



MIAMI-DADE COMMISSION ON
ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST

2021-2022

ANNUAL REPORT



*Building Trust and Confidence
in Local Government*



Contact Us
305-579-2594



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www.ethics.miamidade.gov

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRWOMAN

Annual Report 2021-2022

The year 2022 marks the 26th anniversary of the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust (COE). The opportunity to serve as Chairperson in 2022 has been an honor and privilege and I look forward to my continued service in the new year. It is gratifying to be part of an organization that has been in existence for almost three decades with the main purpose to uphold the public's trust through practice, service, and training. Our Ethics Commission meetings, which are held on the second Wednesday of every month, foster a forum where truth, fairness, and open dialogue are valued. It is also a setting where I am honored to serve with my esteemed fellow Commissioners who freely give their time and expertise to protect and maintain the public's trust. We are thankful for the service of all the Commissioners who served in 2022: Vice Chair Wifredo Gort, the Honorable Lawrence "Larry" Schwartz, Nelson Bellido, Esq., Professor Charlton Copeland, and Professor Keith Rizzardi.



The heart of the Ethics Commission is its "human" resources. The executive team, attorneys, investigators, trainers, and staff all keep the COE's mission and vision alive. The mission of the COE is to ensure the integrity of both the governmental decision-making process and the electoral process, to restore public confidence in government, and to serve as the guardian of public trust. Each month, I am astounded by the productivity and professionalism of the entire team of COE "guardians" who provide effective advice and guidance to all inquiring parties and navigate complex cases and inquiries. A final special thanks to Martha Perez, General Counsel, who will end her tenure at the COE in January. Thank you for your dedication to truth and fairness, and for always sharing your knowledge on procedural matters. The COE team, under the directorship of Executive Director Jose Arrojo, upholds Miami-Dade County's ethics and public trust with a profound commitment to administrative and investigative rigor and a level of public service and advocacy that is immeasurable. My fellow Commissioners and I are proud to be part of this great team of guardians.

Looking ahead to a new year often evokes thoughts of both uncertainty and clarity. What is certain is change and we should anticipate and welcome it with certainty. The COE is consistently evolving to ensure the best ways to serve and ensure the public's trust. This evolution may include revising language to ensure rules and regulations are more comprehensible to the public, revising meeting protocols to better serve and engage the public, and providing training on contemporary topics to keep the public informed. Although continuous improvement is an essential part of preparing for change, the COE is steadfast in ensuring that the common ethical principles and practices that govern our Miami-Dade County are resolute. I hope the residents of Miami-Dade County continue to see the COE as a sounding board to seek guidance on opinions, actions, or decisions, and as a shared space for inquiry, dialogue, knowledge, and truth.

On behalf of my fellow Commissioners and the Ethics Commission, we appreciate the privilege to serve the residents of Miami-Dade County and wish you all the very best in 2023!

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Annual Report 2021-2022

In the past year, we continued to build on prior successes and produced an even greater volume and quality of work. The combined efforts of the gifted and committed staff that I am privileged to work with each day, in partnership with local government stakeholders, produced numbers well above the prior fiscal year in several critical areas including training, ethics opinions and guidance, and enforcement.

We provided over 300 ethics opinions to local government officials, board members, employees, lobbyists, and vendors. Markedly, elected officials continued to seek guidance from the agency and ethics opinions were provided to office holders in the County and 10 of our cities.

We provided over 90 live and virtual ethics and campaign practice training presentations to elected officials, candidates, board members and employees in the County and 15 cities. Notably, we trained internal affairs investigators on the application of the ethics code to police practices, and the overlap between the Officers Bill of Rights and our ethics investigative authority over police officers. Similar, tailored ethics training was also offered to municipal clerks, government auditors, fraud examiners, and small businesses seeking County contracts.

More broadly, the agency provided ethics presentations to officials, good government advocates, journalists, and students from abroad; Florida International University, University of Miami, and Miami-Dade County Public Schools; and offered continuing education webinars for attorneys.

We used various mediums to expand our outreach and to educate the public on ethics, including newspaper, radio, television, on-line platforms, and person-to-person contacts. For the first time in several years, reached into lesser served communities as part of the multi-agency Walking One Stop initiative. This effort included articles, opinions, and public service announcements in the Miami Herald, Miami New Times, Miami-Dade TV, and Haitian Kreyòl language radio. Monthly ethics updates were provided via our electronic newsletter, Eye on Ethics.

