

# The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

# Agenda

The mission of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is to provide its service area with adequate and reliable supplies of high-quality water to meet present and future needs in an environmentally and economically responsible way.

## Ethics Committee

K. Seckel, Chair  
G. Cordero, Vice Chair  
C. Douglas  
M. Katz  
J. Lewitt  
T. McCoy  
P. Paule  
M. Ramos  
G. Shepherd Romey

## **Ethics Committee - Final**

Meeting with Board of Directors \*

**May 12, 2026**

**9:30 a.m.**

**Tuesday, May 12, 2026  
Meeting Schedule**

**08:30 a.m. LEGAL  
09:30 a.m. ETHICS  
10:30 a.m. OPE  
12:00 p.m. BREAK  
12:30 p.m. FAAME  
02:00 p.m. BOD**

Written public comments received by 3:00 p.m. the business day before the meeting is scheduled will be posted under the Submitted Items and Responses tab available here: <https://mwdh2o.legistar.com/Legislation.aspx>.

Members of the public may present their comments to the Board on matters within their jurisdiction as listed on the agenda teleconference and in-person. To provide public comment by teleconference dial 1-877-853-5257 and enter meeting ID: 873 4767 0235 or to join by computer [click here](#).

**Disclaimer: Written and oral public comments are received in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act. Please note that Metropolitan does not endorse or ensure the accuracy or reliability of the information provided as public comment or by third parties.**

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MWD Headquarters Building • 700 N. Alameda Street • Los Angeles, CA 90012

Teleconference Locations:

3008 W. 82nd Place • Inglewood, CA 90305

26772 Calle Maria • Dana Point, CA 92624

Long Beach Utilities Office • 1800 E Wardlow Road • Long Beach, CA 90807

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\* The Metropolitan Water District's meeting of this Committee is noticed as a joint committee meeting with the Board of Directors for the purpose of compliance with the Brown Act. Members of the Board who are not assigned to this Committee may participate as members of the Board, whether or not a quorum of the Board is present. In order to preserve the function of the committee as advisory to the Board, members of the Board who are not assigned to this Committee will not vote on matters before this Committee.

1. **Opportunity for members of the public to address the committee on matters within the committee's jurisdiction (As required by Gov. Code Section 54954.3(a))**

**\*\* CONSENT CALENDAR \*\***

2. **COMMITTEE ACTION (ONLY)**

- A. Approval of the Minutes of the Ethics Committee of April 14, 2026 [21-5698](#)

**Attachments:** [05122026 Ethics 2A \(04142026\) Minutes](#)

3. **COMMITTEE ITEMS (FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)**

NONE

**\*\* END OF CONSENT CALENDAR \*\***

4. **COMMITTEE ITEMS (ACTION FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)**

NONE

5. **COMMITTEE ITEMS (INFORMATIONAL FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)**

NONE

6. **COMMITTEE ITEMS (INFORMATIONAL)**

- a. Discussion of department head performance and goal setting [Public employee performance evaluation—Ethics Officer; to be heard in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957] [21-5795](#)

**Attachments:** [05122026 ETHICS 6a Report](#)

7. **MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS**

- a. Ethics Officer's report on monthly activities [21-5699](#)

**Attachments:** [05122026 ETHICS 7a Ethics Officer's report on monthly activities](#)

8. **FOLLOW-UP ITEMS**

NONE

9. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**NOTE: This committee reviews items and makes a recommendation for final action to the full Board of Directors. Final action will be taken by the Board of Directors. Committee agendas may be obtained on Metropolitan's Web site <https://mwdh2o.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>. This committee will not take any final action that is binding on the Board, even when a quorum of the Board is present.**

**Writings relating to open session agenda items distributed to Directors less than 72 hours prior to a regular meeting are available for public inspection at Metropolitan's Headquarters Building and on Metropolitan's Web site <https://mwdh2o.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.**

**Requests for a disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, in order to attend or participate in a meeting should be made to the Board Executive Secretary in advance of the meeting to ensure availability of the requested service or accommodation.**

**THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**MINUTES**

**ETHICS COMMITTEE**

**April 14, 2026**

Chair Seckel called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

Members present: Directors Cordero, Douglas (teleconference posted location), Katz, Lewitt, McCoy, Paule, Ramos, and Seckel

