ETHICS PROGRAM INSPECTION REPORT

Agency: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR)

Report No.: 22-59I Date: September 28, 2022

Period Covered by Review: January 1,2021 through December 31,2021



.0	AGENCY DATA	
	EMPLO YEES	
1	Number of full-time agency employees.	54
.2	Number of Presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed (PAS) public financial disclosure reports required to be filed.	N/A
.3	Number of non-PAS public financial disclosure reports required to be filed.	18
.4	Number of confidential financial disclosure reports required to be filed.	3
	EIHICS PROGRAM	
.5	Title of Designated Agency Ethics Official (DAEO).	General Counsel
.6	Grade level of DAEO.	GS-15
1.7	Title of Alternate DAEO (ADAEO).	Senior Attorney Advisor
.8	Grade level of ADAEO.	GS-14
.9	Title of the primary, day-to-day ethics program administrator.	General Counsel and Senior Attorney Advisor (shared)
.10	Grade level of the primary, day-to-day ethics program administrator.	GS-15 and GS-14
1.11	Current number of full-time ethics officials.	0
1.12	Current number of part-time ethics officials.	4
1.13	Number of reporting levels between the DAEO and the agency head.	1
	COMMENTS	
	(1.2) The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) does not have any PAS positions. (1.9 and 1.10) The General Counsel and a Senior Attorney Advisor share primary, day-to-day administ	trative duties.

2.0	LEADERSHIP			
	COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS	Yes	No	N/A
2.1	OGE has received an up-to-date designation from the agency head naming the DAEO. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.107(a).	\boxtimes		
2.2	OGE has received an up-to-date designation from the agency head naming the ADAEO. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.107(a).	\boxtimes		
	COMMENTS			
	(2.2) OGE did not initially have an up-to-date designation for the USCCR's ADAEO. The USCCR provided one during	the insp	pection.	

3.0	PUBLIC FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE (OGE Form 278e, OGE Form 278-T)			
	COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS	Yes	No	N/A
	The agency has written policies and procedures in place governing: See 5 U.S.C. app. IV, § 402(d)(1).			
3.1	Collection of public financial disclosure reports.	\boxtimes		
3.2	Review/evaluation of public financial disclosure reports.	\boxtimes		
3.3	Public availability of public financial disclosure reports.	\boxtimes		
3.4	The agency can demonstrate that late filing fees are collected or, where appropriate, waivers are issued when public filers do not timely file financial disclosure reports.	\boxtimes		



3.5	Public financial disclosure reports are securely maintained. See OGE/GOVT-1.	\boxtimes		
3.6	Public financial disclosure reports are retained in accordance with the retention requirements. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.603(g)(1).		\boxtimes	
3.7	There is reasonable assurance that the lead human resources official or designee promptly (no later than 15 days after appointment) notifies the DAEO of all appointments to positions that require incumbents to file public financial disclosure reports. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.105(a)(1).	\boxtimes		
3.8	There is reasonable assurance that the lead human resources official or designee promptly (no later than 15 days after termination) notified the DAEO of terminations of employees in positions that require incumbents to file public financial disclosure reports. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.105(a)(2).	\boxtimes		
	DATA ANALYSIS		%	
3.9	Percentage of sampled non-PAS new entrant reports filed timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(b).		0%	
3.10	Percentage of sampled non-PAS annual reports filed timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(a).		75%	
3.11	Percentage of sampled non-PAS termination reports filed timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(e).		N/A	
3.12	Percentage of sampled non-PAS public financial disclosure reports reviewed within 60 days of receipt. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.605(a).		82%	
3.13	Percentage of sampled non-PAS public financial disclosure reports certified within 60 days of receipt. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.605(a).		82%	
3.14	Percentage of sampled PAS annual reports filed timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(a).		N/A	
3.15	Percentage of sampled PAS termination reports filed timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(e).		N/A	
3.16	Percentage of sampled PAS annual and termination reports reviewed within 60 days of receipt. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.605(a).		N/A	
3.17	Percentage of sampled PAS annual and termination reports certified within 60 days of receipt. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.605(a).		N/A	
	COMMENTS			
	(3.6) During the course of the review, the USCCR found and deleted 28 public financial disclosure reports that exceeded The USCCR is now in compliance with retention requirements. (3.9) Two new entrant public reports were required to be filed in 2021. They were filed one day and five days late, respect (3.10) Six out of eight (75%) annual reports were filed timely. (3.11) No termination reports were required to be filed in 2021. (3.14 – 3.17) The USCCR does not have any PAS positions.			period

