

ETHICS PROGRAM INSPECTION REPORT

Agency: Federal Election Commission

Report No.: 15-261

Date: March 31, 2015

Period Covered by Review: January – December 2013



1.0 AGENCY DATA		
EMPLOYEES (as reported in the most recent Annual Ethics Program Questionnaire)		
1.1	Number of full-time agency employees	333
1.2	Number of agency special Government employees	0
1.3	Number of Presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed (PAS) public financial disclosure reports required to be filed	9
1.4	Number of non-PAS public financial disclosure reports required to be filed	11
1.5	Number of confidential financial disclosure reports required to be filed by employees	60
ETHICS PROGRAM		
1.6	Title of Designated Agency Ethics Official (DAEO)	N/A (Vacant)
1.7	Grade level of DAEO	N/A
1.8	Title of Alternate DAEO (ADAEO)	Deputy General Counsel – Law
1.9	Grade level of ADAEO	SL
1.10	Title of the primary, day-to-day ethics program administrator	Attorney, Deputy Ethics Official
1.11	Grade level of the primary, day-to-day ethics program administrator	GS-14
1.12	Current number of full-time ethics officials	1
1.13	Current number of part-time ethics officials	1
1.14	Average full-time equivalent (FTE) value of a part-time ethics official(s) (For example, if part-time ethics officials at the agency generally devote 10 hours per week to ethics work, the average FTE value is 25%.)	25%
1.15	Number of reporting levels between the DAEO and the agency head	1
COMMENTS		
None		

2.0 LEADERSHIP					
COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT			Yes	No	N/A
2.1	OGE has received an up-to-date designation from the agency head naming the DAEO. <i>See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.202(c).</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.2	OGE has received an up-to-date designation from the agency head naming the ADAEO. <i>See 5 C.F.R. § 2638.202(c).</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
COMMENTS					
(2.1) Although the DAEO position is currently vacant, the designation letter for the former Federal Election Commission (FEC) DAEO was previously received by OGE.					

3.0 ETHICS AGREEMENTS					
COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT			Yes	No	N/A
3.1	During the period under review, all PAS officials complied with their ethics agreements. <i>See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.804.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.2	During the period under review, all PAS officials complied with their ethics agreements in a timely fashion. <i>See 5 C.F.R. § 2634.804.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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3.3	During the period under review, the agency notified OGE of ethics agreement compliance in a timely fashion. <i>See</i> DO-09-015.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4	For all officials currently in PAS positions, the agency maintains documentation of actions taken to comply with ethics agreements. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.804.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	For all officials currently in PAS positions, ethics agreements are maintained with their financial disclosure reports. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.805.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMENTS				
None				

4.0 PUBLIC FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE (OGE Form 278, OGE Form 278-T)							
COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT				Yes	No	N/A	
4.1	The agency has written policies and procedures in place governing: <i>See</i> 5 U.S.C. app. IV, § 402(d)(1).						
4.1.1	• Collection of public financial disclosure reports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
4.1.2	• Review/evaluation of public financial disclosure reports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
4.1.3	• Public availability of public financial disclosure reports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
4.2	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.				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.3	Public financial disclosure reports are securely maintained. <i>See</i> OGE/GOVT-1.				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4	Public financial disclosure reports are retained in accordance with the retention requirements. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.603(g)(1).				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.5	Agency ethics officials respond promptly to requests by OGE for additional information regarding PAS annual and termination public financial disclosure reports. <i>See</i> 5 U.S.C. app. IV, § 402(d)(1). <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2638.203(b)(14).				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DATA ANALYSIS				%			
4.6	Percentage of sampled non-PAS new entrant reports filed timely. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(b).				100%		
4.7	Percentage of sampled non-PAS annual reports filed timely. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(a).				100%		
4.8	Percentage of sampled non-PAS termination reports filed timely. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(e).				100%		
4.9	Percentage of sampled non-PAS public financial disclosure reports certified timely (within 60 days of receipt or later when additional information was being sought or remedial action was being taken). <i>See</i> PA-11-04.				91%		
4.10	Percentage of sampled PAS annual reports filed timely. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(a).				100%		
4.11	Percentage of sampled PAS termination reports filed timely. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.201(e).				100%		
4.12	Percentage of sampled PAS annual and termination reports certified timely (within 60 days of receipt or later when additional information was being sought or remedial action was being taken). <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.605(a).				100%		
COMMENTS							
(4.2) FEC did not have any filers subject to the late filing fee.							