Members absent: Director Shepherd Romey

Other Board Members present: Directors Ackerman, Crane, Dennstedt, Erdman, Faessel, Fellow, Fong-Sakai, Garza, Gray (teleconference posted location), Jay, Kurtz, Miller, and Ortega

Committee Staff present: Beatty, Deshmukh, Hudson, Rodriguez, Salinas, and Shope

**1. OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE ON MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMITTEE'S JURISDICTION**

None

**\*\* CONSENT CALENDAR \*\***

**2. COMMITTEE ACTION (ONLY)**

NONE

**3. COMMITTEE ITEMS (FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)**

NONE

**\*\* END OF CONSENT CALENDAR \*\***

**4. COMMITTEE ITEMS (ACTION FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)**

NONE

**5. COMMITTEE ITEMS (INFORMATIONAL FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)**

NONE

**6. COMMITTEE ITEMS (INFORMATIONAL)**

- a. Subject: Ethics Office Overview, Guest Speaker: Andrea Sheridan Ordin  
Presented by: Abel Salinas, Ethics Officer  
Kelli Shope, Assistant Ethics Officer  
Dominic Berbeo, Senior Deputy Ethics Officer

Mr. Salinas provided an overview of the Ethics Office’s history, structure, programs, and staff. Ms. Shope, Assistant Ethics Officer, provided an overview of the Education, Advice, and Compliance programs. Mr. Berbeo, Senior Deputy Ethics Officer, provided an overview of the Policy Development and Investigations programs. Ms. Sheridan Ordin commented on her experience and the field of ethics.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Paule
2. Ortega
3. Douglas
4. Ramos

Staff responded to the Directors’ questions and comments.

- b. Subject: Ethics Office Review Process  
Presented by: Abel Salinas, Ethics Officer

Mr. Salinas provided an informational overview of Ethics Office reviews.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Seckel
2. Katz
3. Ortega
4. Ramos
5. Lewitt
6. Garza

Staff responded to the Directors’ questions and comments.

- c. Subject: Requested Investigation Information  
Presented by: Abel Salinas, Ethics Officer

Mr. Salinas provided the supplemental Ethics Office investigation information previously requested.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

- 1. Seckel
- 2. Fong-Sakai

Staff responded to the Directors' questions and comments.

## **7. MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS**

- a. Subject: Ethics Officer's report on monthly activities  
Presented by: Abel Salinas, Ethics Officer

Chair Seckel announced we would receive and file the Ethics Officer's report. The report is available online.

Chair Seckel also announced that Mr. Salinas will present the Business Plans for FY 2025/26 and FY 2026/27 at the next meeting.

## **8. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS**

None

## **9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:42 p.m.

Karl Seckel  
Chair



## Office of the Ethics Officer

- Report on FY 2025-26 Achievements

### Summary

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This report highlights Ethics Office achievements for Fiscal Year 2025-26. The Ethics Office successfully administered five core ethics programs, in addition to completing special projects.

For the new Fiscal Year 2026-2027, once the General Manager’s strategic priorities are finalized, I will ensure the Ethics Office programs and special projects are incorporated into Metropolitan’s comprehensive Business Plan, while maintaining Ethics Office independence in ensuring integrity, transparency and accountability.

### Detailed Report

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This report covers the Ethics Officer’s achievements for Fiscal Year 2025-26, from July 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026.<sup>1</sup> The Ethics Officer’s work centered around the following:

#### Core Ethics Programs

- Effectively administering Education, Advice, Compliance, Investigations, and Policy Development

#### Special Projects

- Obtaining Transparency Certificate of Excellence
- Expanding outreach (live ethics training events, ethics newsletters)
- Initiating collaboration in developing an Organizational Code of Conduct
- Performing internal review of ethics policies and procedures

The information below demonstrates achievement of last year’s goals. Due to a leadership transition in the General Manager position, the Ethics Office delayed completion of the organizational Code of Conduct to allow time for input from and collaboration with the General Manager. In light of the new Ethics Committee, the Ethics Officer delayed proposing new ethics rules and procedures to allow time for Committee orientation.

