

MIAMI-DADE
COMMISSION ON
ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST



2019
ANNUAL REPORT

Building trust and confidence in local government





Commissioners

NELSON C. BELLIDO, ESQ.

Chairman

DR. JUDITH D. BERNIER

Vice Chair

JUDGE LAWRENCE A. SCHWARTZ (RET.)

Commissioner

JAN L. JACOBOWITZ, ESQ.

Commissioner

WIFREDO "WILLY" GORT

Commissioner

Executive Staff

JOSE J. ARROJO, ESQ.

Executive Director

MICHAEL P. MURAWSKI, ESQ.

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We had another successful year at the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust. Executive Director Jose Arrojo now has a full year under his belt and the staff has responded well to his leadership. The Ethics Commission performs a vital role in our community to ensure the integrity of the governmental decision-making process and to restore confidence in government. My fellow commissioners and I are committed to improving the process for all involved in filing complaints and in defending allegations. This is especially important in an election year such as 2020. The cornerstone of our communities are often our local elected officials. They work hard at their jobs and it is important that we celebrate them when they do good as they often do, but also hold them accountable if they violate the Ethics Code.

It is our goal in this new year to continue to serve the residents of Miami-Dade County with a transparent process that takes the concerns of all into account and facilitates the process. This includes improving our website as well as going out into the communities from Homestead to Aventura and educating public officials, government employees and the public in general. We take our role to educate our community on the Ethics Code seriously so that all can feel confident that they have been provided with a fair opportunity when dealing with our office.

One of my charges to the Executive Director has been to reach out to populations in our community that may not be fully informed of the Ethics Commission's public charge.



This fiscal year, we will be kicking off a renewed and robust effort to reach out to all citizens of Miami-Dade County.

I also take this moment to reflect on the passing of our immediate past chair Jeffrey "Jeff" Cutler. Jeff was an outstanding husband, father, lawyer and public servant who left an indelible mark on the Ethics Commission. He was a true gentleman who treated all that came before the Ethics Commission with respect and dignity. We miss Jeff and his smile and candor when making difficult decisions. Lastly, I thank you, the residents of Miami-Dade County, for bestowing us with the privilege of serving you. As a volunteer and Chairperson the Ethics Commission, I speak for my fellow Commissioners in expressing our mutual commitment to treating everyone with fairness and respect who appear before us. We are here to serve you and we take this commitment very seriously.

Wishing you a very healthy, happy and ethical 2020!

Best Wishes,
Nelson Bellido,
Chairman

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Those of us who work for the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust take great pride in the fact that our agency was created by the voters of this community to ensure the integrity of the local governmental decision-making process and maintain the public's confidence in local government as required by County Ordinance. With the production and distribution of its Annual Report for fiscal year 2018-2019, the Ethics Commission reinstates its annual required public reporting to the voters on its three basic charges: ethics training, opinions, and enforcement.

In the past fiscal year, the Ethics Commission trained elected officials and candidates throughout Miami-Dade County on the County ethics code, with sessions in Miami Gardens, North Miami Beach, North Miami, Bal Harbour, Miami, and Homestead. More than 1,000 lobbyists and vendors received training on how to ethically conduct business with local government. The County and various cities hosted 40 ethics training sessions that our staff conducted for County and municipal employees and board members. Ethics Commission lawyers shared their local government ethics expertise with visiting dignitaries, members of the judiciary, non-profit agency boards of directors, local government lawyers, student groups, and professional associations.

The Ethics Commission's legal staff provided approximately 200 written informal ethics opinions to County and city elected officials, employees, board members and lobbyists who sought guidance from our office. This, in addition to an even greater number of daily verbal ethics consultations with persons covered under the ethics code.



On the enforcement front, the Ethics Commission handled more than 100 preliminary and formal investigations into alleged ethics violations. These included 52 Complaints filed by members of the public or initiated by our staff. Ethics Commission investigators and legal staff also logged 81 hotline calls and responded to daily inquires on the Ethics Commission's electronic mailbox.

The Ethics Commission did all of the above, serving the County and almost three dozen municipalities on an annual budget of 2.3 million dollars. The Ethics Commission budget comprised less than .03% of the entire County budget of over 7.9 billion dollars, one of the smallest department or agency budgets in the County.

This year, we are moving forward with new leadership and membership on the Ethics Commission, new leadership on our staff, and increased community outreach through our recently initiated monthly Eye on Ethics Newsletter. We are confident that we will be able to continue to play an integral part in ensuring the integrity of the local governmental decision-making process and maintaining the public's confidence in local government as we strive to serve as guardian of the public trust.

