



**Prince George's County
Office of Ethics and Accountability and
Board of Ethics**

Annual Report

INCLUSIVE OF CALENDAR YEAR 2021 & FISCAL YEAR 2022

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Robin Barnes-Shell, Esq.

It is with great pleasure I am providing this year's report for the Office of Ethics and Accountability in conjunction with the Board of Ethics. As we remain committed to promoting trust in County government, the Office of Ethics and Accountability is always looking for ways to better achieve our mission of providing increased accountability and oversight in the operations of the County government.

As a result of the Office of Ethics and Accountability's investigations, legal reviews and other activities, forty-three (43) recommendations were provided to Executive Leadership to promote a culture of integrity, efficiency and public trust. These recommendations identified needs for policy development and revision related to internal controls for County assets, for oversight of secondary employment by County employees, and for compliance with the Open Meetings Act. The Office of Ethics and Accountability has made a total of one hundred sixty-seven (167) recommendations since Fiscal Year 2015, resulting in significant policy development and organizational change.

During Fiscal Year 2022, there were two (2) substantiated or partially substantiated complaints related to ethics violations that were referred to the Board of Ethics. The Office has assisted the Board of Ethics in drafting legislation to govern secondary law enforcement employment as well as revisions to the County's Code of Ethics that align the County's laws with the State Ethics Commission's mandated revisions for all Maryland ethics boards and commissions.

This year, the Office of Ethics & Accountability collaborated with the Office of Human Resources Management to offer mandatory ethics training and resources to the County's workforce of more than 6,000 employees and officials. The Office is collaborating with the Office of Human Resources Management and the Office of Information Technology to make ethics training and awareness more accessible to both employees and appointed officials operating on both internal and external electronic platforms.

The Office of Ethics & Accountability continued to provide administrative support to the Board of Ethics during the pandemic through the collection of financial disclosure statements from County officials and employees, the registration and reporting of lobbying activities, and the continuation of regular board meetings and hearings, which were conducted virtually.

I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to serve and provide increased accountability and oversight in the operations of Prince George's County government.

Sincerely,



Robin Barnes-Shell
Executive Director

Mission

The mission of the Office of Ethics and Accountability is to promote public trust in County government through:

- Providing comprehensive intake, processing, investigations, management, and adjudication of allegations of waste, fraud, abuse and illegal acts in County government.
- Promoting disclosure of outside business and monetary interests of County government employees/officials and real-time notice of lobbying activity directed towards County government.
- Providing training, technical assistance and public education necessary to ensure County government services are delivered with integrity and in accordance with the standards of professional conduct identified within the ethics code.

Purpose

The Office of Ethics and Accountability provides increased accountability and oversight in the operations of the County government by identifying fraud, waste, abuse, and illegal acts pursuant to Prince George's County Code § 2-299. It also provides support to the Prince George's County Board of Ethics in the exercise of its authority to interpret the County Code of Ethics in order to promote public trust in County government by ensuring impartiality of the employees and elected officials in accordance with Prince George's County Code § 2-292.

The Office of Ethics and Accountability's two main functions are best described as investigative of County operations and administrative in its support to the Board of Ethics. Investigations are initiated in several ways: (1) through the PGCEthics Hotline, (2) directly to the Office, (3) via media, or (4) by other means. After an initial investigation by the Office of Ethics and Accountability, a matter may eventually be referred to law enforcement, an appropriate agency, or the Board of Ethics. Administratively, the Office of Ethics and Accountability oversees Financial Disclosure Statement submissions and lobbyists' registrations and reports; renders ethics advice to individuals governed by the Ethics Code; maintains compliance with the Open Meetings Act for the Board of Ethics; and provides ethics training to County officials, employees and lobbyists.

Office of Ethics and Accountability Staff

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Cassandra Burckhalter

In accordance with Section 2- 292(a)(6) of the Prince George's County Code, the Board of Ethics is required to provide an annual report of its activities to the County Executive and County Council. I am pleased to provide the 2022 Annual Report of the Board of Ethics.

I am excited to report that Calendar Year 2021 and Fiscal Year 2022 included the continuation of the County's global mandatory ethics training for employees and Elected Officials (officials). The Office of Ethics and Accountability successfully collaborated with the Office of Human Resources Management to offer training through the County's online learning module system.

Throughout the year, the Board of Ethics and Office of Ethics and Accountability staff continued to receive and respond to a large number of requests for ethics advice, regarding, but not limited to, conflicts of interest, gifts, secondary employment, and post-employment matters.

The Office of Ethics and Accountability continued to investigate several complaints alleging violations of the Ethics Code. Some of the complaints have resulted in the issuance of recommendations to improve County policies and procedures.

To ensure compliance with the County's Code of Ethics, during the Financial Disclosure Statement filing season, the Office of Ethics and Accountability staff provided assistance and legal advice on electronic filings to several officials, employees, volunteer commissioners and board members. To-date, staff have received and processed over one thousand (1,000) Financial Disclosures Statements as well as one hundred and seventy-seven (177) lobbyist registration forms and two hundred and forty-seven (247) annual reports.

The Board of Ethics will continue to render advisory opinions to officials and the employees of the County and address all questions arising under the Code of Ethic, receive complaints and authorize, when applicable, the conduct of investigations in connection with the Code of Ethics.

I look forward to continuing to serve the County and promoting public trust in its officials and employees.

Sincerely,



Cassandra Burckhalter
Chair

Purpose of the Board of Ethics

The Code was enacted to guard against improper influence and even the appearance of improper influence by County officials, employees and appointees to boards and commissions. To ensure impartiality and independent judgment, the Ethics Code requires designated individuals to disclose their financial affairs, and it sets standards for their business conduct. The Board of Ethics is the advisory body responsible for interpreting the Ethics Code and advising those persons subject to it. The Board of Ethics also serves as the body to hear and determine ethics complaints and violations.

Members of the Board of Ethics

The Board of Ethics currently consists of five (5) members. Members must be residents of Prince George's County and no more than three members may be of the same political party. Robin Barnes-Shell serves as the Executive Director to the Board of Ethics in addition to serving as the Executive Director to the Office of Ethics and Accountability. The Board of Ethics selected Cassandra Burckhalter to serve as Chair through December 31, 2022. The remaining members are as follows: Curtis Eugene, Member; Sharon Theodore-Lewis, Esq., Member, Charlene Gallion, Member, and Melanie Barr-Brooks, Member.

Meetings of the Board of Ethics

All regular meetings were either held virtually or in the Office of Ethics and Accountability, in the Largo Government Center located at 9201 Basil Court, Suite 155, Largo, Maryland 20774. As required, advance notice of meetings and the possibility of closed sessions were posted on the County's website. All decisions of the Board of Ethics are reflected in the minutes of the monthly meetings and are available on the County's website.

Generally, agenda topics included establishing procedures for the Board of Ethics, consideration of formal requests for advisory opinions on the application of Ethics Code, and review of investigation reports related to alleged violations of the County's Ethics Code, many of which include recommendations to Executive Leadership in the County. The Board has submitted proposed legislation to the County Council for revisions to the County's Ethics Code disclosure requirements as part of the requirements to align with the State's Ethics Laws and to promote public trust in County government.

