the more thorough any BEGA investigation can be. If possible, indicate:

- * the specific nature of the wrongful or inappropriate act (give as many details as possible);
 - * the name of person(s) who committed the act;
 - * the place where the person works;
 - * the date and time the act occurred;
 - * the place where the act occurred;
 - * the reason you believe the act is wrongful or inappropriate; and
 - * the name, telephone number, and address of any person who can corroborate or supplement your information.
- *Any relevant information or knowledge you acquire after making a report to the BEGA should also be reported in follow-up calls.

Note: To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of all those involved, for anonymous complaints, you may not be notified about how your information is used. However, you can be sure that we will review your information and do all we can to detect and investigate any alleged ethics violations. The BEGA is committed to facilitating an environment in which employees and members of the public feel unconstrained to report violations of misconduct. Nonetheless, where a complaint is filed in bad faith and without merit against a government employee or official, BEGA may require that complainant to pay reasonable fees for time spent reviewing or investigating the claim, complaint or request for investigation and/or reasonable attorneys' fees to the respondent for defending against the allegations.