Successful investigations resulted in the filing of complaints alleging exploitation of official position by a city commissioner, an assistant city manager, and county and city employees and supervisors. Complaints were also filed against County contract bidders for violating the procurement code of silence and engaging in prohibited lobbying.

We continued to strengthen the County Ethics Code. With concerns that some employees might be taking advantage of exemptions regarding solicitation of gifts from vendors, we partnered with the County Commission to amend the gift ordinance to include supervisory oversight of employees' solicitation of gifts in support of public duties. Similar successful collaboration expanded the Ethics Code's jurisdiction to include government officials' and employees' siblings.

Again, we stayed within budget and closed-out the year in the black. We continue to successfully provide expansive county-wide services to Miami-Dade County, its 34 municipalities, the County's public hospitals, and the greater community, with one of the smallest staffs and budgets in all of county service: 17 positions and an annual budget of 2.956 million dollars.

We thank you for your gracious past support, and in future partnership, we hope to continue to serve the community and promote confidence in local governance.



ABOUT THE COMMISSION

The Ethics Commission was created in 1996 as a result of a citizens' vote to amend the Home Rule charter. It is an independent agency with advisory and quasi-judicial powers. Government employees and officials have a special duty to serve the public in a fair and just manner. The Ethics Commission is dedicated to bolstering public trust in the administration of government by informing the public and private sectors about ethics laws and seeking strict compliance with them. It is empowered to subpoena, audit, and investigate all facts and persons materially related to a complaint at issue.



OUR MISSION

The mission of the Ethics Commission is to ensure the integrity of both the governmental decision-making process and the electoral process, to restore public confidence in government, and to serve as the guardian of the public trust.

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



RESPONSIBILITIES

In its training, outreach, and public information function, the Commission provides ethics training to County and municipal elected officials and candidates, board members, employees, and lobbyists. Staff also provides ethics training to non-profit agencies, professional associations, educational institutions, and community groups, through workshops, conferences, and public meetings.

In its guidance function, the Commission provides ethics advice and written opinions to persons within its jurisdiction, including elected officials, as to the proper interpretation or applicability of the County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance, Municipal Ethics Ordinances, and other local laws.

In its ethics investigation, prosecution, and compliance functions, Commission staff conduct investigations of violations of the County Conflict of Interest and Ethics Ordinance, Municipal Ethics Ordinances, and other County ordinances within its jurisdiction, and issues investigative reports. Where probable cause exists, violations are prosecuted as ethics complaints before the Commission.

JURISDICTION

The Commission's jurisdiction includes elected officials, employees and advisory board members in Miami-Dade County and its 34 municipalities. Some rules and ordinances also extend to lobbyists and contract vendors. The Ethics Commission has jurisdiction over the following ordinances:

- 1.** The Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance
- 2.** All Municipal Ethics Codes
- 3.** The County Charters' Citizen's Bill of Rights
- 4.** The Ethical Campaign Practices Ordinance
- 5.** The County Employee Protection Ordinance
- 6.** Miami Dade County Honor Code

MEET THE COMMISSION

Chairwoman Bernier

Judith Bernier is the Director of the Center for Labor Research and Studies at Florida International University (FIU), where the mission is to develop and raise awareness about the changing nature of work and workplace diversity. As faculty member, Dr. Bernier teaches courses in labor relations and employment, global diversity and cultural competence, conflict resolution and mediation techniques, and vocational education. Dr. Bernier earned her Doctorate in Adult Education and Human Resource Development, Master's in Human Resource Development, and Bachelor's in Communication from FIU. She serves as a peer reviewer for academic journals in her field and is involved in several professional organizations. Dr. Bernier is a former adjunct professor at Miami-Dade College and worked in the private industry as a human resource manager and trainer for a national retailer. She has been an Ethics Commissioner since May 2014.



DR. JUDITH BERNIER
Chairwoman



WIFREDO GORT
Vice Chair

Vice Chair Gort

Wifredo "Willy" Gort is a longtime Miami-Dade County resident with almost two decades of municipal service, having been elected to the City of Miami Commission several times and acting as its mayor in 1996 after the passing of then City of Miami Mayor Stephen Clark. Mr. Gort has been an active member of his community for decades and has served on numerous boards and committees within the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County. He is a founding member and board member of the Latin Chamber of Commerce (CAMACOL), a former President of the Miami-Dade County League of Cities and has served on the boards of the Christian Community Service Agency, the East Little Havana Development Corp., the United Way, and the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Gort is a graduate of both Miami-Dade Community College and Florida International University, holding a B.A. in Business Administration.

