

# **Year-end Education Summary**

**Prepared for the  
Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board**



**December 14, 2006**

# An Overview of Ethics Education in 2006

Connecticut General Statutes, Section 1-81 (5) mandates that the OSE provide “yearly training to all state employees” regarding the code of ethics. Additionally, Section 1-89a (b) of Connecticut General Statutes states that in each even-numbered calendar year (such as 2006), the Office of State Ethics (OSE) must conduct a conference for executive branch and quasi-public agency officials and state employees. Finally, the OSE is mandated in Section 1-81b to develop and publish on the Web site a plain language summary of state ethics laws for persons, firms and corporations submitting bids/proposals for state contracts, and state contractors.

Following is a summary of how the agency met (and in many cases exceeded) those objectives in 2006, and how we will expand our efforts in 2007 and beyond.

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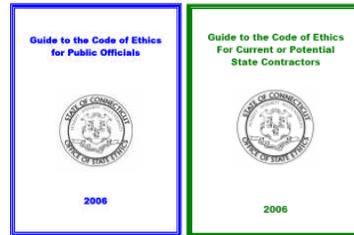
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## **SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

The Office of State Ethics (OSE) was able to hire an education officer on March 29, 2006. From April 2006 to present, the agency conducted 24 in-person trainings, including a statutorily-mandated conference, reaching approximately 1,475 individuals face-to-face.

### **► In-person Training Sessions**

<u>Agency/Group</u>	<u>Approx. # in Audience</u>
Department of Environmental Protection	100
Department of Administrative Services – State Agency New Managers Training	20
Department of Transportation (2 sessions)	300
Connecticut Lottery	25
Commission on Culture and Tourism	60
Department of Administrative Services – Procurement Staff	55
Department of Correction	90
Department of Information Technology	115
Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities – Council Members	30
Western Connecticut State University – Management/Procurement Officials	30
Connecticut Management Advisory Council (Executive Director Public Appearance)	20
Department of Administrative Services – New Managers Training	20
Connecticut Society of Association Executives	30
Office of the Treasurer	15
Betty Gallo Lobbyist Roundtable	15
Board of Education and Services for the Blind	100
Commission on Culture and Tourism – Commission Board Members	20
Office of Policy and Management	140
Department of Motor Vehicles	60
Connecticut State University System	30
Construction Industries Association	35
Department of Environmental Protection	85
2-day Conference (details below)	80
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These in-person trainings consisted of a PowerPoint presentation and handout materials as discussed in more detail below. OSE staff collected participant questions in advance of each presentation and tailored the speaking parts to include those specific agency questions as examples, used to illustrate the Code’s provisions. In this way, each presentation was uniquely relevant (and interesting) to the audience. Many agencies chose to video tape the presentations and subsequently offer the session to additional agency staff.

## ► **Conference**

On June 6 and June 7, 2006, the OSE held two identical conferences to which all agency ethics liaisons, ethics compliance officers, agency heads and legislative leadership/staff members were invited. All such officers of executive and quasi-public agencies were included, although the audience was expanded from the minimal statutory requirement, as this was the new OSE's first official state-wide training event. This comprehensive training included participation from the Governor's office and contained a broad values-based discussion of ethics in government as well as a detailed overview of Part I of the Code of Ethics with accompanying materials. This conference was taped by CT-N and subsequently aired repeatedly on the network, increasing its reach. The training remains available via a link on CT-N's Web site.

## ► **Quantitative Evaluation**

Our goal is not simply to impart information, but to do it well. We have instituted an evaluation system whereby presentation attendees fill out a simple, one-page evaluation form. The form gathers information such as:

- Overall session evaluation;
- Presenter's knowledge of subject;
- Presenter's interaction with audience;
- Participant's knowledge of subject before and after presentation;
- Participant's role in state service and number of years at job;
- Suggestions for improvement; and
- Topics participant would like to see addressed on OSE's Web site or in future seminars.

This data is then compiled into pie chart form so we can see, at a glance, how we are doing. Suggestions for improvement are compiled and given serious consideration. Our evaluations to date have been overwhelmingly positive. When the OSE has adequate support staff in place, we hope to take all of the evaluation data to date and create a master program evaluation that will help shape the nature of our presentations in 2007.