### I. Core Ethics Programs

#### A. Education Program

Education Program highlights:

- Live, in-person *Government Ethics 101* training program for employees

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all data in this report reflects the period of July 1, 2025, through April 30, 2026 (noted in the charts below as “FY 2025-26\*”) as compared to last fiscal year which reflected July 1, 2024 through June 17, 2025.

- Ethics rule fact sheets
- Outside legal opinion on inspection trips
- State ethics law updates for directors
- Ethics rule overviews for directors at Committee meetings
- Live ethics orientation sessions for new employees
- Live trainings by workgroup and topic
- 4 quarterly newsletters for workforce

Ethics staff also continued professional ethics education through:

- Council on Governmental Ethics Laws annual conference (two directors and two staff attended)
- Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics Academy and Annual Conference
- COGEL web-based training sessions
- FPPC web-based trainings
- Association of Workplace Investigators web-based trainings

**Key Education Statistics:**

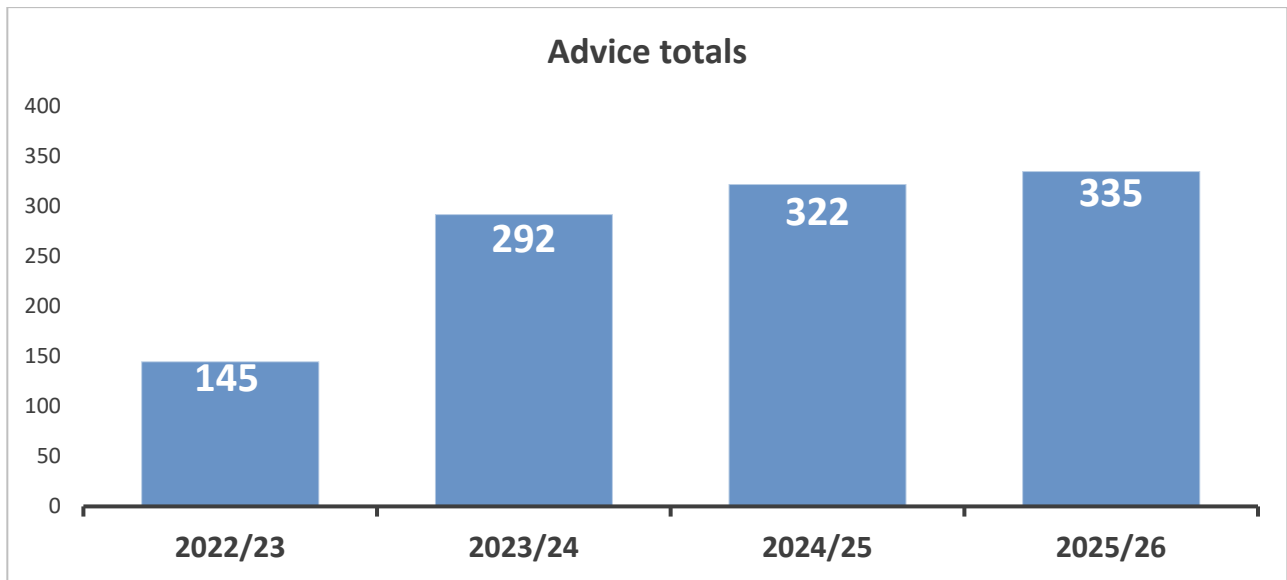


**B. Advice Program**

The Advice Program continued an upward trend from previous years:

- Timely analyzed and responded to 335 advice matters regarding ethics laws and policies (335 as of May 6, 2026)
- Produced conflicts bulletins for Committee/Board items, recusals, and disclosure scripts for directors
- Reviewed conflict of interest disclosure forms submitted by prospective consultants
- Prepared formal requests for advice to the FPPC for directors

