
INQ 16-123 Ventura

From: Centorino, Joseph (COE)

Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2016 2:37 PM

To: Turay, Radia (COE) <Radia.Turay@miamidade.gov>; Perez, Martha D. (COE) <perezmd@miamidade.gov>; Diaz-Greco, Gilma M. (COE) <GDIAZGR@miamidade.gov>

Subject: INQ 16-123 Ralph Ventura, Chief of Staff for Mayor of City of Sweetwater (Exploitation)

Ralph Ventura, Chief of Staff for the Mayor of the City of Sweetwater and also former City Attorney for the City of Sweetwater, inquired concerning whether it would be appropriate for him to use contacts he had made with officials at Florida International University (FIU) through his official positions with Sweetwater, to favorably influence his daughter's employment application with the Frost Museum at FIU. Mr. Ventura acknowledged that he was acquainted with some officials at FIU only through his contacts with them in connection with his official duties at the City of Sweetwater. The City, which abuts the FIU main campus, has significant historical and ongoing ties with FIU. Mr. Ventura indicated that there are several Memorandums of Understanding between the City and FIU concerning matters of mutual concern, that there are ongoing efforts to integrate some City and FIU operations; and that the City and FIU are co-applicants on grant applications.

In informed Mr. Ventura that, in view of the significant ties between the City and FIU, and the fact that he has interacted with these officials only through his official position with the City of Sweetwater, an attempt on his part to utilize these contacts to influence a hiring decision in favor of his daughter could easily be perceived as an Exploitation of Official Position in violation of Section 2-11.1(g) of the County Code of Ethics. I advised Mr. Ventura to refrain from using such influence.

Joseph M. Centorino

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