During the 2021 calendar year, the Board of Ethics met eight (8) times for regular session, twice (2) for special session, twice (2) for a closed hearing, and once (1) for a public hearing. A notice of the meetings appeared on the County's website. The Board of Ethics conducted closed sessions to discuss advisory opinion requests, exemption requests and Board investigation referrals. The Board of Ethics conducted open meetings for all other actions.

Charter §1002 Waivers

The Board of Ethics did not receive any requests for Section 1002 waivers in the calendar year of 2021. Section 1002 of the Charter provides that the Board of Ethics may authorize any County employee to own stock or maintain a business, which engages in business with the County subject to the Board of Ethics' determination that the employee's involvement does not violate the public trust, and that there is full disclosure of all pertinent facts.

Board of Ethics Referrals

The Board of Ethics is empowered with authority to determine violations of the County's Ethics Code. The Board of Ethics reviews all complaints of alleged violations, conducts fact findings and hearings, and determines if an Ethics Code violation has occurred. Investigations of ethics violations completed by the Office of Ethics and Accountability are referred to the Board of Ethics for a determination of violations. Some complaints may be determined by the Board of Ethics in the following fiscal year upon completion of investigations. During the 2022 Fiscal Year, the Board received nine (9) referrals of alleged ethics violations of which two (2) were substantiated or partially substantiated through investigations by the Office of Ethics and Accountability.

Enforcement Activities

The Board of Ethics is empowered to impose fines and other penalties as warranted and to seek judicial enforcement of its sanctions. The Board of Ethics did not seek judicial enforcement but did impose late filing fees for delinquent filing of Financial Disclosure Statements and Lobbyists Annual Reports during the calendar year.

Proposed Legislative Changes

Periodically, certain provisions in the Prince George's County Code will require revisions to comply with statutory changes made by the State Ethics Commission or to clarify interpretation to ensure compliance. Any proposed amendments to the Prince George's County Code of Ethics embodied in legislative proposals require approval by the State Ethics Commission in addition to an enactment by the County Council.

Ethics Training

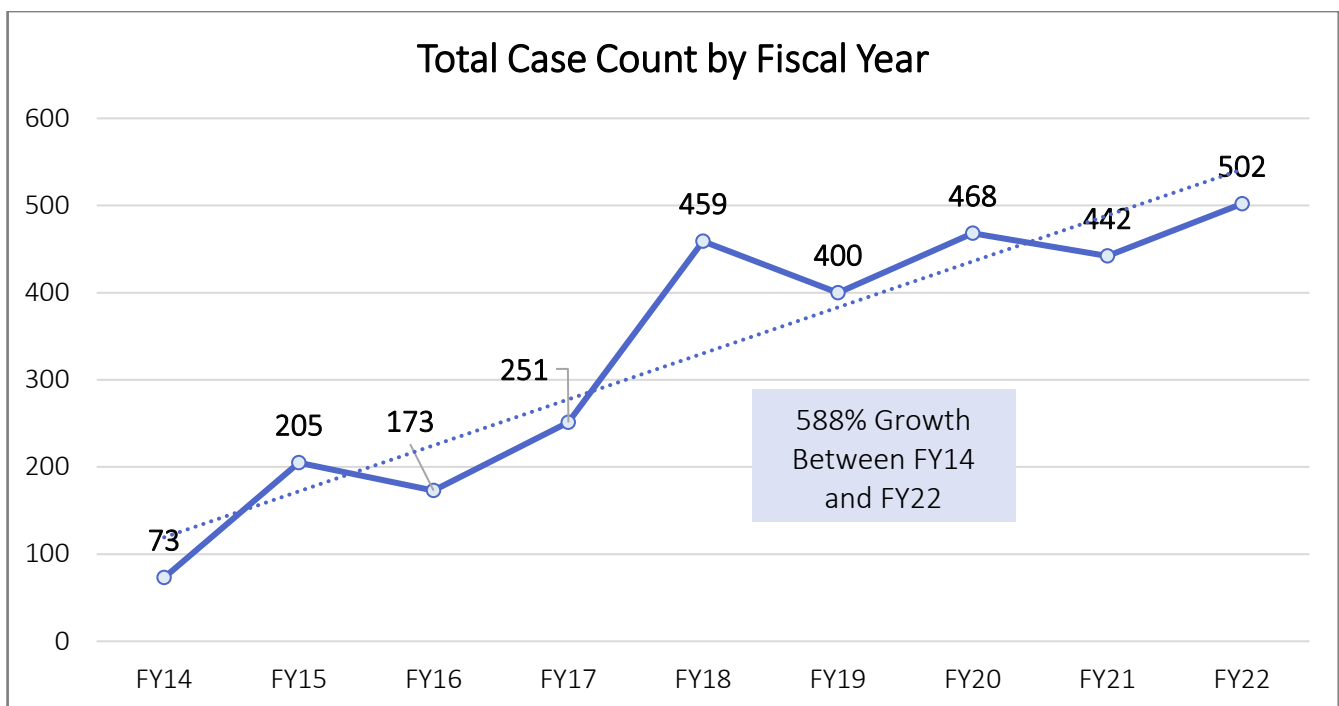
The Office of Ethics & Accountability collaborated with the Office of Human Resources Management to offer mandatory ethics training and other ethics training resources to more than 6,000 employees, officials and board/commission members. Between January 1, 2022 and June 30, 2022, the Office provided Instructor Led and online ethics training to approximately seventy-eight (78) board/commission members. Through the use of online Learning Management Systems such as NEOGOV and E-Learning platforms, ethics training is made readily available to individuals upon hire or appointment and throughout their tenure of service with the County. The Office promotes ethics training and compliance through five (5) distinct training areas: new employee orientation materials, online Learning Management System training, Instructor led virtual online workshops, on-site agency trainings by agency request, and special ethics topics trainings. Ethics training materials are periodically reviewed to incorporate any revisions to the Code of Ethics or other requirements.