4.0	CONFIDENTIAL FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE			
	COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS	Yes	No	N/A
	The agency has written policies and procedures in place governing: See 5 U.S.C app. IV, § 402(d)(1).			
4.1	Collection of confidential financial disclosure reports.	\boxtimes		
4.2	Review/evaluation of confidential financial disclosure reports.	\boxtimes		
4.3	Confidential financial disclosure reports are securely maintained. See OGE/GOVT-2.	\boxtimes		
4.4	Confidential financial disclosure reports are retained in accordance with the retention requirements. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.604.	\boxtimes		
4.5	The agency's OGE-approved alternative confidential financial disclosure system complies with plans approved by OGE. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.905(a).			\boxtimes



4.6	There is reasonable assurance that the lead human resources official or designee promptly (no later than 15 days after appointment) notifies the DAEO of all appointments to positions that require incumbents to file confidential financial disclosure reports. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.105(a)(1).	\boxtimes		
	DATA ANALYSIS		%	
4.7	Percentage of sampled confidential new entrant reports filed timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.903(b).		N/A	
4.8	Percentage of sampled confidential annual reports filed timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.903(a).		100%	
4.9	Percentage of sampled reports reviewed within 60 days of receipt. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.605(a).	100%		
4.10	Percentage of sampled confidential financial disclosure reports certified within 60 days of receipt. See 5 C.F.R. §§ 2634.605(a) and 2634.909(a).		100%	
	COMMENTS	_		
	 (4.4) During the course of the review, the USCCR found and deleted three confidential reports that exceeded the retention USCCR is now in compliance with retention requirements. (4.5) The USCCR does not have an OGE-approved alternative confidential financial disclosure system. (4.7) No confidential new entrant reports were required to be filed at the USCCR in 2021. 	onperio	od. The	

5.0	NOTICES TO PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES			
	COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS	Yes	No	N/A
	Written offers of employment for positions covered by the Standards of Conduct provide: See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.303.			
5.1	• A statement regarding the agency's commitment to government ethics.		\boxtimes	
5.2	 Notice that the individual will be subject to the Standards of Conduct and the criminal conflict of interest statutes as an employee. 		\boxtimes	
5.3	 Contact information for an appropriate agency ethics office or an explanation of how to obtain additional information on applicable ethics requirements. 	\boxtimes		
5.4	• Where applicable, notice of the time frame for completing initial ethics training.		\boxtimes	
5.5	 Where applicable, a statement regarding financial disclosure requirements and an explanation that new entrant reports must be filed within 30 days of appointment. 		\boxtimes	
5.6	The agency has established written procedures for issuing the notice to prospective employees. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.303(c).	\boxtimes		
5.7	The agency's written procedures are reviewed by the DAEO each year. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.303(c).	\boxtimes		
5.8	The agency can demonstrate that there is an effective process for ensuring all covered employees receive the required information with their written offer of employment. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.303.	\boxtimes		
	COMMENTS			
	(5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5) The USCCR's notices to prospective employees who would not be required to file financial disclosure compliance requirements. However, OGE examined a notice the USCCR provided to a prospective employee who would public financial disclosure reports which appeared to be identical to the notice the USCCR sends to new supervisors. (The addressed in the next section.) As such, it only met the requirement to provide contact information for how to obtain addressed entire ent	d be received to be resented to be received to be r	quired to tices are informa	e, ation