### Advice Matters by Year:

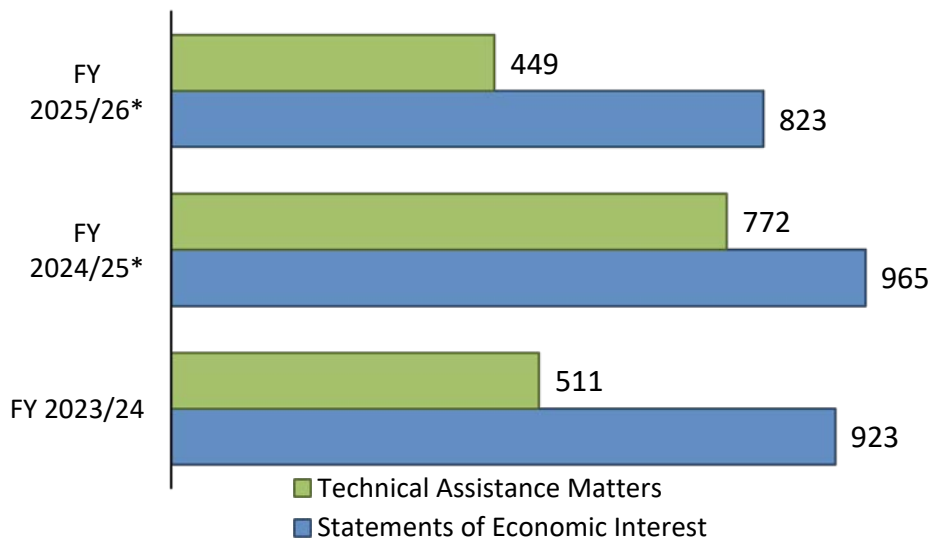


### C. Compliance Program

Compliance Program highlights:

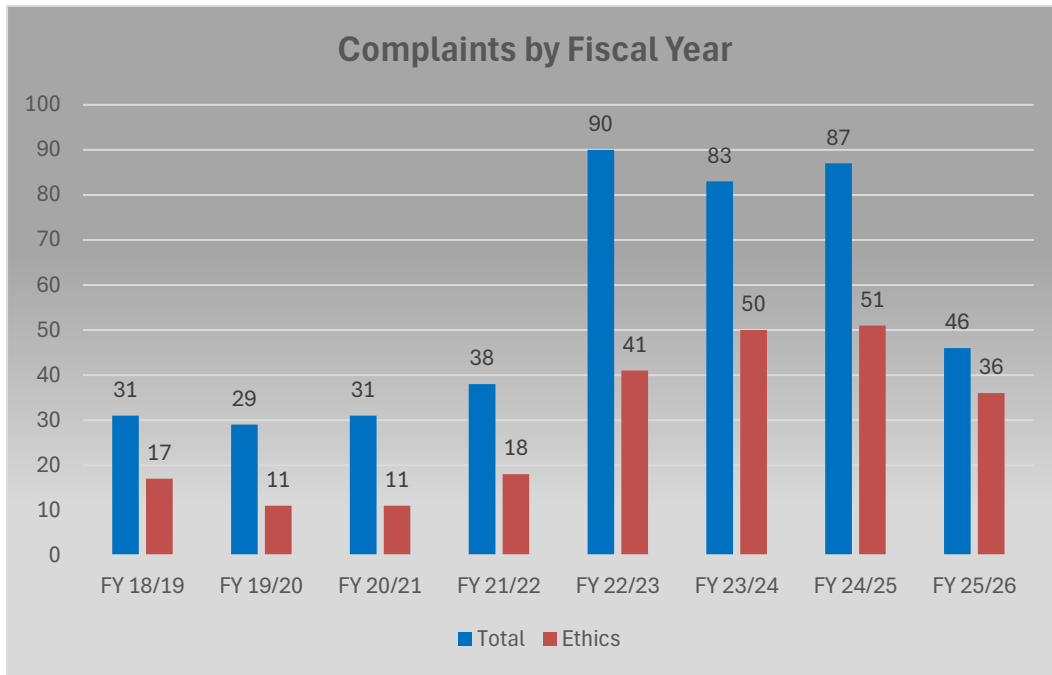
- Served as Metropolitan’s filing officer for 823 Statements of Economic Interest (Form 700)
- Achieved 91% compliance from Form 700 filers to date
- Managed Metropolitan’s compliance with state ethics training requirements (AB 1234)
- Assisted with Form 700 filings, including notifications and e-filing system