FY2022 Key Accomplishments

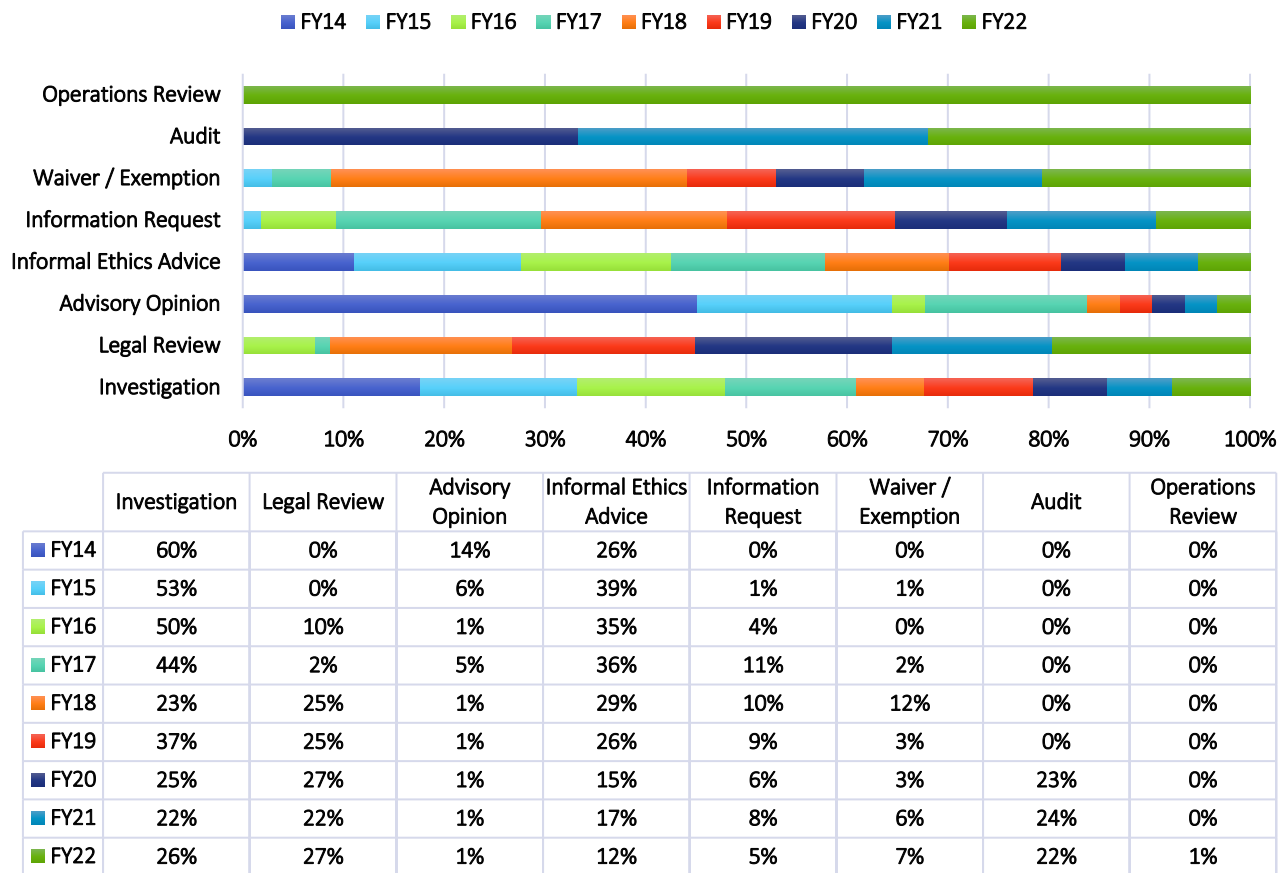
The Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA) achieved the following key milestones:

The Office of Ethics and Accountability processed five hundred and two (502) requests for the following case types in Fiscal Year 2022: investigations, operations reviews, audits, legal reviews, advisory opinions, informal ethics advice, information provision, and financial disclosure exemptions or fee waivers – largely received electronically. The Office has seen a five hundred eighty eight percent (588%) increase in cases since its establishment in Fiscal Year 2014. Of the complaints investigated solely or jointly by the Office of Ethics and Accountability this fiscal year, two (2) cases were substantiated or partially substantiated with appropriate actions taken by agencies to address the identified ethics violations. Information related to Advisory Opinions, Informal Ethics Advice and Investigations are provided on the County's website.



The Office of Ethics and Accountability continues to provide ethics advice, rendering fifty-eight (58) informal opinions and four (4) formal advisory opinions to officials, employees and lobbyists. During Fiscal Year 2022, twenty-six percent (26%) of the cases involved investigations and twelve percent (12%) involved the rendering of informal ethics advice. Legal reviews constituted another twenty-seven percent (27%) of the Office's efforts, which entailed, in part, review of the County and State legislation that impacted ethics laws. Information Requests comprised five percent (5%) of cases and Waivers or Exemptions comprised seven percent (7%) of cases. The Office of Ethics and Accountability also carried out Operations Reviews (<1%) and provided administrative support to the Board of Ethics in rendering Advisory Opinions (1%) in the interpretation of permissible activities under the County's Ethics Code.