6.0	NOTICES TO NEW SUPERVISORS			
	COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS	Yes	No	N/A
	The agency must provide each employee upon initial appointment to a supervisory position with: See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.3	06.		
6.1	• Contact information for the agency's ethics office.	\boxtimes		
6.2	• The text of 5 C.F.R. § 2638.103.	\boxtimes		
6.3	• A copy of, a hyperlink to, or the address of a Web site containing the Principles of Ethical Conduct.		\boxtimes	
6.4	Other information the DAEO deems necessary.	\boxtimes		
6.5	The agency has established written procedures for supervisory ethics notices. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.306(d).	\boxtimes		
6.6	The agency's written procedures are reviewed by the DAEO each year. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.306(d).	\boxtimes		
6.7	The agency can demonstrate that there is an effective process for ensuring that new supervisors receive the required information within one year of appointment. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.306(b).	\boxtimes		
	COMMENTS			
	(6.3) The supervisory notices provided to OGE did contain hyperlinks to a website with the Principles of Ethical Conductive hyperlinks led to webpages no longer accessible and thus did not provide the required content.	et. How	ever, th	e

7.0	INITIAL ETHICS TRAINING				
	COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS	Yes	No	N/A	
	Each new employee of the agency subject to the Standards of Conduct must complete initial ethics training. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304.				
7.1	The training presentation(s) addressed concepts related to conflicts of interest, impartiality, misuse of position and gifts. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304(e)(1).	\boxtimes			
7.2	The agency provided new employees with either the following written materials or written instruction for accessing them: The summary of the Standards of Conduct distributed by the Office of Government Ethics or an equivalent summary prepared by the agency; provisions of any supplemental agency regulation that the DAEO determines to be relevant or a summary of those provisions; such other written materials as the DAEO determines should be included; instructions for contacting the agency's ethics officials. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304(e)(2).	\boxtimes			
7.3	The agency has established written procedures for initial ethics training. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304(f).	\boxtimes			
7.4	The agency's written procedures are reviewed by the DAEO each year. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304(f).	\boxtimes			
	DATA ANALYSIS		%		
7.5	Percentage of new employees who received initial ethics training. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304.		82%		
7.6	Percentage of new employees who received initial ethics training within three months of appointment. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304(b).		82%		
	COMMENTS	•			
	(7.1) The USCCR used separate presentations for public filers and non-public filers. While the training for public filers are required content, the presentation for non-public filers did not have a section dedicated to impartiality but appeared to present in places. OGE suggests that in future trainings, the DAEO make certain to highlight each of the four required to discussion questions or summary statements to ensure that each concept is more fully addressed.	artially	tially address the		



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9.0	ETHICS ADVICE AND COUNSELING			
	COMPLIANCE REQ UIREMENT	Yes	No	N/A
9.1	Based on a sample collected by OGE, guidance provided by agency ethics officials to employees appears to be consistent with applicable laws and regulations. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.104(c)(4).	\boxtimes		
	COMMENTS			
	None.			
10.0	SPECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES (SGE) SERVING ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES	AND	BOAF	RDS
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10.0	SPECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES (SGE) SERVING ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES	AND	BOAI	RDS
	Public Financial Disclosure			
10.1	Number of SGEs serving on Advisory Committees and Boards.		8	
	DATA ANALYSIS		%	
10.2	Percentage of sampled public new entrant reports filed timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(b).		N/A	
10.3	Percentage of sampled public annual reports filed timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(a).		100%	
10.4	Percentage of sampled public termination reports filed timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(e).		N/A	
10.5	Percentage of sampled reports reviewed within 60 days of receipt. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.605(a).		86%	
10.6	Percentage of sampled reports certified within 60 days of receipt. See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.605(a).		86%	
	Ethics Training			
	COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS	Yes	No	N/A
	Required ethics training must be provided to each SGE. See 5 C.F.R. §§ 2638.304 and 2638.307.			
10.6	The training presentation(s) addressed concepts related to conflicts of interest, impartiality, misuse of position and gifts. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304(e)(1).	\boxtimes		
10.7	The agency provided employees with either the following written materials or written instruction for accessing them: The summary of the Standards of Conduct distributed by the Office of Government Ethics or an equivalent summary prepared by the agency; provisions of any supplemental agency regulation that the DAEO determines to be relevant or a summary of those provisions; such other written materials as the DAEO determines should be included; instructions for contacting the agency's ethics officials. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304(e)(2).	\boxtimes		
	DATA ANALYSIS		%	
10.8	Percentage of SGEs who received initial ethics training. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304.		100%	
10.9	Percentage of SGEs who received initial ethics training timely. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.304(b)(2).	100%		
10.10	Percentage of SGEs who received annual ethics training. See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.307(d)(2).	100%		
	COMMENTS			•
	(10.2-10.5) USCCR is headed by eight Commissioners: four appointed by the President and four by Congress. These Commissioners, who serve 6-year terms, are classified as SGEs. In accordance with § 2634.202(c), Commissioners are required to file public financial disclosure reports (new entrant, annual, or termination) if they work more than 60 days in a calendar year. All eight were required to file public reports during 2021.			