### Compliance Highlights by Year:

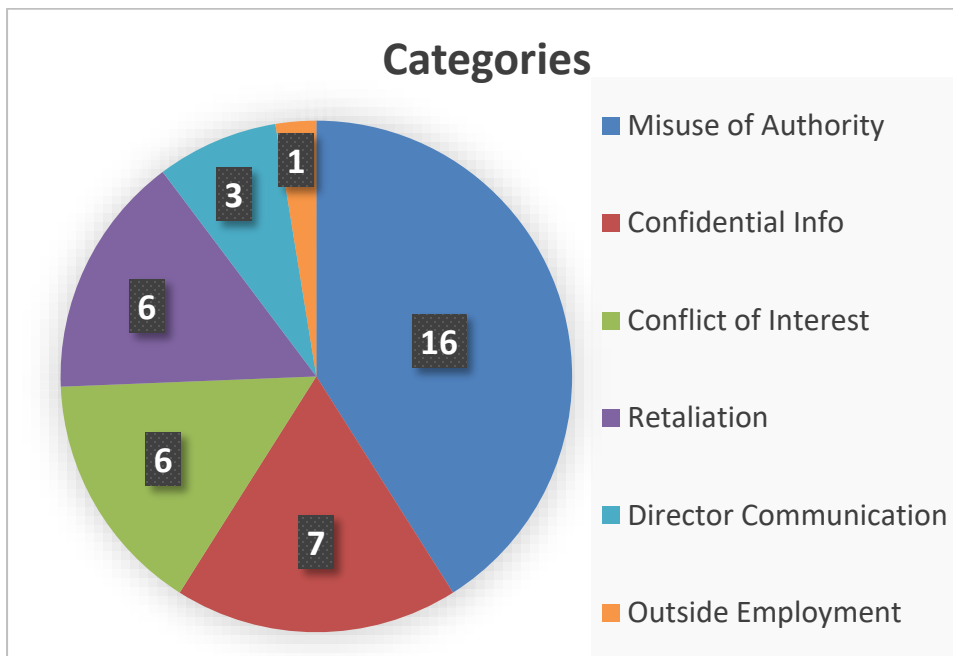


**D. Investigations Program**

**Complaints Received by Fiscal Year (as of 4/30/2026):**



**Categories – 36 Ethics Complaints Received in FY2026 (as of 4/30/2026):**



**Status of 36 Ethics Complaints Received in FY2026 (as of 4/30/2026):**

- 8 Investigations (3 completed, 5 ongoing)
- 28 Preliminary Reviews (23 completed, 5 ongoing)

## E. Policy Development Program

Policy Development Program highlights:

- Surveyed other government ethics agencies to compare ethics rules and procedures
- Reviewed ethics-related Administrative Code and assessed for potential amendment
- Discussed Lobbying Registration and Reporting program with Community and Workplace Culture Committee in preparation for proposed amendment to the program
- Made recommendations for amending operating and other policies from an ethics perspective

## II. Special Projects

In addition to our core work, the Ethics Officer completed the following special projects:

- Led collaborative process for Metropolitan to obtain a Transparency Certificate of Excellence from the Special District Leadership Foundation.



- Completed an ethics-related review on Metropolitan's Sponsorships Process

## III. Looking Ahead

Fiscal Year 2026-27

Core Ethics Programs

- Continue to efficiently administer core ethics programs: Education, Advice, Compliance, Investigations, and Policy Development

## Special Projects

- Employee Ethics Survey
- Ethics-related Review - Fleet vehicle use policies/procedures
- Propose amendments to ethics rules and procedures for Board approval

## IV. Conclusion

Metropolitan's Ethics Office is a protective barrier that maintains public trust in Metropolitan programs and operations. We foster an organizational culture of integrity, transparency, and accountability. Metropolitan consistently brings excellence in everything we do, but even small ethical lapses can tarnish the incredible efforts of our employees, the reputation of our agency, and diminish the public's trust and support for our endeavors.

The Ethics Office administers the board directed ethics program that includes organizational values and rules intended to promote a public official's ability to discharge their duties only with the public's well-being in mind and with uncompromised allegiance to public duty. The Ethics Officer continues to be committed to a collaborative working relationship with leadership, bargaining units, employees, and other stakeholders to promote a culture that encourages ethical conduct and compliance with the law and policies.