5.0 CONFIDENTIAL FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE							
COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT				Yes	No	N/A	
5.1	The agency has written policies and procedures in place governing: <i>See</i> 5 U.S.C app. IV, § 402(d)(1).						
5.1.1	• Collection of confidential financial disclosure reports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

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5.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review/evaluation of confidential financial disclosure reports 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Confidential financial disclosure reports are securely maintained. <i>See</i> OGE/GOVT-2.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	The agency's OGE-approved alternative confidential financial disclosure system complies with plans approved by OGE. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.905(a).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.4	Confidential financial disclosure reports are retained in accordance with the retention requirements. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.604.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DATA ANALYSIS		%		
5.5	Percentage of sampled confidential new entrant reports filed timely. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.903(b).	86%		
5.6	Percentage of sampled confidential annual reports filed timely. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2634.903(a).	100%		
5.7	Percentage of sampled confidential financial disclosure reports certified timely (within 60 days of receipt or later when additional information was being sought or remedial action was being taken). <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. §§ 2634.605(a), 2634.909(a).	100%		
COMMENTS				
(5.3) FEC does not have an alternative confidential financial disclosure system.				

6.0 INITIAL ETHICS ORIENTATION				
COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT		Yes	No	N/A
6.1	All initial ethics orientation material contains: <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2638.703(a) and (b).			
6.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current contact information of relevant ethics official(s) 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of the Standards of Ethical Conduct and any agency supplemental standards to keep or review; or Summaries of the Standards, any agency supplemental standards, and 14 Principles for employees to keep 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2	The agency can demonstrate that it has an effective process to ensure that new employees receive initial ethics orientations. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2638.703(c).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DATA ANALYSIS		%		
6.3	Percentage of new agency employees who received initial ethics orientation within 90 days. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2638.703.	100%		
COMMENTS				
None				

7.0 ANNUAL ETHICS TRAINING				
COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT		Yes	No	N/A
7.1	All annual ethics training material contains: <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2638.704(b).			
7.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current contact information of relevant ethics official(s) 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the criminal conflict of interest statutes 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Standards of Ethical Conduct 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the 14 Principles 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of any agency supplemental standards 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.2	The agency can demonstrate that it has an effective process to ensure that covered employees receive annual ethics training. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2638.704(c) and 705(c).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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	DATA ANALYSIS	%
7.3	Public financial disclosure filers who completed annual ethics training. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2638.704(a).	8%
7.4	Confidential financial disclosure filers who completed annual ethics training. <i>See</i> 5 C.F.R. § 2638.705(a)(3).	10%
COMMENTS		
	<p><u>Concern:</u> (7.2 – 7.4) While preparing for OGE’s inspection, FEC learned that its electronic ethics training system only reported incomplete training for employees who started, but did not fully complete, the electronic training. Employees who never started the electronic training were not identified on the incomplete-training report. Because training follow-up was based on the incomplete-training report, ethics officials believed they had identified all employees who had not completed training. However, a significant number of employees who had not started training had not been identified until OGE’s inspection. Analysis of the 2013 training records showed training had been completed by only 8 percent of public financial disclosure filers and 10 percent of confidential filers. Upon identifying the problem, FEC developed a reconciliation process to accurately track the training status of all employees required to receive training.</p>	

8.0	ETHICS ADVICE AND COUNSELING			
	COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT	Yes	No	N/A
8.1	Based on a sample collected by OGE, guidance provided by agency ethics officials to employees appears to be consistent with applicable laws and regulations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMENTS				
	None			

9.0	RECOMMENDATION(S)			
#	Element	RECOMMENDATION	Compliance Due	
1	7.2 – 7.4	<p><u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Ensure covered employees complete annual ethics training as required.</p> <p><u>AGENCY RESPONSE:</u> FEC’s ethics program plans to have all covered employees complete annual ethics training by August 31, 2015. As noted in OGE’s report, we have developed a reconciliation process for our electronic training system to resolve the prior technological errors in the electronic tracking system, and that process will be implemented this year in conjunction with the annual training. We appreciate OGE’s assistance and guidance during the inspection process.</p>	8/31/15	