MEET THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Bellido

Nelson C. Bellido was appointed to the Ethics Commission by then Chief Judge of the Eleventh Circuit, Joel Brown, in July 2010. Mr. Bellido is a managing partner in a Miami based law firm, a former adjunct professor of Business Law at Florida Memorial College, and worked with the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office from 1993 to 1997. He is a past Director of the Cuban American Bar Association, past president and director of the League of Prosecutors and has been serving on the Miami-Dade County Fair and Exposition Inc.'s board of directors for the past eight years. Mr. Bellido received his Juris Doctor from the University of Florida College of Law and earned an undergraduate degree in Political Science and History with emphasis on Latin American History from Duke University.



**NELSON C.
BELLIDO, ESQ.**
Commissioner



**JUDGE LAWRENCE A.
SCHWARTZ**
Commissioner

Commissioner Schwartz

Judge Lawrence A. Schwartz was appointed to serve on the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust by then Chief Circuit Court Judge, Joel Brown, in January 2013, shortly after his retirement from the bench. Judge Schwartz won election to the County Court in 1991 and subsequently sat on the Circuit Court after his appointment by then-Governor Lawton Chiles in 1997. Mr. Schwartz received an Associate's Degree from Dade County Junior College, a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and Sociology from the University of Oklahoma and a Master's Degree in Education from Florida Atlantic University. Mr. Schwartz taught sixth grade for five years at Lake Stevens Elementary in Carol City. After earning his Juris Doctorate from the University of the Pacific, Mr. Schwartz was a Deputy District Attorney in Sacramento, California, for a dozen years. The Miami Beach native returned home in 1987 to work as an Assistant State Attorney in the 11th Judicial Circuit prosecuting economic crimes, before ascending to the Bench.

Budget & Staffing



The past fiscal year, once again, the agency stayed within its budget allotment and closed-out the year in the black. It continues to provide services to Miami-Dade County, its 34 municipalities, and the County's public hospital system, Jackson Health Services, with one of the smallest budgets in all of county service.

1



2

Grow



3

IMPROVE



Over the last four years, and continuing into the last fiscal year, the agency has successfully grown its staffing and budget to better serve its constituency. Its staffing compliment has grown to 17 full time positions from 13 full time and 2 part time positions. Its budget has increased from 2.317 million to 2.956 million dollars.

Increases in its attorney staff and the addition of a new records specialist position have allowed the agency to improve its services, particularly in the areas of ethics guidance & opinions, outreach, and public records and information.



ETHICS OPINIONS & GUIDANCE WITH HIGHLIGHTED OPINIONS

ROQ's are ethics opinions issued by the Ethics Commission in public session after considering the recommendations of its legal staff, and any other involved party or member of the public, which interpret the Ethics Code or other local law under its jurisdiction.

INQ's are ethics opinions provided by the Ethics Commission legal staff after review and approval by the Executive Director, which deal with opinions previously addressed in public session by the Ethics Commission or within the plain meaning of the Ethics Code or other local law under its jurisdiction.

By the numbers:

The past fiscal year, the agency provided over 300 ethics opinions to County and municipal elected officials, board members, employees, lobbyists, and vendors. This roughly calculates to an increase, year over year, of 37% from last year's total.

**OVER 300
OPINIONS
PROVIDED**

**37% INCREASE
FROM LAST
YEAR'S TOTAL**

RIGHT TO BE HEARD

A citizen activist requested guidance regarding her right to appear before the elected council in her city to address matters within the council's jurisdiction, but not on the agenda. The Ethics Commission formally opined that the Right to be Heard provision contained in Section (A) 5. of the County Home Rule Charter's Citizens' Bill of Rights requires a municipality to afford citizens the right to address a municipal board on a matter within the board's jurisdiction, even if the matter is not on an official board meeting agenda. A rule or practice that does not afford this right violates the Right to be Heard provision contained in the Charter's Bill of Rights.