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ISSUES IDENTIFIED AND RESOLVED DURING THE INSPECTION					
Element	ISSUE				
2.2	ISSUE: Prior to the start of the inspection, the Commission had not provided OGE with an up-to-date designation for their ADAEO. In response to a request from OGE, the Commission promptly provided an up-to date designation that met applicable requirements. AGENCY RESPONSE: This issue has been resolved and USCCR will use best practices moving forward to ensure compliance with OGE regulatory requirements.				
3.6	ISSUE: The Commission had 28 public financial disclosure reports that were retained beyond the retention period. In response to a request from OGE, the Commission deleted these reports and is now in compliance with retention requirements. AGENCY RESPONSE: This issue has been resolved and USCCR will use best practices moving forward to ensure compliance with OGE regulatory requirements.				
4.4	ISSUE: The Commission had three confidential disclosure reports that exceeded the retention period. In response to a request from OGE, the Commission deleted these reports and is now in compliance with retention requirements. AGENCY RESPONSE: This issue has been resolved and USCCR will use best practices moving forward to ensure compliance with OGE regulatory requirements.				
5.6 - 5.8	ISSUE: The Commission did not have written procedures for issuing notices to prospective employees when OGE began its inspection. The agency drafted procedures during the course of the review that meet all applicable requirements. AGENCY RESPONSE: This issue has been resolved and USCCR will use best practices moving forward to ensure compliance with OGE regulatory requirements.				
6.5 – 6.7	ISSUE: The Commission did not have written procedures for issuing notices to new supervisors when OGE began its inspection. The agency drafted procedures during the course of the review that meet all applicable requirements. AGENCY RESPONSE: This issue has been resolved and USCCR will use best practices moving forward to ensure compliance with OGE regulatory requirements.				

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	RECOM	RECOMMENDATIONS			
#	Element	RECOMMENDATION	Compliance Due		
1	3.9, 3.10	RECOMMENDATION: Ensure public financial disclosure reports are filed timely. AGENCY RESPONSE: USCCR's disclosure system, FD Online, sends automated reminders to filers and the DAEO and ADAEO email filers to remind them of upcoming due dates and consequences for not timely filing. OGE COMMENT: OGE comment to agency's response, if necessary			
2	5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5	RECOMMENDATION: Ensure that all required notices and information are provided to prospective employees and those being appointed to supervisory positions. (E.g., a prospective employee offered a supervisory position that includes a requirement to file annual financial disclosures must be provided with the required notice to prospective employees and the required notice to new supervisors. Those notices would also have to include the information relevant to financial disclosure reporting requirements.) AGENCY RESPONSE: On July 21, 2022, at OGE's behest, the DAEO established a new written agencywide policy to notify prospective employee and those being appointed to supervisory positions of all requirements contained in 5 CFR Subpart C, including, but not limited to, §§ 2638.303, 2638.306. OGE COMMENT: OGE comment to agency's response, if necessary			
3	6.3	RECOMMENDATION: Ensure the required notice to new supervisors is updated to include a hyperlink to a live website containing the Principles of Ethical Conduct. AGENCY RESPONSE: On July 21, 2022, at OGE's behest, the DAEO established a new written agencywide policy to notify prospective employee of all requirements contained in 5 5 CFR Subpart C, including, but not limited to, § 2638.306. OGE COMMENT: OGE comment to agency's response, if necessary			