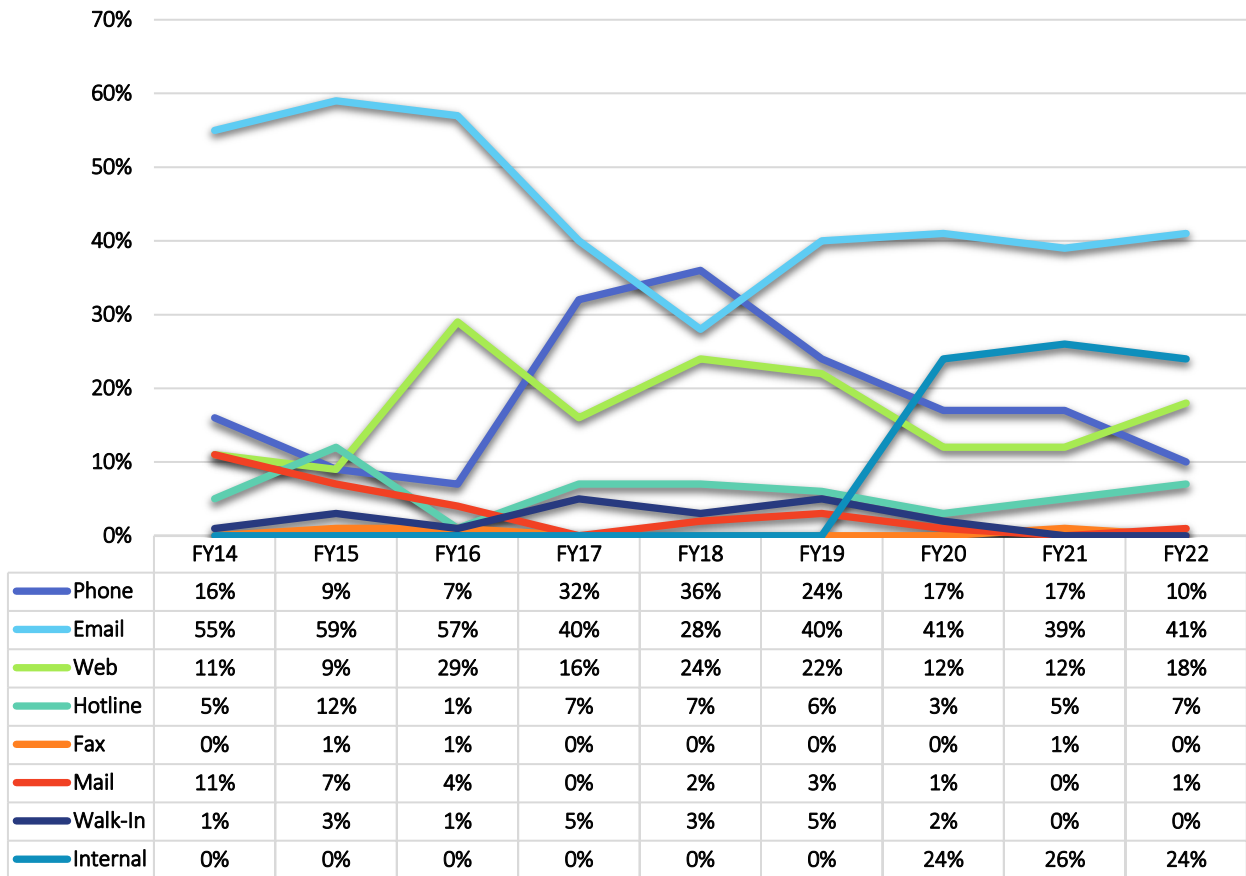
Case Type by Fiscal Year



The majority of cases received by the Office of Ethics and Accountability in Fiscal Year 2022 were filed electronically or by phone such as via email directly to the Office, through the County's Web-Portal, or through the hotline, which allows reporters to file complaints anonymously. In addition, the Office initiated twenty-four percent (24%) of all cases, which were primarily related to findings from annual audits of financial disclosure statements. This category (internal) was newly added in Fiscal Year 2020 and therefore omitted in prior years. The Office of Ethics and Accountability continues to utilize an online payment system for late fees and fines due from designated filers of Financial Disclosure Statements and lobbyists. This electronic payment enhancement provides convenience to those designated filers who have been assessed fees as a result of filing their disclosure statements and reports after the mandated filing dates mandated by the County's Ethics Code.

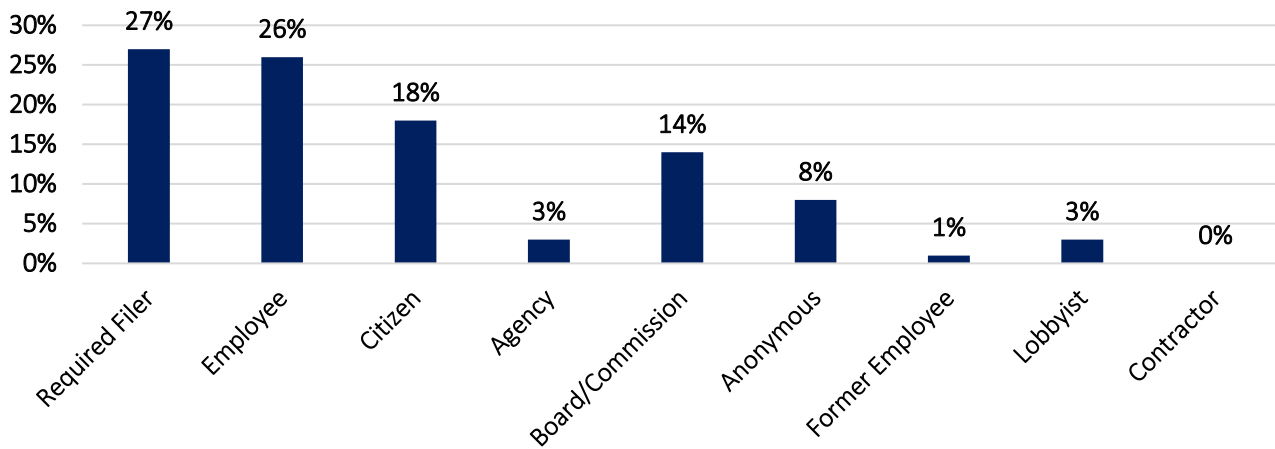
In its role of providing oversight and review of the collection of Financial Disclosure Statements from designated filers in accordance with the County's Ethics Code, the Office of Ethics and Accountability processed over one thousand (1,000) Financial Disclosure Statements. The Office of Ethics and Accountability conducted a common errors audit and a Schedules audit on one-hundred and five (105) Financial Disclosure Statements filed for calendar year 2020 pertaining to Schedule E (business entities employed with County), Schedule H (other sources of income), and Schedule J (Other Interests) to determine any conflicts related to secondary employment.

Method of Case Receipt by Fiscal Year



The Office of Ethics and Accountability continues to partner with agencies to broaden its global ethics training initiatives, and through training, bring awareness to officials and employees on the importance of reporting ethics violations and instances of fraud, waste, abuse, illegal acts and noncompliance with County policies. Through these efforts, County employees represent twenty-six percent (26%) of all case intake sources for reporting allegations or requesting support through ethics advice and information provision. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of all case intake sources comprise of designated Financial Disclosure Statement filers who are subject to financial disclosure audits.

FY2022 Intake Report Source



As a result of investigations, legal reviews, and other activities, the Office of Ethics and Accountability provided forty-three (43) recommendations to Executive Leadership to affect process improvement(s) throughout County government and promote efficiency and accountability as follows (a table of the recommendations can be found on the County's website):

- To ensure ongoing reinforcement of Administrative Procedure 152-Outside Employment and ensure proper use of County resources by agency personnel.
- To recommend review of board/commission compliance toward the Maryland Open Meetings Act for all procedures and practices which make information available to the public.
- To recommend further investigation beyond OEA findings and conduct internal agency review as necessary.
- To recommend the proper management of County assets.