**RQO
2022-03**

LOBBYING

A principal in a business requested guidance regarding whether services offered to commercial clients consisting of reviewing client water and sewer bills and then contacting local government water and sewer officials on the client's behalf to dispute the bill and negotiate an adjustment or refund, constituted lobbying. The Ethics Commission formally opined that this type of compensated advocacy on behalf of clients constituted "lobbying activity" as defined by Section 2-11.1(s) of the County Ethics Code. Consequently, the business principal has to register as a lobbyist and abide by all requirements of the section. This includes compliance with the prohibition on lobbyists accepting success or contingency fees.

**RQO
2022-02**

ETHICS OPINIONS & GUIDANCE WITH HIGHLIGHTED OPINIONS

INQ
2022-33

VOTING CONFLICT

City Attorney on behalf of councilmember requested guidance regarding the application of the County Ethics Code's voting conflict provision as applied to the councilmember's possible vote on a potential settlement agreement between his city and a second city. The councilmember is employed as the principal of a city sponsored charter school located in the second city. The charter under which the school operates grants second city's mayor and council responsibility for the general supervision, direction and control of the school's business and officers, including approval of the voting councilmember's employment agreement as school principal. In an informal opinion issued by the Executive Director, he opined that because the councilmember has an employment and financial relationship with the second city as the charter school's governing board, and the second city would be affected by his vote on the possible settlement agreement, then a voting conflict as defined in Section 2-11.1(d) of the County Ethics Code, prohibited his vote on settlement agreement between the two cities.

INQ
2022-98

VOTING CONFLICT

A city manager requested guidance regarding the application of the County Ethics Code's prohibition on conflicting employment as applied to his outside employment as the president of a nonprofit that is developing, remodeling, and constructing a medical office complex and senior affordable housing facility complex and accompanying public works improvements in his city. In an informal opinion issued by the Executive Director, he opined this constituted conflicting outside employment as defined in Section 2-11.1 (j) of the County Ethics Code inasmuch as there is an overlap between the public role as city manager and private role with the nonprofit while it is engaged in the development and construction of a project in the city. An internal separation between the employee's public role and the private employment is not possible as there are various city departments involved in oversight of site development and abutting public works improvements, and these departments are under the manager's supervision.

INQ
2022-15

VOTING CONFLICT

A mayor requested guidance regarding the voting conflict provision as applied to his possible vote on property development matter. The mayor in his outside employment capacity brokered the sale of property, and the sale was contingent on obtaining city commission approval of the development purposes. In an informal opinion issued by the Executive Director, he opined that because the mayor had a recent business relationship with the parties involved in the sale and purchase of the property, that a voting conflict as defined in Section 2-11.1(d) of the County Ethics Code, prohibited his vote on the property development matter.

