

FY 2024 OEA Annual Report Highlighted Recommendations

#	Case No.	Case Details	Recommendation(s)	Date Issued
1.	N/A	N/A	Review, update, and reissue Executive Order 13-2014 – Code of Ethics §2-294 – Financial Disclosure Statement Designated Filers for Agencies, Boards & Commissions. (Continuation of 2023 Recommendation).	N/A
2.	N/A	N/A	Possible State Ethics Code clarifying legislation for State Financial Disclosure Statements (FDS) filing requirements with the County Board of Ethics/OEA in Prince George's County for Bi-County Commissions (M-NCPPC, WSSC, and WSTC)(Gen. Prov. Art. §§5-602, 5-822 — 5-832) (Continuation of 2023 Recommendation).	N/A
3.	N/A	N/A	Possible County Ethics Code §2-294(b) clarifying legislation for Bi-County Commissions (M-NCPPC, WSSC, and WSTC) to provide their State Financial Disclosure Statements (FDS) to the County Board of Ethics/OEA. (Continuation of 2023 Recommendation).	N/A
4.	23-0279e	<p>Case Type: Procurement/FWAI</p> <p>Agency/B/C: OCS</p> <p>Subject: Allegation of collusion between employee and county vendor, whose submitted bid was approximately 60% higher than its second responsive vendor.</p> <p>Disposition: Unsubstantiated</p>	<p>I. OCS to update the current policy on prevailing wage monitoring services solicitation, to include specific steps to be taken to address issues where an accepted bid is substantially higher than that of another responsive bidder.</p>	11/2/23
5.	23-0315e	<p>Case Type:</p> <p>Agency/B/C: OIT</p> <p>Subject: Allegation that employee that OIT employee hired their brother as a contractor under their leadership/ department in OIT.</p> <p>Disposition: Unsubstantiated</p>	<p>I. Currently there is no known policy that addresses conflict of interest with new employees of agencies. OIT, in collaboration with OOL and OHRM, should work to create a policy regarding the solicitation and hiring of subject matter experts (SME's). In particular, when an SME or employee is hired, internal control measures should be in place to avoid a conflict or the appearance of a conflict regarding employees' relationships with employees, contractors, or SMEs.</p>	11/2/23

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6.	24-0048e	<p>Case Type: Use of County Resources Agency/B/C: DoE Subject: Allegation that employee used County equipment for non-County work. Disposition: Substantiated</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Respondent should be given a written Letter of Reprimand by the Department of the Environment Management. The Letter of Reprimand should detail the prohibited behavior committed by the Respondent. The Letter of Reprimand should state that any further violations by the Respondent could result in further disciplinary action, including fines and/or removal. Department of the Environment Management should consult with the Office of Human Resources Management on any additional appropriate discipline. 	2/26/24
7.	24-0091	<p>Case Type: Operation Review Agency/B/C: Fire/EMS Department Subject: Allegation that County Fire/EMS official used the login credential of another employee to enter a Fire/EMS database and keep tabs on an employee. Disposition: Substantiated</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Fire/EMS Department Internal Affairs Investigation, Case # 2023-009 be forwarded to the Office of Professional Standards, for review and appropriate action against the official; 2. The official be required to take appropriate training regarding safeguards and the consequences of providing or the use of another person's passwords and should sign an affirmation that they have taken the training and agrees to follow the policy. If there is another violation regarding passwords, would be subject to the FIRE/EMS disciplinary policy. 3. The Fire/EMS Department continues the policy to require Fire Department personnel to change or verify their password every thirty (30) days. 	2/26/24
8.	24-0146e	<p>Case Type: Use of County Resources Agency/B/C: DoE Subject: Allegation that employees are taking dogs from the County shelter without following proper intake procedures so that the public does not get a chance to adopt the animals. Disposition: Unsubstantiated</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Department of the Environment (DOE) and Animal Services Division (ASD) Management create and implement an official written policy regarding ASD employee rescue of animals from the animal shelter. The policy should specifically detail the procedures for all types of employee animal rescue (fostering and adopting). Further, employees should be required to sign and date the document confirming that they have read and understand the rules and protocols in place 	5/9/24

