



MONTGOMERY COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

September 10, 2025

Waiver 25-09-010

Pursuant to § 19A-14(c) of the Public Ethics Law, a public employee must not use any County agency facility, property, or work time for personal use or for the use of another person, unless the Ethics Commission grants a waiver.

Hilary Laskey is a Manager III at the Children, Youth and Families (CYF) Division within the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Ms. Laskey is also engaged in doctoral research as a graduate student at The Catholic University of America. Her dissertation focus is Job Satisfaction of Child Welfare Workers among lingering covid-19, a topic she formulated while a State of Maryland employee. To further her dissertation, Ms. Laskey developed an anonymous, confidential survey for Child Welfare Workers throughout the state of Maryland. Ms. Laskey has asked the Ethics Commission to waive the prohibition against use of County property and work time so that Montgomery County Child Welfare Workers may participate in this anonymous survey. For reasons provided below, the Ethics Commission grants the requested waiver.

The waiver as designed by Ms. Laskey will be fully anonymous and its responses confidential. Neither she nor DHHS managers or supervisors will know who among the DHHS workforce choose to respond to the survey, which will be facilitated through a publicly available survey-generating website. Ms. Laskey's county email address will not be linked to the survey, but she will be asking DHHS management to forward a link to the survey to the workforce listserv for County Child Welfare Workers. After compiling and analyzing the responses, Ms. Laskey will be sharing her findings with all participating entities, which currently include 23 other counties and Baltimore City. If she is granted this waiver, Montgomery County will be included as a participant.

Department management and leadership have signaled their support for Ms. Laskey's use of County-owned listservs insofar as the information gathered from this survey will be helpful in understanding employee satisfaction and, ultimately, employee retention for the County. The survey invitation emphasizes the voluntary nature, anonymity and confidentiality attached to participation, so County employees will not feel pressured to participate should they choose not to do so. Additionally, the survey's anonymity and confidentiality add further layers of protection for participants.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

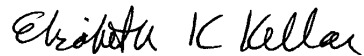
100 MARYLAND AVENUE, ROOM 204, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

OFFICE: 240.777.6670

The Ethics Commission may waive a prohibition of § 19A-14 pursuant to § 19A-8, which states that a waiver may be issued so long as doing so is in the best interests of the County; the importance to the County of a public employee performing their official duties outweighs the actual or potential harm of any conflict of interest; and granting the waiver will not give a public employee an unfair economic advantage over other public employees or members of the public. The Ethics Commission agrees that, based on Ms. Laskey's request and the concurrence of her County department leadership, these three requirements have been met. Therefore, the Commission grants the waiver to allow use of both County-derived listservs and County time for the purposes of sending this doctoral dissertation survey and having it filled out by Child Welfare Workers as described by Ms. Laskey in her waiver request to the Commission.

In reaching this decision, the Commission has relied upon the facts as presented by Ms. Laskey.

For the Commission:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Kellar".

Elizabeth Kellar, Chair