

**COMMISSION ON ETHICS
ADVISORY OPINION
RQO 98-17**

BACKGROUND: Marcia Fernandez-Morin, Administrator of the Fire Board, is seeking an advisory opinion as to whether the Stay Alive From Education (SAFE) program conducted by Miami-Dade Fire Rescue complies with the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics ordinance.

NARRATIVE: The Stay Alive From Education (SAFE) program was developed by Miami-Dade fire rescue workers and is an educational program designed to teach the danger of driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol. SAFE workshops are conducted for high school, college and adult audiences in several Florida counties. The SAFE program operates as a 501-c corporation and Florida Atlantic University handles all legal and financial matters involving the corporation. Law enforcement officers and paramedics are paid one hundred fifty (\$150) dollars for each eight hour teaching day.

ARGUMENT: Miami-Dade Fire Rescue personnel and law enforcement personnel may participate in the program as long as their participation is approved by a supervisor and they file an annual disclosure form. Section 2-11(b) permits county employees to accept incidental or occasional employment so long as such employment is not contrary, detrimental or adverse to the county and the department head approves the employment. Section 2-11.1(k) requires all county employees who have outside employment to file an annual report detailing the source of outside employment, the nature of the work and the money received as a result of the work. The employees who participate in the program are in compliance with the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics requirements as long as they obtain permission to participate and file the required disclosure.

CONCLUSION: The SAFE program complies with the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics ordinance as long as all county employees comply with the provisions of the ordinance which govern outside employment.