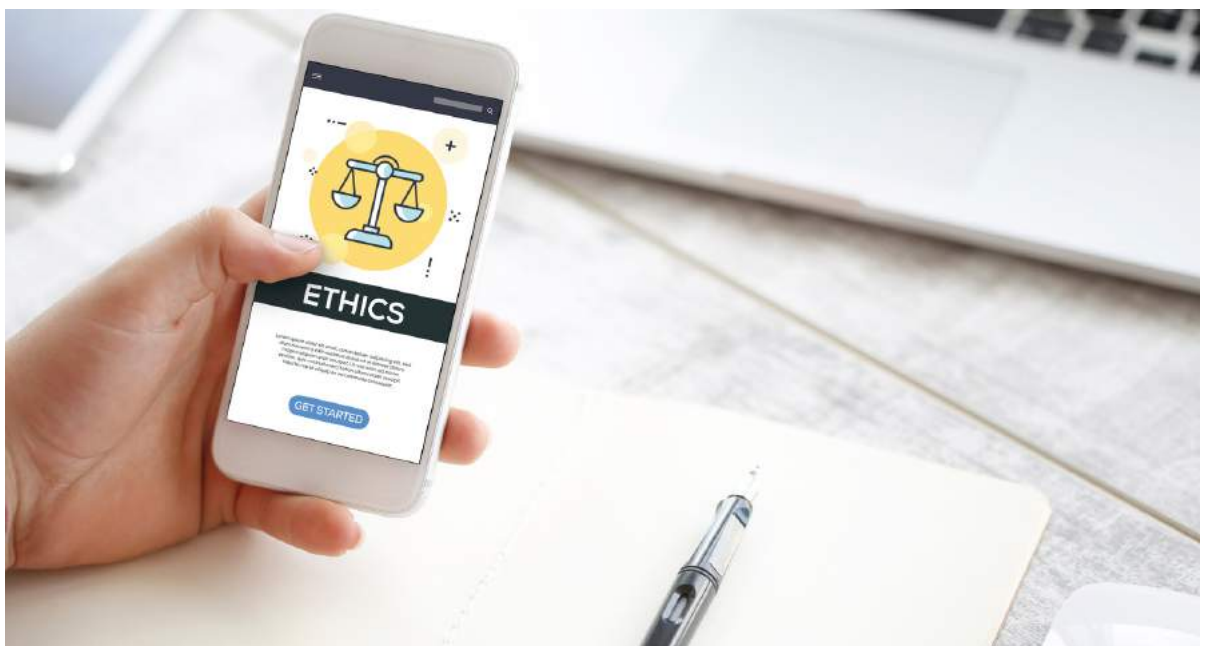
HIGHLIGHTED OPINIONS

INQ
2022-73

VOTING CONFLICT

A City Attorney on behalf of a councilmember requested guidance regarding the application of the County Ethics Code's voting conflict provision as applied to the councilmember's possible vote on a requested zoning variance relating to the expansion of a behavioral health hospital that is in close geographical proximity to the member's home. In an informal opinion issued by the Executive Director, he opined that the councilmember did not have a voting conflict as defined in Section 2-11.1(d) of the County Ethics Code. The Ethics Commission will apply a five-prong test to determine if a voting conflict exists in these types of matters:

1. Whether the voting official's property abuts, adjoins or is otherwise in close proximity to the property impacted by the zoning variance or traffic mitigation plan.
2. Whether the voting official owns 1% or more of the properties that would be impacted by the zoning variance or traffic mitigation plan.
3. Whether the zoning variance or traffic mitigation plan will significantly increase or decrease traffic in the area proximate to the voting official's property.
4. Whether the zoning variance or traffic mitigation plan will significantly change the character of the official's neighborhood, including changes in densities or intensities of development.
5. Whether the zoning variance or traffic mitigation plan would create a financial benefit or detriment to the official and whether that benefit or detriment is remote and speculative.

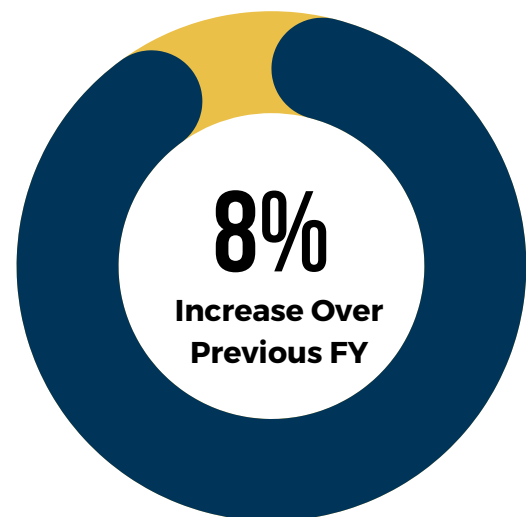




The agency used a variety of mediums in its training and outreach function. For the first time in the last several years, and certainly after the passing of the critical phase of the pandemic, the agency successfully combined print media, printed materials, electronic media/email, radio, television, and person to person contacts to educate the public on local government ethics and the Ethics Commission's work. Also, for the first time in several years, the agency made in-roads towards the goal of reaching lesser served communities.

ETHICS TRAINING & OUTREACH

Ethics commission staff continued on-site and virtual training for elected officials, candidates, County and municipal advisory and quasi-judicial board members, and expanded their partnerships with municipal associations to provide additional and expanded training opportunities. During the fiscal year, the COE delivered or participated in a total of 91 training and outreach sessions throughout the County, including in the cities of Coral Gables, Miami, Opa-locka, North Miami, South Miami, Hialeah and North Miami Beach. The total number of training and outreach sessions represents an 8% increase over the previous fiscal year. Each training contact with a government, not-for-profit, private educational entity, also serves the Commission's outreach charge by including not only ethics training but COE messaging.



