OSE NEWS NOVEMBER 2014

Message to Agency Ethics Liaisons and Compliance Officers

The mission of the Connecticut Office of State Ethics is to practice and promote the highest ethical standards and accountability in state government by providing education and legal advice, ensuring disclosure, and impartially enforcing the Code of Ethics.

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board believes that education is often the most visible aspect of the Office of State Ethics' work, and Agency Ethics Liaisons and Compliance Officers have an integral role toward maintaining high ethical standards for all public officials and state employees.

Ethics Liaisons Best Practices

Often, an individual such as yourself is assigned to be the Ethics Liaison or Compliance Officer for your agency. ***What does that mean? What responsibilities does this role encompass?***

Our publication - Agency Ethics Guide: Ethics Liaisons and Compliance Officers, contains a voluntary self-audit, which was developed to assist you in integrating best practice management strategies in relation to the Code of Ethics. The self-audit is intended to assist you in thinking about your ethics-related leadership and will benefit your agency and the employees you serve.

As the Ethics Liaison your role is to work with the Office of State Ethics, to coordinate and facilitate the development of ethics policies for your agency; to provide access to education and training; to update and maintain the Statement of Financial Interests filers list and to foster communication between the Office of State Ethics and your agency employees.

As you look back on 2014, and review the following audit areas of review: Education, Agency Ethics Policies, Liaison Communication, Ethics Advice, Conflicts of Interest, Statements of Financial Interests and Reporting; we believe that you will achieve high ethical standards for your agency as you continue to audit and monitor your agency practices against the Code of Ethics requirements.

You are to be commended for taking time out of your busy schedule to complete it. We are available at 860-263-2400 to provide assistance, to schedule agency in-person trainings and to review your agency ethics policy.

ETHICS SELF AUDIT

Ethics Education - Annual Training Requirements

Requirement	How does your agency comply with this requirement?	Date Last Completed?	Action Items
Provide and/or schedule annual training for existing employees			
Provide and/or schedule training for new employees			
Provide access to training materials and guidebooks			
Maintain documentation of completion of annual ethics education for each employee			

Agency Ethics Policies

Requirement	How does your agency comply with this requirement?	Date Last Completed?	Action Items
Develop and maintain agency ethics policy			
Submit to the Office of State Ethics and to DAS an updated ethics policy as required by statute			
Provide ethics policy to existing and new employees			
Provide post-employment rules to departing employees			

Ethics Liaison Communication

Requirement	How does your agency comply with this requirement?	Date Last Completed?	Action Items
Receive monthly communications via e-mail from the Office of State Ethics and distribute key information to employees			
Routinely visit the Office of State Ethics website and the "Ethics Liaison / Compliance Officer Corner"			
Print ethics posters and placed them on agency bulletin boards			

Ethics Advice

Requirement	How does your agency comply with this requirement?	Date Last Completed?	Action Items
Employees know that you are the Ethics Liaison/ Compliance Officer and will contact you for ethics advice			
Understands the process for obtaining legal compliance advice			
Familiar with the Code of Ethics and the process for filing a complaint with the Office of State Ethics			

Statements of Financial Interests

Requirement	How does your agency comply with this requirement?	Date Last Completed?	Action Items
Maintain the SFI list, in a timely manner and make certain that filers are notified of filing requirements			
Notify the Office of State Ethics within ten days of any designation changes in your agency			
During the recruitment process, new employees who will be required to file an SFI are notified of the requirement			
New employees that are required to file are added to the SFI system within ten days			
Departing employees are informed of their requirement to submit a departing official SFI			
Update the SFI system within ten days if a designated filer leaves state service or the position that required him/her to file			
Maintain and update home addresses and email address of departing and former employees			

Conflicts of Interest

Requirement	How does your agency comply with this requirement?	Date Last Completed?	Action Items
Develop a system to identify Conflicts of Interest			
Maintain documentation of decisions made concerning Conflicts of Interest			
Periodic review of Office of State Ethics Conflict of Interest Decisions			

Reporting

Requirement	How does your agency comply with this requirement?	Date Last Completed?	Action Items
Educate your agency head regarding the mandatory obligation to report violations			
Develop a protocol as to how violations are reported			
Develop a system to be able to identify when a matter may be a violation of the Code of Ethics			

Let's continue to build our partnership and promote ethics in the workplace!

Happy Holidays!

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