## ► **Looking Ahead**

State agencies and other groups are already booking in-person training sessions for 2007. To date, we have scheduled: New Legislators training; Department of Administrative Services – existing state managers; Department of Administrative Services – new state agency managers; Connecticut Development Authority Board; and Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. A positive trend is that we are receiving requests for speaking engagements not just from state agency compliance officers who are mandated to coordinate such training, but from lobbyist, vendor and municipal groups that are interested in hearing from the OSE. As we hope never to turn down a request for an in-person training event, the OSE is primed to have tremendous future public visibility.

In 2007, the OSE will also conduct, with the CT Humanities Council and the Joint Committee on Legislative Management, a conference for members of the General Assembly and Lobbyists. (Per CGS Section 1-89a (a).)

## **WRITTEN MATERIALS**

To accompany and supplement the public presentations, the OSE has developed many written training materials. These “plain-language” tools are available to any state agency or member of the general public.

### **► Handouts**

For an “at-a-glance” look at more complex areas of the law, simple handouts exist on the following topics:

- OSE General Information
- Gifts to the State
- Necessary Expenses
- Legislative Receptions
- Valuation Rules

### **► Guides**

Two brand new, plain-language guides to the Codes of Ethics were produced and disseminated to the public in 2006: the *Guide to the Code of Ethics for Public Officials* and the *Guide to the Code of Ethics for Current or Potential State Contractors*. These guides are available on the OSE’s Web site as well as in hard copy.

### **► Presentations**

Complete PowerPoint presentations on Parts I and II of the Code of Ethics exist and are available to anyone upon request. A number of Ethics Liaisons from smaller agencies who received our training in June requested the presentations and have used them to train their own staff members – a perfectly acceptable alternative to inviting the OSE to conduct the training, and a key reason for the “train-the-trainer” nature of the conference in June.

### **► Braille**

The Board of Education and Services for the Blind was kind enough to provide the OSE with Braille copies of the guide for public officials, the PowerPoint presentation on Part I of the Code and our handout on necessary expenses. These Braille copies are kept in the public area of the OSE for anyone who wishes to review them.

### **► Looking Ahead**

First drafts of two additional new guides: the *Guide to the Code of Ethics for Client Lobbyists* and the *Guide to the Code of Ethics for Communicator Lobbyists* are completed and moving forward with a tentative completion date of December 30, 2006. The *Guide to the Code of Ethics for Legislators* is the final guide in the set, with a tentative completion date of January 15, 2007. Once final, these guides will be placed on the Web site and announced by a special notice to each agency’s liaison or compliance officer.

The OSE also hopes to produce small, tri-fold style informational brochures to be included in the pay envelopes of state employees. In this way, we can easily send a reminder to all state employees of the big picture provisions of which they should be aware, while encouraging them to view our Web site and contact our staff for assistance with the details.

## **ELECTRONIC AND OTHER MEDIA**

### **► *Monthly Electronic Newsletter***

Each month, the OSE communicates with state agency ethics liaisons and compliance officers (as well as key legislative personnel and other interested parties) through the electronic newsletter. This vehicle serves to encourage a sense of dialogue and communication between the OSE and state agencies. This monthly contact is key to developing a communicative relationship with those who have to teach and adhere to the Code. These electronic communications include summaries of any new Advisory Opinions as well as timely topics and answers to frequently asked questions. An archive of all such communications exists on the OSE Web site, so that any person can access past newsletters.

### **► *Web site***

The OSE's Web site is just becoming the user-friendly vehicle for information that we want it to be, although we are very encouraged by its apparent public use, most notably by Senator Judith Freedman in her "From the Senate Circle" article in the *Wilton Villager*. New to the site is the "Ethics Liaison/Compliance Officer Corner," which creates a special environment for persons holding such designation. Thanks to our superb summer interns, we were able to implement online indexes to the Codes and the Regulations, so that users can jump from topic to topic without scrolling through the entirety of the text. We continue to include full text and summaries of all new Advisory Opinions and have updated the public information, publications and forms pages to include our new material. Much care is given to ensure that the home page is always up to date, with a new message to the public each month. We have also implemented, in the "contact us" section, unique e-mail addresses for legal questions, enforcement concerns, SFI filing questions and lobbyist filing questions. By encouraging regulated individuals to address their concerns to the appropriate venue, we can ensure a more timely response from the correct division. Finally, the lobbyist section of the site has been updated to include a brand new "Lobbyist FAQ" section, which addresses, in plain language, such vital topics as: "What is a lobbyist?" "Do I need to Register?" and "How often must I file reports?"