ETHICS TRAINING & OUTREACH



91

Total Sessions



- City of Miami Boards
- Coral Gables Boards
- County Trade Consortium Board
- Miami Shores Boards
- County Selection Committees
- Ethical Governance Day MDCPS



- County Advisory Boards
- Municipal Boards
- Univ. of Miami Law Students
- County Selection Committees
- Citrus Community Based Care
- Rep. Government Witnesses in Ethics & Criminal Investigations (CLE)



- Ethical Campaign Practices
- Biscayne Bay Watershed Board
- City & County Mgmnt Assoc.
- County Advisory Boards
- UPAC
- Walking One Stop
- Municipal Elected Officials



- Miami Elected Officials
- City of Miami Boards
- County Interfaith Board
- County Advisory Boards
- County Dept Personnel Reps.
- Children's Trust Board Staff
- County Youth Comm. Board
- Opa-Locka Boards & Staff
- Walking One Stop
- County Selection Committees
- Miami Beach Elected Officials
- Police Internal Affairs Investigators



- County Advisory Boards
- South Miami Boards
- County Selection Committees
- St. Thomas Law Students
- Beacon Council Executive Staff
- El Portal Elected Officials



- Miami Dade College Students
- County Advisory Boards
- County Mayor's Career Outreach
- FIU College of Law Students
- County Selection Committees
- UM Networking & Info Students
- North Miami Boards
- Sunny Isles Elected Officials

ETHICS TRAINING & OUTREACH



- City of Miami Boards
- Children's Trust Board Staff
- County Advisory Boards
- County Mayor's Career Outreach
- County Selection Committees
- Early Learning Coalition Board
- Clerk of Courts Audit Team

- Black Collective/Opa-Locka CDA
- County Selection Committees
- Haitian American Chamber
Scale Up Incubator Function
- Pub. Health Trust Board
- Mexican Visiting Dignitaries
- Miami-Dade Clerks Association



- County Advisory Boards
- County Mayor's Career Outreach
- Kiwanis Builders Club Students

- County Selection Committees
- Miami Police Internal Affairs
- Constitutional Prohibition on
Public Official Lobbying (CLE)



- Community Small Biz Enterprise
- County Advisory Boards
- Miami-Dade College Students
- CSBE Association
- Early Learning Coalition Board
- City of Hialeah Employees

- County Mayor's Career Outreach
- County Selection Committees
- County Advisory Board Liaisons
- Pub. Health Trust Board
- Hialeah Gardens Elected Officials
- Opa-Locka Executive Staff



- Key Biscayne Boards
- County Advisory Boards
- County Selections Committees
- County Mayor's Career Outreach
- Miami Employees Retirement
Trust Board

- County Procurement Fair
- State Attorney and Sr. Staff
- Ethical Campaign Practices
- Hialeah Elected Official
- West Miami Elected Officials
- Bay Harbor Isles Elected Official



- Miami SEOT CRA
- County Advisory Boards
- County COE Board New Member

- County Selection Committees
- County Procurement Expo



- New County Commissioner
- County Advisory Boards
- County Selection Committees

- Surfside Town Hall Forum
- County Asian-American
Advisory Board

- Visiting the Hubert O. Sibley K-8 Academy, a Magnet School in North Miami, and meeting with the Kiwanis Club's K-Kids club students. During the session the students learned about the process of resolving ethical dilemmas, the elements of critical and analytical thinking, and how to apply them in daily life.
- Producing a Public Service Announcement in 3 different languages to educate all sectors of the community on the role and accessibility of the COE.
- Partnering with FIU at their Law Public Interest & Government Career Fair at the law school's atrium. The event featured close to 50 government agencies and non-profit organizations that employ lawyers.
- Volunteering to provide much-needed support at the Animal Services Department animal shelter in Doral.
- Educating Surfside residents at a public forum that gave an opportunity for members of the community to engage in a casual forum with Ethics Commission staff so that staff can brief them on ethics ordinances and how they have been interpreted in the past.
- Facilitating the introduction of hundreds of civic leaders including judges, lawyers and elected officials into local high school classrooms to address students on the importance of civic participation and engagement as a means to ensure ethical governance and support for our democracy during Ethical Governance Day.
- At West Perrine's Circle Plaza and Rainbow Housing Development taking part in the award-winning Walking One Stop, a collaborative partnership with Community leaders, Police, and Social Services that seeks to deliver federal, state, and local social and economic services to the doorstep of residents.

