



## MONTGOMERY COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

**Waiver 23-07-012**

**July 25, 2023**

Ingrid Lizama is a Client Assistance Specialist at the Office of Community Affairs Division, Latino Health Initiative, of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). She would like to engage in outside employment as a Program Coordinator (Part-Time) at Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Washington (Catholic Charities), an entity that contracts with DHHS.

Montgomery County Public Ethics Law Section 19A-12(b)(1)(B) provides that, unless waived by the Ethics Commission, a County employee is prohibited from working for an entity that “negotiates or contracts with the County agency with which the public employee is affiliated.” Section 19A-8(b)(3) states that the Ethics Commission may grant a waiver of this prohibition if the Commission concludes that the outside employment will not be likely to create an actual conflict of interest. As Ms. Lizama’s proposed outside employer contracts with DHHS, the outside employment is barred pursuant to 19A-12(b)(1)(B), absent her obtaining a waiver from the Ethics Commission under Section 19A-8(b)(3).

As a community engagement specialist at the DHHS Latino Health Initiative, Ms. Lizama is responsible for enhancing community engagement through outreach campaigns on social media platforms by planning, developing, designing, and executing social media posts and health campaigns in Spanish to reach Latino County residents. She designs printing materials such as flyers, brochures, diagrams, reports, presentations, and posters. Additionally, she manages the initiative’s website through weekly updates, participates in workgroups within the County government to coordinate services and communications to client groups, and coordinates an annual Latino health fair for Montgomery County’s Latino population. Ms. Lizama does not interact face-to-face with County clients or residents, nor does she provide any direct service or support in the field or in the community.

In her role as a Program Coordinator at Catholic Charities, she will assist in the implementation of the Strong Families Initiative, a Catholic Charities curriculum, by facilitating in-person group sessions for adults and youth during after-school hours at Catholic Churches. She will engage with youth and adult participants to participate in the program group sessions and connect

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**100 MARYLAND AVENUE, ROOM 204, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850**

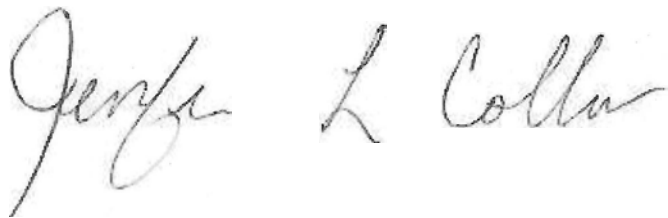
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them to resources depending on their needs and where they live, either in Montgomery County or Prince George County. She will create flyers, assist in materials preparation and track activity attendance for the program. She does not and will not perform any contract monitoring as part of her job for DHHS or Catholic Charities. Additionally, her proposed job at Catholic Charities is not funded by any of the contracts Catholic Charities has with Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. She has been assured by the Catholic Charities Program Manager that, while Catholic Charities receives funding from Montgomery County DHHS, her proposed position is new within the organization and will be entirely funded by the Catholic Charities Capital Campaign.

Pursuant to § 19A-8(b)(3) of the Public Ethics Law, the Ethics Commission may grant a waiver of the prohibition of § 19A-12(b) if the Ethics Commission concludes that the proposed employment is not likely to create an actual conflict of interest. Upon a review of the request and the Department's concurrence in and support for the waiver request, the Commission finds that there is no actual conflict of interest. Pursuant to the standard of § 19A-8(b)(3), the Commission grants the waiver of the prohibition of § 19A-12(b). The waiver is conditioned on Ms. Lizama not using her position as an employee of DHHS to advance the interests of her Catholic Charities clients with the Montgomery County DHHS. Also, in the very unlikely event Ms. Lizama is presented with a circumstance where she is expected to serve a client who she has served for her other employer (DHHS or Catholic Charities as the case may be), she will notify her supervisor and ask to be recused from directly servicing the client in the subsequent capacity.

This waiver expires when the outside employment approval with which it is associated expires, unless a continuation request for outside employment is timely filed and subsequently approved by the Ethics Commission. In reaching this decision, the Commission has relied upon the facts as presented by Ms. Lizama.

For the Commission:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jennifer L. Collins".

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Jennifer Collins, Acting Chair