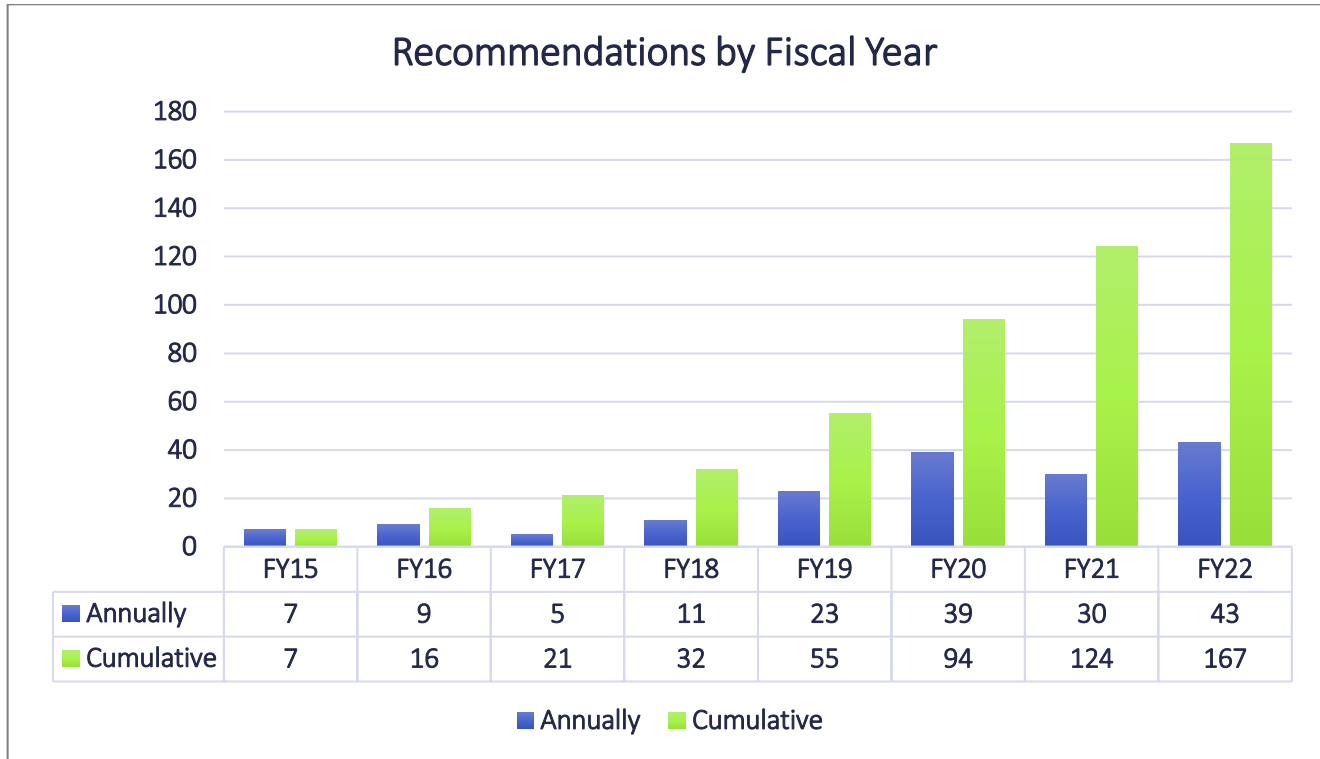
Major Objectives for Fiscal Year 2023

The Office of Ethics and Accountability will continue to focus on establishing processes to govern its core services of investigations, evaluation of County operations, collection of Financial Disclosure Statements for employees and officials, collection of registrations and annual reports for lobbyists, and provision of ethics training and advice to include the following:

- To provide comprehensive intake, processing, investigation, management, adjudication, analysis, reporting of allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, illegal acts, and operations review in County government and make necessary recommendations to executive and legislative officials to promote efficiency and accountability in County government.
 - To promote disclosure of the outside business and monetary interests of County government employees/officials and real-time notice of lobbying activity directed towards County government.
 - To provide ethics advice and legal reviews to officials and employees to ensure compliance with the County's Ethics Code.
 - To provide comprehensive reviews of deficiencies in County government to ensure compliance with policies and evaluate the effectiveness of internal controls.
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Recommendations and Actions Taken

In Fiscal Year 2022, the Office of Ethics and Accountability provided forty-three (43) recommendations to Executive Management. Thirty-five (35) of the recommendations involved fee waivers or exemptions, legislative reviews, or legal reviews. Actions taken in response to recommendations in Fiscal Year 2022 are also provided in the table below.



FY 2022 Recommendations

I. AGENCY: Multiple

ALLEGATION: Case #21-0231 (Operations Review) - To evaluate multiple agencies electronic timecard management

DISPOSITION: Compliant

RECOMMENDATIONS: In an effort to assist each agency, and beyond the scope of this review, OEA has provided below, prior recommendations made to County agencies between FY's 2014 and 2021, in order to reduce incidents of theft and misuse of time, and to promote continuous improvement:

- Strengthen policy guidance and management oversight of employee time & attendance to include contract staff and other personnel types.
- Optimize management scheduling practices to reduce the need for employee overtime during shifts.
- Improve monitoring and compliance of County vehicle usage to reduce incidents of time and attendance abuses involving County vehicles.
- Ensure employee work schedules are formally documented and proper data inputs are entered into the electronic time management system.
- Consult with the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) on proper implementation of alternative work schedules.
- Ensure segregation of duties in oversight of timecards for all levels of staff
- Encourage Department Heads to conduct internal agency reviews of potential incidents of misconduct related to timecards.
- Consult with the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) on the proper administration of leave types.
- Conduct periodic audits of employee timecards and other measures to strengthen oversight.

ACTION(S) TAKEN or RESPONSE(S): An exit conference was conducted with the agencies to review the findings and recommendations. No response is required.

2. AGENCY: Office of the County Executive (CEX)

ALLEGATION: Case #21-0402e – Executive leadership, as it relates to the Stand Up and Deliver Food Assistance Program, paid for grocery boxes at a significantly higher rate than the market rate. The complaint further alleged that the County did not issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for this contract, and that an employee of the County Executive's Office (CEX) worked for Sodexo in the past.

DISPOSITION: Unsubstantiated

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Director of OCS consider implementing a County policy providing guidance on how contracts are administered using Partnerships and/or MOU's. The policy should indicate that agencies must work with the Office of Law to ensure legal sufficiency.

ACTION(S) TAKEN or RESPONSE(S): The OCS Director has requested guidance from the OOL.

3. AGENCY: Department of Inspection, Permit, and Enforcement (DPIE)

ALLEGATION: Case #22-0019e – A DPIE inspector was working unreported secondary employment and misusing County resources.

DISPOSITION: Unsubstantiated

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Director of DPIE update the Secondary Employment approval for the inspector to state that the inspector is prohibited from working secondary employment during employee's County work hours and overtime hours. Also, it should state that the inspector is prohibited from using any County resources and or equipment while performing any duties for their secondary employer.

ACTION(S) TAKEN or RESPONSE(S): Employee resubmitted a revised request to work secondary employment, noting that employee is prohibited from using any County resources and or equipment while performing any duties for employee's secondary employer.

4. AGENCY: Fire Commission

ALLEGATION: Case #22-0031 – Fire Commission is not publishing its meeting dates or agendas for the public as mandated.

DISPOSITION: Matter not formally investigated by OEA; however, OEA reviewed the website. Violations of the MD Open Meetings Act are investigated by the MD Open Meetings Compliance Board.

RECOMMENDATIONS: An error was discovered in the Fire Commission's website calendar which listed the meeting dates. The Office of the Fire Chief was notified of the issue and advised to correct the calendar. OEA also recommended that the Fire Commission review its practice of not posting meeting agendas prior to meetings, as such practices may violate the Maryland Open Meetings Act

ACTION(S) TAKEN or RESPONSE(S): Notification provided to Fire/EMS. No response required.

5. AGENCY: Department of Family Services (DFS)

ALLEGATION: Case #22-0051e – A Veteran's Affairs Coordinator and an assistant were working unapproved secondary employment, which has created a conflict of interest with their duties.

DISPOSITION: Partially Substantiated

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Director of DFS, in consultation with the Office of Information Technology and the Office of Human Resources Management, consider further

investigation of the two employees' use of County resources to engage in secondary employment or any self-dealing through referral of veterans to the Veteran's Affairs Coordinator's personal business and the appropriate personnel actions.

The Director of DFS, in consultation with the Office of Law and the Office of Human Resources Management, conduct an internal review of the Veteran's Affairs Coordinator's actions regarding the substantiated subjects detailed in the investigation report, inclusive of their non-compliance with County Administrative Procedure 152 (Secondary Employment).