COE IN THE COMMUNITY



Ethics Commission in the Media

**BREAKING
NEWS**

Turay, Radia. "After 25 years, Miami-Dade's Ethics Commission remains a guardian of the public trust." *Miami Herald*, 25 November 2021, Opinion.

[Link to story](#)

Majchrowicz, Michael. "Will Ethics Complaint About Mayor Courting Developers Hold Water?" *Miami New Times*, 29 October 2021, Election.

[Link to story](#)

Prazan, Phil. "Ethics Watchdogs Hold Surfside Public Forum After Significant Number of Complaints." *NBC 6 South Florida*, 7 September 2022, Television Newscast.

[Link to story](#)

Milberg, Glenna. "Miami commissioner's alleged ghost employee denies wrongdoing despite evidence indicating otherwise," *ABC Local 10*, 8 June 2022, Television Newscast.

[Link to story](#)

Charles, Johania. "New public advocate makes strides on county ethics commission." *The Miami Times*, 3 November 2021, Top Story.

[Link to story](#)

Leibowitz, Aaron. "Opa-locka city manager resigns from nonprofit after ethics official cries foul." *Miami Herald*, 15 June 2022, Miami Gardens-Opa-Locka Section.

[Link to story](#)

ENFORCEMENT

BY THE NUMBERS



336

HOTLINE CALLS LOGGED & RESPONDED

Ethics Hotline Calls are miscellaneous reports and inquiries that come into the agency's hotline mobile telephone number and are logged and reported to by investigators and attorneys.

62

COMPLAINTS

Complaints (Cs) are formal filed matters presented to the Ethics Commission directly filed by outside third parties or self-initiated by Commission Staff.

77

PRELIMINARY INQUIRIES

(PIs) are investigations handled by the enforcement staff regarding allegations of misconduct that are within the Ethics Commission's enforcement jurisdiction.

195

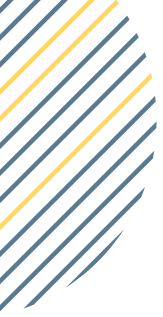
COUNTY LOBBYIST APPEALS

County Lobbyist Appeals filed by lobbyists that have been sanctioned by the County for late or insufficient lobbyist expenditure filings.

179

NO ACTION - REFERRALS

No Actions (NAs) are responses to reporting parties alleging violations that do not meet the Ethics Commission's enforcement jurisdiction. Complaints are reviewed and parties are then referred to agencies that can assist them.



HIGHLIGHTED CASES



C 22-04-02: Probable Cause Found in Case Involving Opa-Locka Assistant City Manager

A City of Opa-Locka Assistant City Manager stipulated to a finding of Probable Cause and entered into a settlement agreement for violating the “Exploitation of Official Position” section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance. A COE investigation revealed that the Assistant City Manager made direct telephone calls to a manager at the Opa- Locka Hialeah Flea Market during which he improperly solicited a monetary contribution for a City of Opa-Locka sponsored event.

C 21-11-05: Former County Department Director Stipulates to Finding of Probable Cause

A former County Department Director, stipulated to a Finding of Probable Cause for violating the “Continuing Application After County Service” (the “Two-Year rule”) section of the Miami-Dade County Ethics Code. The COE investigation showed that the former Director attended, but did not speak, during a meeting between three lobbyists, including a lobbyist for her current employer, and the Miami-Dade Commission Chairman within two months of her separation from the County, where the purpose of the meeting was to influence the Chairman to take official action or make an official decision.



HIGHLIGHTED CASES



C 22-49-08: Probable Cause Found in Case Involving County Water and Sewer Department Supervisor