Jose Arrojo,
Executive Director **3**



ABOUT THE COMMISSION

The Ethics Commission was created in 1996 as a result of a citizens' vote to amend the Home Rule charter. It is an independent agency with advisory and quasi-judicial powers. Government employees and officials have a special duty to serve the public in a fair and just manner. The Ethics Commission is dedicated to bolstering public trust in the administration of government by informing the public and private sectors about ethics laws and seeking strict compliance with them. It is empowered to subpoena, audit, and investigate all facts and persons materially related to a complaint at issue.

MISSION

The mission of the Ethics Commission is to ensure the integrity of both the governmental decision-making process and the electoral process, to restore public confidence in government, and to serve as the guardian of the public trust.



JURISDICTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

JURISDICTION

The Commission's jurisdiction includes elected officials, employees and advisory board members in Miami-Dade County government and in all municipalities in the county. Some rules and ordinances also extend to lobbyists and contract vendors. The following are under the Ethics Commission's authority:

- ✓ The Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance
- ✓ Ethics Commission enabling ordinance
- ✓ The Citizen's Bill of Rights Ordinance
- ✓ Miami-Dade County Honor Code
- ✓ The Ethical Campaign Practices Ordinance
- ✓ The Commission on Ethics Rules of Procedure
- ✓ Ethics Commission Bylaws
- ✓ Municipal Ethics Codes

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Ethics Commission is committed to public education, training and community outreach. This responsibility is discharged in a variety of settings including training sessions and workshops for government personnel, to conferences and seminars on topics of interest in the community.

Another important area of responsibility involves advice-giving. Each year several hundred local government officials and employees seek legal opinions from the Ethics Commission to establish the standard of public duty they should exercise. All of these opinions are posted on the Ethics Commission's website.

The third role of the agency is enforcement of rules and ordinances under the Ethics Commission jurisdiction. The Public Advocate and a team of investigators may initiate probes and prosecute cases against violators.



MEET THE COMMISSIONERS

NELSON C. BELLIDO, ESQ.
CHAIR



Nelson Bellido was appointed to the Ethics Commission by the Chief Judge of the Eleventh Circuit, Joel Brown, in July 2010. Mr. Bellido is a managing partner in the Miami-based law firm ROIG Lawyers, a former adjunct professor of Business Law at Florida Memorial College, worked with the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office from 1993 to 1997, was a Director of the Cuban American Bar Association, past president and director of the League of Prosecutors and has been serving on the Miami-Dade County Fair and Exposition Inc.'s board of directors for the past eight years. Mr. Bellido received his Juris Doctor from the University of Florida College of Law and earned an undergraduate degree in Political Science and History with emphasis on Latin American History from Duke University.

DR. JUDITH BERNIER
VICE CHAIR



Judith Bernier is the Director of the Center for Labor Research and Studies at Florida International University (FIU), where the mission is to develop and raise awareness about the changing nature of work and workplace diversity. As a faculty member, Dr. Bernier teaches courses in labor relations and employment, global diversity and cultural competence, conflict resolution and mediation techniques, and vocational education. Dr. Bernier earned her Doctorate in Adult Education and Human Resource Development, Master's in Human Resource Development, and Bachelor's in Communication from FIU. She serves as a peer reviewer for academic journals in her field and is involved in several professional organizations. Dr. Bernier is a former adjunct professor at Miami-Dade College and worked in the private sector as a human resource manager and trainer at a national retailer. She has been an Ethics Commissioner since May 2014.

MEET THE COMMISSIONERS

JUDGE LAWRENCE A. SCHWARTZ



Judge Lawrence A. Schwartz was appointed to serve on the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust by Chief Circuit Court Judge, Joel Brown, in January 2013, shortly after his retirement from the bench. Judge Schwartz won election to the County Court in 1991 and subsequently sat on the Circuit Court after his appointment by then-Governor Lawton Chiles in 1997. Mr. Schwartz received an Associate's Degree from Dade County Junior College, a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and Sociology from the University of Oklahoma and a Master's Degree in Education from Florida Atlantic University. Mr. Schwartz taught sixth grade for five years at Lake Stevens Elementary in Carol City. After earning his Juris Doctorate from the University of the Pacific, Mr. Schwartz was a Deputy District Attorney in Sacramento, California, for a dozen years. The Miami Beach native returned home in 1987 to work as an Assistant State Attorney in the 11th Judicial Circuit prosecuting economic crimes, before ascending to the Bench.

JAN L. JACOBOWITZ, ESQ



Jan Jacobowitz is a law school lecturer and serves as Director of the University of Miami Law School's Professional Responsibility and Ethics Program and as Director of UM's Government and Ethics Project. Ms. Jacobowitz began her career as a Legal Aid attorney in the District of Columbia; prosecuted Nazi war criminals at the Office of Special Investigations of the U. S. Department of Justice; and was in private practice with general practice and commercial litigation firms in Washington and Miami. She was also was a teacher in Coral Reef High School's Legal Academy for five years. Ms Jacobowitz earned a Juris Doctorate from George Washington University and a B.S. in Speech from Northwestern University. She was sworn into a four-year term as an Ethics Commissioner in June 2018.

