



## **What Public Servants Need to Know About the Ethics Ordinance**

The Ethics Ordinance was first enacted by the Detroit City Council in 2000 and amended in 2006. The creation of the Ordinance was mandated by the City Charter of 1997. The Charter required that the Ordinance establish Disclosure Requirements and Standards of Conduct applicable to all public servants.

An independent Board of Ethics has been established which is responsible for the overall administration and implementation of the Ordinance.

### **WHAT IS THE DETROIT BOARD OF ETHICS?**

The Detroit Board of Ethics is a seven member body composed of residents of the City. Three members are appointed by the Mayor and three are appointed by the City Council. One member is jointly appointed by the Mayor and City Council. Members serve five (5) years terms and may be reappointed however they may not serve more than two (2) terms or a total of ten (10) consecutive years.

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE ETHICS ORDINANCE?**

Public service is a public trust. A position of public trust should never be used for private gain. The purposes of the Ethics Ordinance is to promote public confidence in public servants, to preserve the integrity of city government and to establish disclosure requirements and standards of conduct for all City of Detroit public servants.

### **WHAT IS UNETHICAL CONDUCT?**

The Ordinance defines unethical conduct as a violation of the Disclosure Requirements set forth in Division 2 or a violation of the Standards of Conduct as set forth in Division 3 of the Ethics Ordinance.

The Disclosure Requirements can be summarized as: (1) Disclosure of interest in real and personal property, (2) Disclosure in interest in city contracts, (3) Disclosure of campaign contributions and expenditures(4) Disclosure of Appointee relationship to Elected Official.

The Standards of Conduct can be summarized as: (1) Engaging in official duties for private gain prohibited, (2) Use of confidential information for private gain prohibited, (3) Disclosure of confidential information prohibited, (4) Use of city resources for commercial gain prohibited, (5) Incompatible employment or rendering of services prohibited, (6) Representation of private entity prohibited, (7) Self-interested regulation prohibited, (8) Improper use of official position, (9) Improper solicitation of loan or monetary payment prohibited (10) Improper influence by an Elected Official in the filling of a civil service vacancy prohibited.

*In addition to the Ordinance the City Charter mandates that even the appearance of impropriety is to be avoided.*

## **WHO IS COVERED BY THE ETHICS ORDINANCE?**

The City of Detroit Board of Ethics has jurisdiction over the following *public servants as defined in the City of Detroit Ethics Ordinance*: **Public servant means** the mayor, members of the city council, the city clerk, any member of any city agency, board, commission, or other voting body that is established by the 1997 Detroit City Charter or by this Code, and any appointee, any employee, or any individual who provides services to the City of Detroit within or outside of its offices or facilities pursuant to a personal services contract.

## **WHAT DOES THE BOARD DO?**

The role of the Board of Ethics is to investigate and resolve complaints regarding alleged violations of the Ethics Ordinance by public servants, and to issue advisory opinions regarding the meaning and application of provisions of the Charter, City Ordinances, other laws, or regulations establishing standards of conduct for public servants.

## **WHAT IS AN ADVISORY OPINION?**

An advisory opinion is a written opinion of the Board addressing a question of ethical conduct by an elective officer, appointee or employee. Advisory opinions are published by the Board annually in a report to the Mayor and City Council.

## **WHO MAY REQUEST AN ADVISORY OPINION?**

Advisory opinions are rendered upon written request by a public servant.

## **WHO MAY FILE A SWORN COMPLAINT?**

Any citizen may file a complaint with the Board.

## **DOES THE BOARD HAVE AN OFFICE AND STAFF?**

The Board office is located at 660 Woodward, First National Building, Suite 1537, Detroit, MI. 48226. The Hours are 8:00am to 4:00pm. The Board members are volunteers, however the Executive Director and Administrative Secretary are available in the office to answer questions, assist with the completions forms and to respond to telephone inquiries.

**Persons wishing to file sworn complaints or request advisory opinions may send their complaints or requests for advisory opinions to:**

City of Detroit Board of Ethics  
1537 First National Building  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Office (313) 224.2376  
Fax (313) 224.2371