



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BOARD OF ETHICS**

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

The Board of Ethics is an independent Charter created entity established by 1997 City Charter. The Board is a seven-member body composed of residents of the City appointed by the Mayor and City Council. One member is jointly appointed by the mayor and the city council. The term of membership of the board is five years and no member may serve more than two terms (10 years)

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

The Ethics Ordinance was enacted by the City Council in 2000 and amended in 2006. It establishes disclosure requirements and standards of conduct applicable to all City of Detroit Public Servants.

### **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 purpose of the Ethics Ordinance is to promote public confidence in public servants and to preserve the integrity of city government. The Ethics Ordinance is intended to establish clear disclosure requirements and standards of conduct for all public servants of the City of Detroit. The purpose is further defined as intending to declare integrity in governmental decision making, operations and processes as a fundamental value and policy of city government to which all public servants in city government should strive to adhere at all times. 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 Board of Ethics role 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 A COMPLAINT?**

A complaint is a sworn statement alleging a violation of the Ethics Ordinance against public servant.

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

Any member of the public may file a complaint with the Board where a person believes there has been a violation of the Ordinance.

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

An advisory opinion is a written opinion of the Board addressing a question of ethical conduct by a public servant. Advisory opinions are filed with the City Clerk and are also available at the Municipal Reference Library located in Room 1004 of the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center.

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

Advisory opinions are rendered upon written request by a *public servant*. The request must relate to the requesting public servants own conduct and must be related to a question regarding the Standards of Conduct or the Disclosure Requirements enumerated in the Ethics Ordinance.

## **WHEN DOES THE BOARD MEET?**

The Board meets monthly generally the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. The schedule for the year is issued in December and posted on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor of the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center. Meetings are conducted in the City Council Committee of the Whole Room (13<sup>th</sup> floor) unless otherwise posted. All meeting are open the public.

## **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.

## **DOES THE BOARD HAVE A WEBSITE AND WHAT CAN I ACCESS ON LINE?**

The Board of Ethics website address is [www.ci.detroit.mi.us/BoardOfEthics](http://www.ci.detroit.mi.us/BoardOfEthics) Copies of the Charter Provision regarding the Board and the Ethics Ordinance are available online. All forms required by the Ordinance are also available.