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**M**ission – *The Ethics Office promotes the highest standards of government integrity to support Metropolitan's mission through an independent and comprehensive program that enhances trust, transparency, and accountability for the benefit of the workforce and the public it serves.*

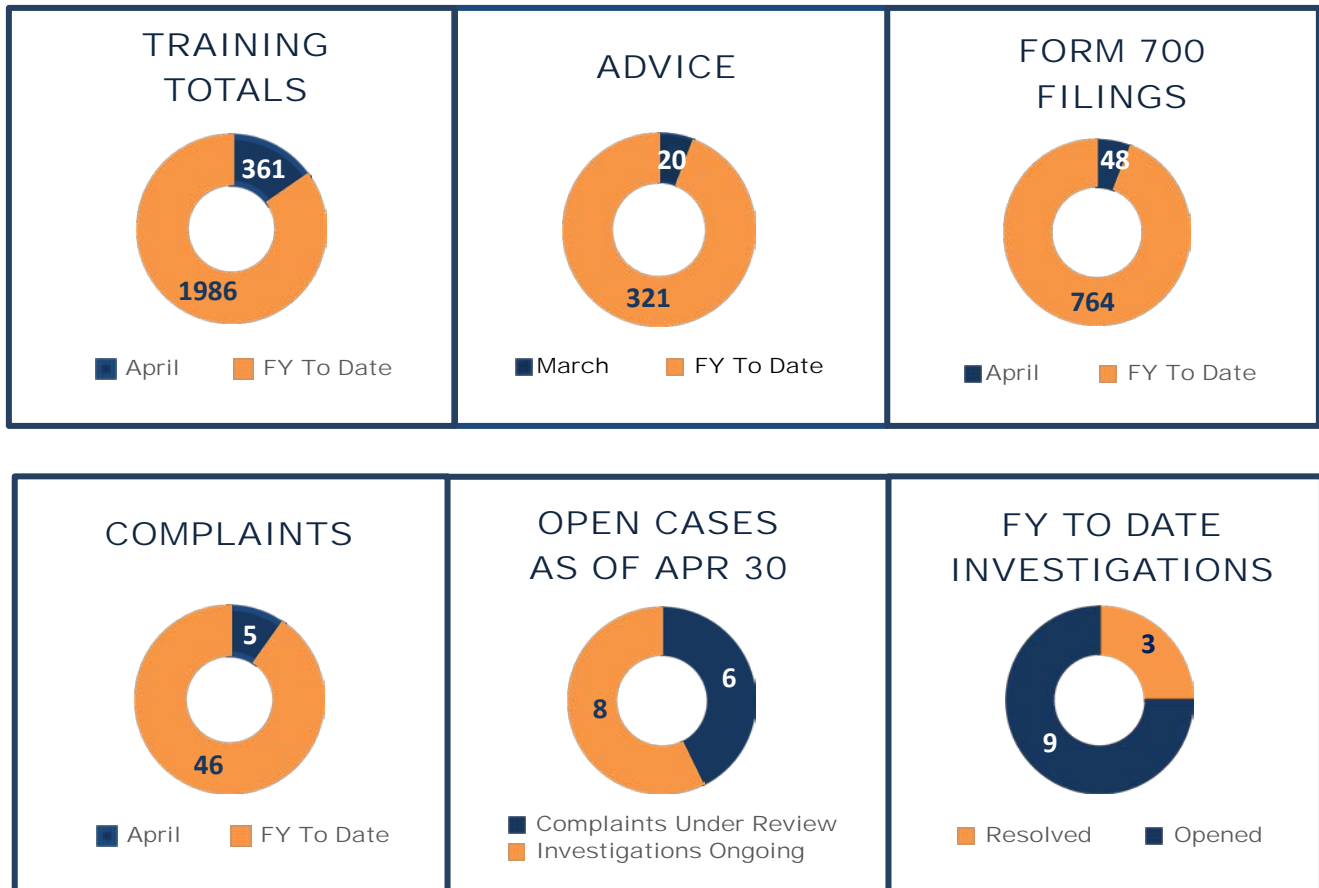
**V**ision – *Our vision is to be a leader in governmental ethics with an unparalleled commitment to supporting an ethical organizational culture.*

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## OFFICE OF ETHICS

Report for April 2026



## EDUCATION Program

Staff presented Ethics Office overviews at four new employee orientation sessions hosted by Human Resources and three in-person *Government Ethics 101* training sessions for 151 employees at Union Station.

Ethics staff participated in continuing ethics education:

- o *Whistleblowers: The Challenges of Investigating Anonymous Complaints*, presented by the Association of Workplace Investigators.