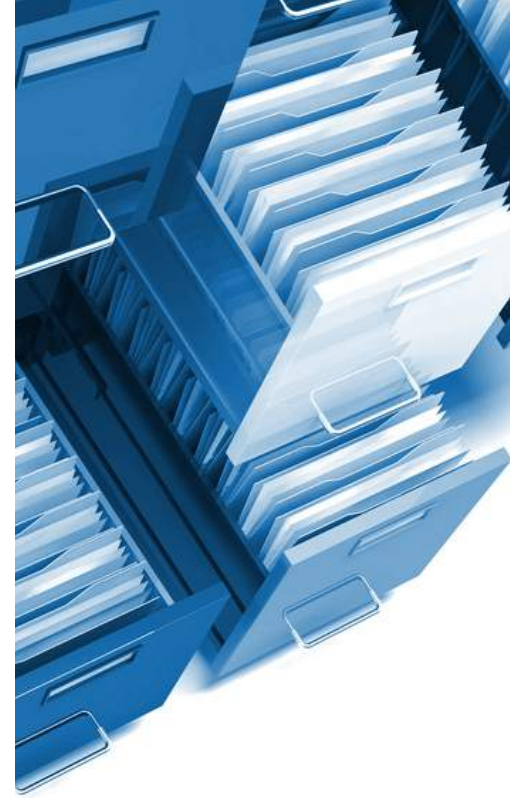
A Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer Department Supervisor stipulated to a finding of Probable Cause and entered into a settlement agreement for violating the “Exploitation of Official Position” section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance. A COE investigation revealed that the Supervisor stored personal equipment in a County facility and directed his subordinate County employee to clean his (the respondent’s) personal vehicle on County property.

C 22-52-09: Probable Cause Found in Case Involving City of Miami Commissioner

The Ethics Commission unanimously found Probable Cause that a City of Miami Commissioner violated the “Exploitation of Official Position Prohibited” section of the Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance. A COE investigation revealed that the Commissioner exploited his official position by permitting and/or securing the use of a City of Miami vehicle, for the benefit of his friend. The investigation also revealed that the Commissioner exploited his official position by permitting the use of a City of Miami owned vehicle as a means for personal errands to be conducted on his behalf for his personal benefit and/or convenience.

C 22-02-01 & C 22-03-01: City of Miami Building Department Employees Stipulate to Finding of Probable Cause

City of Miami Building Department employees stipulated to a finding of Probable Cause and entered into a settlement agreement for violating the “Exploitation of Official Position Prohibited” section of the Miami-Dade County Ethics Code. The COE investigation showed that the employees used city vehicles to transport individuals who were going door to door speaking to voters during an event in furtherance of the campaign for a then City of Miami Commission candidate.



MEET OUR COE TEAM

Commission
on Ethics &
Public Trust



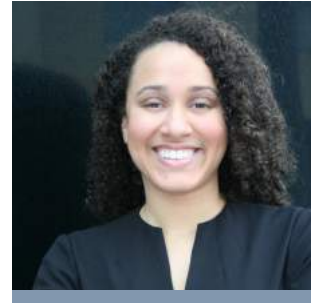
Jose Arrojo
Executive Director



Radia Turay
Advocate



Nolen Bunker
Staff Attorney



Loressa Felix
Staff Attorney



Etta Akoni
Staff Attorney



Rodney Vega
Lead Investigator



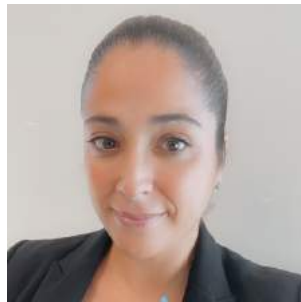
Nilda Olmo
Investigator



Susannah Nesmith
Investigator



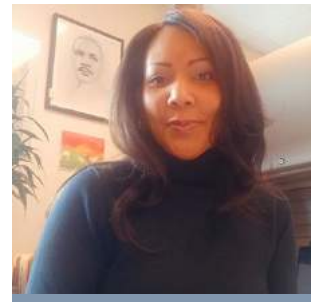
Karl Ross
Investigator/Auditor



Stephanie Vega-Saraf
Investigator



Rodzandra Sanchez
Office Administrator



Rachelle Ross
Commission Clerk



Robert Thompson
Outreach Coordinator



Charmaine Ruiz
Records Specialist



Onaivys Diaz
Executive Assistant



Leonardo Mendoza
Public Information Officer

HAVE YOU SEEN UNETHICAL CONDUCT
IN OUR GOVERNMENT?

REPORT AN ETHICS

VIOLATION



HOTLINE: 786-314-9560

EMAIL: ETHCS@MIAMIDADE.COM

WEB: ETHICS.MIAMIDADE.GOV

**YOU MAY REMAIN
ANONYMOUS**

Date. NO.

**MIAMI-DADE COMMISSION ON
ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST**

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



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ethics@miamidade.gov



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