### ► **Web-streaming Video**

Using the services and technology from the Department of Transportation's Communications team, the OSE has available a web-streaming video training on Part I of the Code. While this is not widely advertised, as there are some bandwidth issues and therefore restrictions on how many users can download and view the training at once, it is a viable training option for state employees and is available to any agency contact upon request. This video, filmed against a blue screen with the PowerPoint superimposed behind the speakers, contains a welcome message from the Board Chair, an ethical overview from the executive director, and presentations on the law's provisions as well as an introduction to the enforcement division by OSE staff. This can be accessed from any computer at the viewer's convenience. Further, the set-up allows for a viewer to choose one or a few select sections to view from the interactive index, rather than having to watch the entire training as a whole in one setting. This video is also ADA-compliant.

### ► **DVDs**

The above training session, taped at DOT's communication studio, is also available as a DVD for those agencies who prefer a video method of training. We have distributed the DVD to approximately five agencies for their use in training staff. Additionally, many agencies videotape their OSE-led, in-person sessions for later use.

### ► **Looking Ahead**

In 2007, the OSE will expand its electronic newsletter to include a new edition for the lobbyist community. This communication will be sent out quarterly, just prior to filing deadlines. Thus, it will serve as a useful filing reminder as well as a means by which to impart useful knowledge, new relevant Advisory Opinions and lobbyists' frequently asked questions.

Continuing in our pursuit to offer a variety of training options, the OSE has developed the full content for an interactive, online training program. This Web-based program will be available to any number of individuals at any time that is convenient for them.

Participants will be guided through all components of the in-person training, with questions after each section. After answering each question (phrased as a commonly-encountered scenario), the participant will receive a thorough "yes, because" or "no, because" response to enhance his or her understanding of the principle involved. We hope to have the technology in place to allow agency heads and ethics liaisons to track state employee users. We also envision enabling each user, upon successful completion, to print out a personalized certificate of ethics training. In late summer of 2006, we were full speed ahead with this project with Samantha Wolf. After our contract for her services was not renewed, we have been actively searching for a cost-effective alternative. The OSE has a meeting with a member of the DOIT staff on December 18, 2006, to discuss her abilities and the possibility of establishing an MOU. Should the MOU prove to be the appropriate course of action, the project may be completed as early as February 2007.

## **PRINT MEDIA/PRESS**

### **► 2006 Philosophy – Reactive**

In 2006, many of the OSE's operations were in a formative state and thus not newsworthy. While the Board Chair and Executive Director did make early, positive contact with a number of key media personnel, our day-to-day dealings with the media was overall reactive. We prided ourselves on always responding to any media response with timeliness and accuracy in order to build positive relationships with editors and reporters. We were glad to be called upon for many stories, including an appearance on NBC-30's Evening News. In our quick yet comprehensive responses, we have laid the groundwork as being a reliable resource for media outlets.

### **► 2007 Philosophy – Proactive**

In the fall of 2006, the OSE began its more proactive approach to visibility by submitting an Op-ed piece written by the education officer and Executive Director. This piece, dealing with the very real concerns of citizens regarding ethics in politics, appeared in the *Hartford Courant* and spawned numerous other editorials on the subject, which served to raise general awareness of our agency and ethics in general.

In 2007, we will take initiative to continue to be on the forefront of such issues of national as well as local scope. As a starting point, we look forward to providing media outlets with interesting and telling data gathered from the January lobbyist registrations. We also look forward to inviting members of the media to our educational sessions, audit ceremonies and other public events.

### **Special thank you to the members of the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board 2006**

**Patricia T. Hendel, Chairperson**

**Robert Worgaftik, Vice Chairperson**

**Jaclyn Bernstein**

**Rebecca M. Doty**

**Enid Oresman**

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**Michael Rion**

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