

Ethics Commission

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Ethics Commission is to enforce the Montgomery County Code of Ethics by ensuring the ethical conduct of individuals who serve in County government.

The Ethics Commission has moved from the Executive Branch to the Legislative Branch of the County government.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total approved FY12 Operating Budget for the Ethics Commission is \$191,430, a decrease of \$26,820 or 12.3 percent from the FY11 Approved Budget of \$218,250. Personnel Costs comprise 96.5 percent of the budget for two full-time positions for two workyears. Operating Expenses account for the remaining 3.5 percent of the FY12 budget.

LINKAGE TO COUNTY RESULT AREAS

While this program area supports all eight of the County Result Areas, the following are emphasized:

❖ ***A Responsive, Accountable County Government***

DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures for this department are included below. The FY11 estimates incorporate the effect of the FY11 savings plan. FY12 and FY13 targets assume the approved FY12 budget and FY13 funding for comparable service levels.

Measure	Actual FY09	Actual FY10	Estimated FY11	Target FY12	Target FY13
Program Measures					
Average turnaround time for processing routine requests (days) ¹	15	35	40	40	40
Complaints received and investigated	5	6	7	7	7
Financial disclosure statements processed ²	2,018	2,100	2,060	2,060	2,060
Lobbyist activity reports filed	162	200	200	200	200
Lobbyists' registrations processed ³	162	250	350	350	350
Outside employment requests received and granted	1,002	1,150	1,150	1,150	1,150
Training sessions conducted	75	85	80	80	80
Waiver requests reviewed and approved	3	3	3	3	3

¹ Reflects the increasing number of information requests received and processed after the loss of a full-time position.

² The number of financial disclosure statements processed by staff due to RIF (Reduction-in-Force) and retirements in FY10.

³ The number of lobbyist registrations processed based upon the increase in the lobbying fee.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INITIATIVES

- ❖ ***The Executive Director of the Commission is being abolished and will be replaced by a Chief Counsel Attorney position.***
- ❖ ***The Commission will continue to pursue funding in order to computerize and streamline the process for employees to request outside employment and for lobbyists to be able to register and report online.***
- ❖ ***In FY09, the Commission established a fee for lobbyists that now generates over \$20,000 annually for the General Fund. More recently, the Commission developed a process to bill, collect, and record lobbying fees. In the coming year, the Commission will work with the County Executive's Office and the County Council to refine the term "lobbyist" to better identify those who contact elected officials and/or County employees that may influence the drafting of legislation, executive regulations, or other important administrative documents.***

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Barbara McNally of the Ethics Commission at 240.777.6670 or Phil Weeda of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2780 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Ethics Program Compliance

The Ethics Commission administers the County's Code of Ethics by encouraging and enforcing compliance and ensuring the ethical conduct of employees of the Executive Branch, County Council, selected Boards and Commissions, the Revenue Authority, the Housing Opportunities Commission, Fire Corporations, and Rescue Squads. The Commission also serves in an advisory capacity to the Washington Suburban Transit Commission. The compliance goal is achieved through the following activities:

Education – the Ethics Commission provides ethics education and training for County officials and employees and provides computer access to all reporting forms required under the Ethics law.

Financial Disclosure – the Ethics law requires specific public officials and employees to disclose financial information to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

Lobbying Registration – requires lobbyists to register and report lobbying activities involving the County government when income or expenditures exceed \$500.

Outside Employment – requires employees and officials to obtain approval from the Commission to be engaged in outside employment.

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY10	Budget FY11	Estimated FY11	Approved FY12	% Chg Bud/App
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	198,192	143,340	140,030	154,010	7.4%
Employee Benefits	85,053	71,310	73,120	30,770	-56.9%
County General Fund Personnel Costs	283,245	214,650	213,150	184,780	-13.9%
Operating Expenses	9,636	3,600	3,600	6,650	84.7%
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0	—
County General Fund Expenditures	292,881	218,250	216,750	191,430	-12.3%
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	3	2	2	2	—
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
Workyears	3.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	—
REVENUES					
Lobbying Registration Fees As Permitted By Law	0	25,000	25,000	25,000	—
County General Fund Revenues	0	25,000	25,000	25,000	—

FY12 APPROVED CHANGES

	Expenditures	WYs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
FY11 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	218,250	2.0
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: Staff Director/Chief Counsel Position	137,800	1.0
Increase Cost: Retirement Adjustment	4,940	0.0
Increase Cost: Restore Personnel Costs - Furloughs	3,100	0.0
Increase Cost: Operating Expenses	2,750	0.0
Increase Cost: Help Desk - Desk Side Support	230	0.0
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail Adjustment	70	0.0
Decrease Cost: Group Insurance Adjustment	-1,960	0.0
Decrease Cost: Annualization of FY11 Personnel Costs	-7,780	0.0
Decrease Cost: Executive Director	-165,970	-1.0
FY12 APPROVED:	191,430	2.0