ACTION(S) TAKEN or RESPONSE(S): The Department Director considered further investigation of the employee's use of County resources and appropriate personnel actions were taken. As a result, no further actions occurred regarding this employee. The second employee was instructed to submit a secondary employment request in compliance with Administrative Procedure 152 (Secondary Employment), which requires the submission of a request to work in a secondary employment capacity to the Department Head, for consent or approval. The letter was delivered to the employee who submitted the request for secondary employment.

6. AGENCY: Office of Information Technology (OIT)

ALLEGATION: Case #22-0093e – An employee allegedly is working unreported secondary employment while on County time.

DISPOSITION: Substantiated

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Director of OIT, in consultation with the Office of Law and the Office of Human Resources Management, conduct an internal review of the employee's actions regarding the substantiated subjects detailed in the investigation report to determine the need for additional inquiries or investigations

The Director of OIT, instruct the employee to complete a secondary employment request within ten (10) days of the closeout meeting.

The Director of OIT develop a written Agency policy and implement internal controls that require units to appropriately manage County assets within its purview.

The Director of OIT conduct an internal audit of the equipment ordered by the Telecommunications Units to ensure that County assets are properly accounted for and used consistent with County policy.

ACTION(S) TAKEN or RESPONSE(S): OIT conducted an internal investigation. Their findings confirmed OEA's determination and appropriate personnel actions were taken.

OIT Division Chief was assigned task of drafting an inventory management policy to be implemented by October 15, 2022. Additionally, the Director reorganized OIT's asset management function.

OIT Asset Management Division will conduct an audit of all telecom equipment to be completed by August 1, 2022.

Director will realign management within the Telecommunications Section to provide better oversight of the unit. Additionally, a contractor has been terminated as a result of OIT's internal investigation.

7. AGENCY: Department of Permitting, Inspections & Enforcement

ALLEGATION: Case #22-0176e – An inspector is not performing the duties as an inspector and managing personal matters while on County time.

DISPOSITION: Unsubstantiated

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Office of Law and the County's Risk Management Office review Administrative Procedure 610 to assess the risks associated with transporting passengers in County vehicles for unrelated County business when using County vehicles for incidental personal use and whether the policy requires revision.

The Agency advise employees through training and written directive that transporting passengers for unrelated County business in County vehicles during incidental personal use is prohibited.

ACTION(S) TAKEN or RESPONSE(S): DPIE sent an Agency reminder to employees regarding Administrative Procedure 610. Additionally, DPIE will require any employee in violation of the policy to attend mandatory training.

8. AGENCY: Office of the County Executive (CEX)

ALLEGATION: Case #22-407e – County elected official was photographed with other constituents who were wearing shirts that supported a Council candidate. The pictures were posted on the County's social media.

DISPOSITION: Unsubstantiated

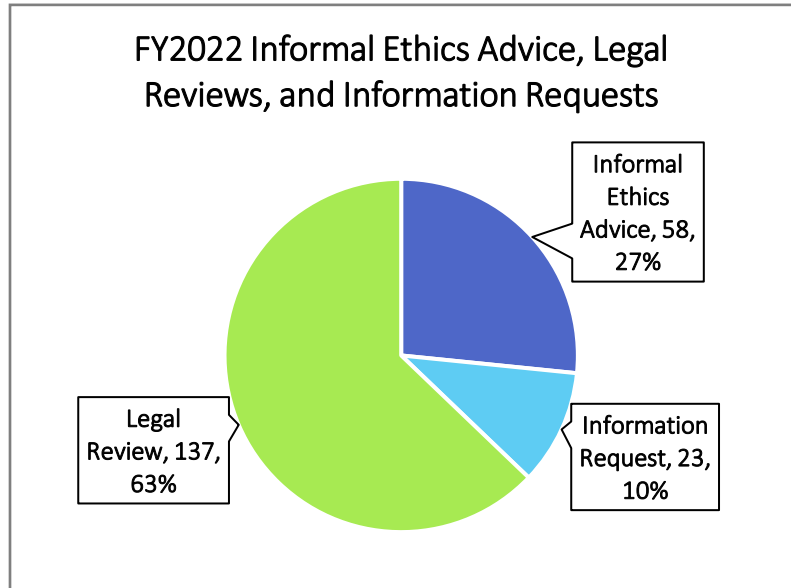
RECOMMENDATIONS: Although elected officials cannot control the attire citizens wear at official events, posting of candidates to County websites and social media accounts must be vetted in accordance with the County's Code of Ethics.

ACTION(S) TAKEN or RESPONSE(S): No response required.

Ethics Advice by the Office of Ethics and Accountability

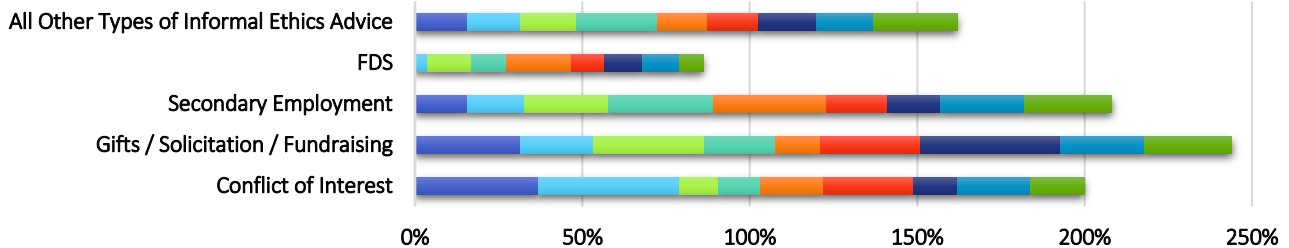
The Office of Ethics and Accountability provides support to the Board of Ethics in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Accountability, Section 2-303. The Office’s Legal Counsel provides written and verbal advice to County officials, employees, agencies, and the public who seek advice regarding the application of the County’s Code of Ethics.

The Office of Ethics and Accountability received a combined total of two-hundred and eighteen (218) requests for Informal Ethics Advice, Legal Reviews or Information Requests in Fiscal Year 2022. One-hundred and thirty-seven (137) involved legal reviews; twenty-three (23) involved requests for information; and fifty-eight (58) involved informal ethics advice.



Of informal ethics advice, sixteen percent (16%) involved conflicts of interest; twenty-six percent (26%) involved gifts/solicitation/fundraising; twenty-six percent (26%) involved secondary employment; and seven percent (7%) involved Financial Disclosure Statements. Twenty-five percent (25%) cases fall under the category of All Other Types of Informal Ethics Advice, which includes advice pertaining to post-employment, political activity, prestige of office, lobbying, honorarium and other related matters.