## COMPLIANCE Program

**Form 700/Filing Officer Duties** – Pursuant to state law and the Administrative Code,

Compliance staff assisted directors and employees with their Annual, Assuming Office, and Leaving Office Form 700 filings. Assistance included troubleshooting the electronic filing system and issuing notices of deadlines. Staff addressed 39 compliance-related matters for directors and employees related to Form 700.

**Annual Form 700 Compliance** – 764 Annual Form 700s have been filed since January 1, 2026. All directors timely filed their Annual Form 700. 61 employees have not yet filed. Staff continues efforts to obtain compliance from these employees to help Metropolitan meet the state’s Annual Form 700 filing requirement.

**AB 1234 Ethics Training Compliance** – Staff assisted employees with AB 1234 ethics training requirements. Assistance included notifications, troubleshooting the online training program, and obtaining training certification. A total of 120 employees completed their training this month. One director has not submitted their ethics training certificate to the Ethics Office. Staff will continue efforts to confirm 100% compliance. Staff addressed 258 AB 1234 compliance-related matters for employees.

**Proposed Amendment of Conflict of Interest Code (COI Code)** – Pursuant to state law, the Ethics Office proposed to amend Metropolitan’s COI Code, a document that identifies which employees are required to file Form 700 and their disclosure requirements. Proposed amendments include adding newly created positions that must file Form 700, updating titles of existing positions, revising disclosure requirements, and making other technical changes. The state mandated 45-day notice and comment period began on April 28, 2026 and ends June 12, 2026.

## ADVICE Program

Staff addressed 20 time-sensitive advice matters for directors and employees related to conflicts of interest, financial disclosure, outside employment, gifts, and other ethics-related topics.

Advice questions included:

- May a Metropolitan official participate in Metropolitan matters involving their consulting clients?
- Does a Metropolitan official need to disclose a prize awarded during an external training session on Form 700?
- May an employee participate in a Metropolitan matter involving their former engineering firm employer?
- May an employee accept travel payments from a nonprofit to attend a conference? If so, are the payments reportable on Form 700 and does acceptance create a conflict of interest in future Metropolitan matters involving the nonprofit?

Staff reviewed Committee and Board letters and directors’ financial interests listed in Forms 700 to help screen for potential conflicts of interest in Metropolitan matters. Staff also reviewed conflict of interest disclosure forms from contractors and subcontractors to help screen for and address potential conflicts prior to finalizing Metropolitan contracts.

## INVESTIGATION Program

**Complaints Received** – The Ethics Office received five new complaints in April. Three complaints involved ethics allegations, and two involved non-ethics allegations. The three ethics complaints alleged two separate incidents of unfair treatment by managers in personnel investigations and release of confidential medical information in an accommodations process. One complaint was resolved after a preliminary review found insufficient basis to investigate. The other two are currently under preliminary review by the Ethics Office. The two non-ethics complaints alleged discrimination and harassment and were referred to the EEO Office.

**Complaints Resolved** – Three preliminary reviews were completed to assess complaints alleging ethics violations. Two complaints were closed with no further action because the evidence reviewed did not support the allegations. An investigation was initiated into the third complaint, which is discussed further below. It took an average of 28 calendar days to complete the preliminary reviews.

**Open Complaints and Investigations** – As of April 30, 2026, the Investigation Program was managing a total of six open ethics complaints under preliminary review and eight ongoing ethics investigations. The first ongoing investigation, alleging a conflict of interest, was opened in September and is expected to be completed within the next 60 days. The remaining seven investigations are expected to be completed within the standard six-month timeframe. Details of the seven investigations are as follows: two alleging conflicts of interest were opened in November; four alleging misuse of authority for personal gain related to improper expenditures of District funds – three opened in March, and one in April; and one alleging the improper release of confidential information related to a personnel process was opened in March.

**Alternative Complaint Hotline** – No complaints were filed via the Alternative Complaint Hotline in April.

### MISSION

The Ethics Office promotes the highest standards of government integrity to support Metropolitan's mission through an independent and comprehensive program that enhances trust, transparency, and accountability for the benefit of the workforce and the public it serves.

### VISION

Our vision is to be a leader in governmental ethics with an unparalleled commitment to supporting an ethical organizational culture.