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9.	24-0156e/ 24-0174e	<p>Case Type: Secondary Employment/Use of County Resources/ FWAI</p> <p>Agency/B/C: DPWT</p> <p>Subject: Allegation that DPWT employees are stealing time, changing time sheets to indicate they are working when they are not working. employee runs an outside secondary business and stores equipment from that business at a DPWT facility and an employee is working at an unauthorized secondary employment job and using County resources during County business hours.</p> <p>Disposition: Partially substantiated</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DPWT Management confer with the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) to determine appropriate discipline for employees as both committed violations of official timekeeping procedures. 2. An employee immediately submits a Secondary Employment Request for approval. 3. An employee should be counseled by DPWT Management on County policy regarding County employees attending school, and the use of County Resources and Official Time to attend school or conduct classwork. 4. DPWT reviews and conducts mandatory official timekeeping training for all DPWT Management staff, to ensure proper accounting of official timekeeping procedures and records. 	6/20/24
10.	24-0203	<p>Case Type: FWAI</p> <p>Agency/B/C: OCS</p> <p>Subject: Allegation that OCS manager lives out of state and is in violation of the Telework Agreement Policy (TAP) agreement.</p> <p>Disposition: Unsubstantiated</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) consider a review of the TAP policy/agreements to determine whether to include some type of residency requirement (County, in-State, or within the District, Maryland or Virginia region) and its potential impact on County operations and staffing consistent with TAP policy. 	2/16/24

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11.	24-0263e	<p>Case Type: Use of County Resources/FWAI Agency/B/C: DPWT Subject: Allegation that DPWT supervisor is using a County vehicle as their personal vehicle to drive from Brandywine shop to D'Arcy road shop daily and DPWT employee is filling gas cans at the D'Arcy road gas pumps and taking the gas cans home for personal use. Disposition: Unsubstantiated</p>	<p>1. The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) and the Office of Information Technology (OIT) collaborate to ensure that all DPWT facility surveillance/security cameras are operational. Proper functionality of the surveillance/security cameras is paramount in County efforts to prevent the misuse/theft of County resources.</p>	9/6/24
12.	24-0264e	<p>Case Type: Secondary Employment/Procurement/FWAI (Illegal Act) Agency/B/C: PGC Housing Authority Subject: PGCHA official is awarding contracts outside of established guidelines and receiving "kickbacks" for those contracts and working unauthorized secondary employment on County time. Disposition: Partially substantiated</p>	<p>1. The official was required to file a current secondary employment form; 2. Also be required to file FDS for 2023 with secondary employment information included; and 3. The official must review and sign an affidavit stating that they are aware of the policy governing contracting and that any violation of contracting policy may result in discipline from the Agency and OHRM.</p>	4/11/24

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13.	24-0281e	<p>Case Type: Use of County Resources Agency/B/C: DoE Subject: Allegation that management official used County employees for non-County work; not following proper procedures for awarding contracts; and allowed employees to hire family members. Disposition: Unsubstantiated</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> OIT management reach out to their Appointing Authority and Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), to obtain guidance regarding the appropriate work atmosphere in the agency under the County Personnel Code. Additionally, should reach out and request consultation regarding any internal personnel issues that require remediation. OIT management be counseled about issues related to their discussions with OIT employees and the executive team regarding personal matters and the creation of the potential appearance of favoritism in the agency. 	6/18/24
14.	24-0362	<p>Case Type: Information Request/Operations Review Agency/B/C: County Council Subject: Alleged Abuse of Franking Privileges Disposition: Unsubstantiated</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Council Administration reviews the Maryland General Assembly's Joint Committee of Legislative Ethics Guide (2024), in particular, Ethics Opinion #12 regarding Official Correspondence and Use of Resources, for potential best practices and policies to be implemented for Council franking privileges. The County Council Administrator consider implementing a County policy for the Legislative Branch to govern elected officials' use of franking privileges close to all elections. 	7/2/24
15.	24-0366	<p>Case Type: Informal Opinion Request Agency/B/C: OMB Subject: Informal ethics advice request regarding travel programs. Disposition: Advice Provided</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> OMB review Administrative Procedure 640 (Travel) to update to include a policy statement consistent with the State's Standard Travel Regulations under COMAR 23.02.01.03, in that officials and employees may accept promotional awards if they are obtained under the same conditions as those offered to the general public, are not provided by a prohibited source or donor, and that participation in such programs results in no additional cost to the County. This is consistent with Section 2-293(f) language, which states that it should be generally available to the public and authorized by county regulation. 	5/24/24