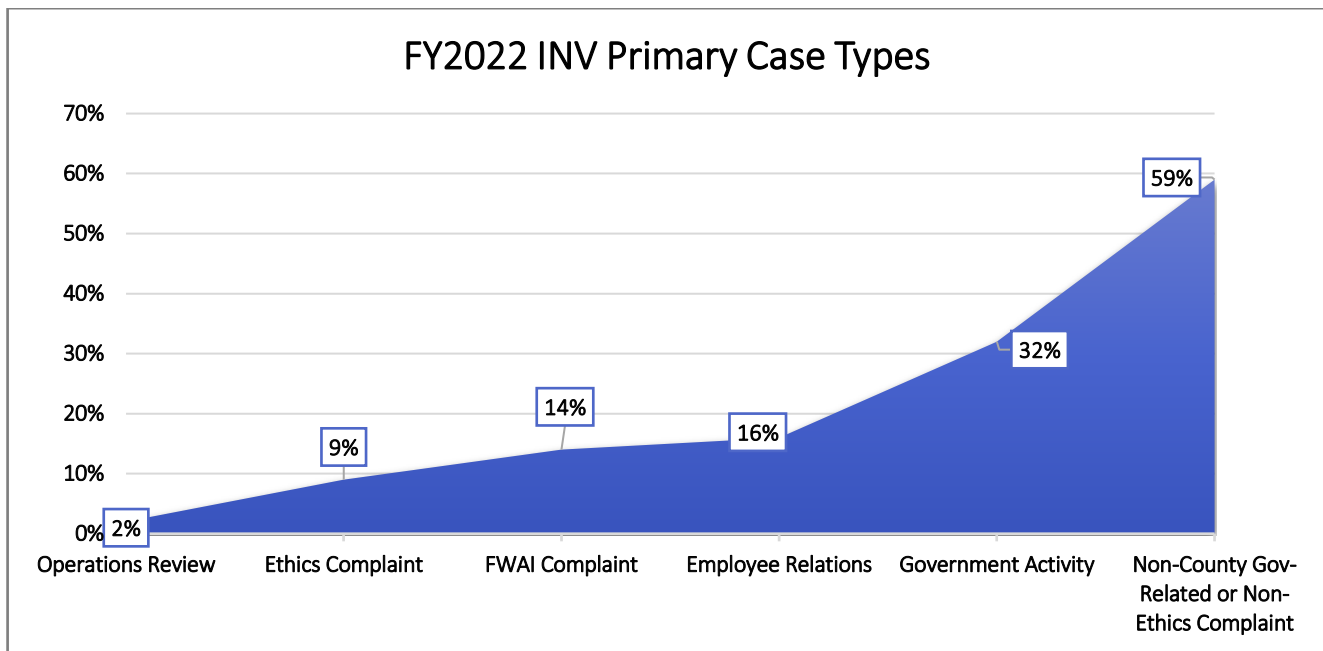
FY2014 - FY2022 Informal Ethics Advice Table



	Conflict of Interest	Gifts / Solicitation / Fundraising	Secondary Employment	FDS	All Other Types of Informal Ethics Advice
■ FY14	37%	32%	16%	0%	16%
■ FY15	42%	22%	17%	4%	16%
■ FY16	12%	33%	25%	13%	17%
■ FY17	13%	21%	32%	11%	24%
■ FY18	19%	13%	34%	19%	15%
■ FY19	27%	30%	18%	10%	15%
■ FY20	13%	42%	16%	12%	17%
■ FY21	22%	25%	25%	11%	17%
■ FY22	16%	26%	26%	7%	25%

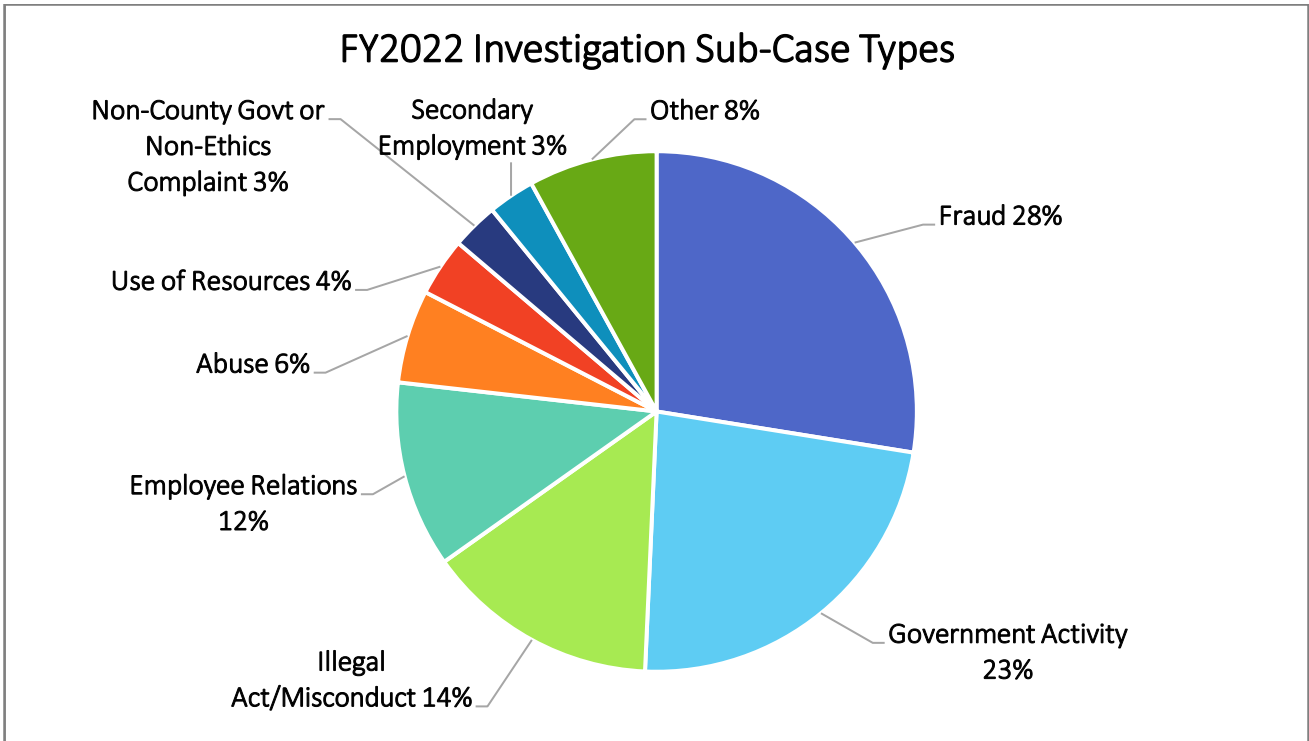
FY 2022 Investigations

The Office of Ethics and Accountability is authorized pursuant to the County's Ethics and Accountability Code, Section 2-303 to conduct criminal, civil and administrative investigations; to provide information and evidence that relates to criminal acts to appropriate law enforcement officials; to initiate reviews of operations of County government as deemed appropriate; to investigate complaints from any source or upon its own initiative concerning alleged fraud, waste, abuse and service deficiencies; and to conduct joint investigations and projects with the Office of Audits and Investigations as well as other oversight, public safety or law enforcement agencies. During Fiscal Year 2022, thirty-two percent (32%) involved concerns with government activities, fourteen percent (14%) involved alleged fraud, waste, abuse or illegal activity, nine percent (9%) involved alleged ethics violations, and sixteen percent (16%) involved employee relations matters, and two percent (2%) involved matters for operations review. Although allegations may be unsubstantiated, many of the investigations may result in the issuance of recommendations to Executive and Legislative Leadership to address appearances of conflicts of interests, policy gaps, and operational deficiencies.

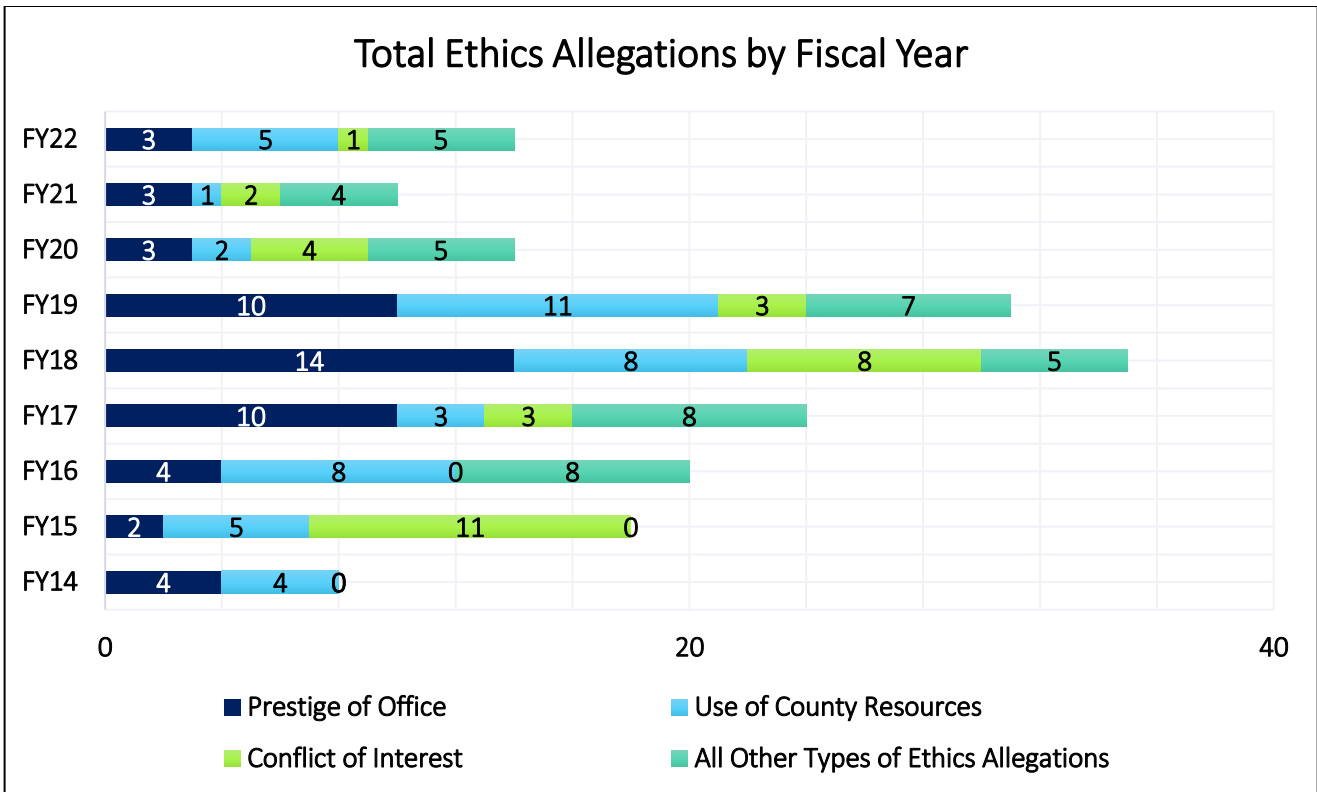


The Office of Ethics and Accountability does not prosecute criminal conduct. However, criminal conduct discovered by the Office of Ethics and Accountability during its investigation of a complaint or tip is referred to the appropriate prosecuting authority in accordance with the County's Ethics and Accountability Code. Moreover, the Office of Ethics and Accountability does not administer personnel matters or seek to resolve personnel conflicts that have existing procedures in place to address. The following charts and table provide data analytics and a list of the complaints or allegations reported to OEA during the 2022 fiscal period.

In Fiscal Year 2022, the Office of Ethics & Accountability investigated or referred one-hundred and thirty-two (132) investigation cases. Investigations comprised twenty-six percent (26%) of all case types, and the below chart displays additional details related to investigation outcomes. Most investigations handled by the Office are related to Government Activity or Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Illegal Acts and are supervised by the Compliance Officer with advice from OEA's Legal Counsel. Additional categorization is used to segregate the matters under investigation and the chart below outlines Investigation Sub-Case types.



The below chart is specific to Ethics Complaints which comprised nine percent (9%) of all FY2022 investigations. Of the nine (9) types of Prohibited Conduct & Interests listed in the Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest and Misuse of County Resources were the most commonly investigated complaints.



Lobbyists Disclosures and Annual Reports

The Office of Ethics & Accountability conducted a review of all Lobbyists' 2022 Registration & Disclosure Forms and 2021 Annual Report Forms. In 2022, our Office processed one-hundred and seventy-seven (177) registration forms from sixty-two (62) total registered lobbyists, and two-hundred and forty-seven (247) reports for the 2021 calendar year were filed and completed. These reports are located on the County's website.

A list of lobbyists registered with the Office of Ethics and Accountability in calendar year 2022 and their clients can be found on the County's website.

The following is the summary of Lobbyists' Annual Reports filed with the Board of Ethics for Calendar Year 2021. Total expenditures for 2021 lobbying activities were \$1,268,753.37. The summary of sub-categories on the 2021 Lobbyists' Reports are as follows:

Lobbying Activities	Total Expenditures
Total compensation paid to the lobbyist not including expenses reported under (B) through (I) below, salaries, compensations, or reimbursed expenses of the staff of the lobbyist:	\$1,258,819.37
Office expenses of the lobbyist not reported in (A):	\$1,110.00
Professional and technical research and assistance not reported in (A):	\$2,895.00
Publications which expressly encourage persons to communicate with Prince George's County officials or employees:	\$0
Fees and expenses paid to witnesses:	\$0
Meals and beverages for Prince George's County Officials or employees or their spouses or dependent children:	\$0
Special events in which all members of the Council or standing committee are invited:	\$5,270.00
Expenses for food, lodging, entertainment of officials or employees for a meeting which was given in return for participation in a panel or speaking engagement at the meeting:	\$350.00
Other gifts to or for officials or employees or their spouses or their dependent children:	\$0
Other expenses:	\$309.00
Subtotal of A through F:	\$1,262,824.37
Subtotal of G through J:	\$5,929.00
Grand Total:	\$1,268,753.37