MEET THE COMMISSIONERS

WIFREDO "WILLY" GORT



Wifredo "Willy" Gort is a longtime Miami-Dade County resident with almost two decades of municipal service having been elected to the City of Miami Commission two times and acting as its mayor in 1996 after the passing of then City of Miami Mayor Stephen Clark. Mr. Gort has been an active member of his community for decades and has served on numerous board and committees within the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County. He is a founding member and board member of the Latin Chamber of Commerce (CAMACOL), a former President of the Miami-Dade County League of Cities and has served on the boards of the Christian Community Service Agency, the East Little Havana Development Corp., the United Way, and the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Gort is a graduate of both Miami-Dade Community College and Florida International University, holding a B.A. in Business Administration.

JEFFREY CUTLER, ESQ (IN MEMORIAM)



H. Jeffrey "Jeff" Cutler, the Chairman of the Miami Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust, sadly and unexpectedly, passed away on September 20, 2019. Chairman Cutler, who was born and lived his entire life in Miami-Dade County, practiced law in this community for almost forty years, was a former Village of Pinecrest Councilman and Vice Mayor and served as the Chairman of the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust. He served on the Ethics Commission as the appointee of the Miami Dade County League of Cities. Mr. Cutler was first appointed to the Ethics Commission in 2015 and was elected its Chairman in 2017. His leadership on the Ethics Commission was marked by his sense of fairness and dedication to ethical governance and a concurrent commitment to insuring that all parties engaged with the Ethics Commission were afforded due process and the opportunity to be heard. He is remembered for his unpretentious and kind manner and among his colleagues on the Commission, for his collegiality.

2019

BUDGET/ STAFF

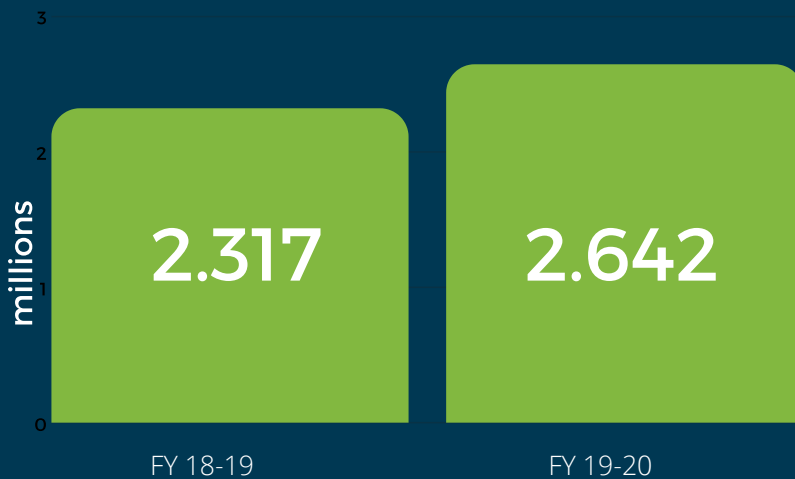
This year's focus was on a realignment and expansion of the Commission on Ethics Staff to provide more effective legal, enforcement, and training functions with an expanded and more refined outreach function to include communications across varied electronic media platforms and into traditionally lesser served communities.

14%

budget increase

3

additional positions



.029%
OF TOTAL
COUNTY
BUDGET

The Board of County Commissioners approved an increase in the Commission on Ethics FY 19-20 budget (from 2.317 million dollars to 2.642 million dollars) corresponding to the hiring of two prior part-time Staff Attorneys on to full-time status and the addition of a General Counsel position. These costs were offset in part with cost savings resulting from the hiring of the reclassified Executive Assistant and Communications and Public Information Officer (from 13 full-time positions to 16 full-time positions).

The Ethics Commission budget remains lean and comprises less than .03% of the entire County budget.

STAFFING & ORGANIZATION

1

A resulting increase in availability of the existing Commission on Ethics legal staff by 832 work hours per year resulting from the hiring of two existing part-time Staff Attorney to full-time employment in FY 19-20.

2

A resulting additional increase in the availability of Commission on Ethics legal staff, and specifically for the Commissioners, by 2080 work hours per year resulting from the addition of a General Counsel with a hire date in FY 19-20 year.

3

The reclassification of the former Communications Director position to a Communications and Public Information Officer position with a refined focus on on-line platform communications, electronic emails and annual reports, and interaction and outreach to traditionally lesser served communities in Miami-Dade County.



STAFFING & ORGANIZATION (CONT'D)

4

The establishment of an Executive Assistant position to support the legal opinion and guidance function and provide support to the Executive Director.

5

The reduction in the investigative staff by one position after reassessment of that section's needs with the Commission Advocate.

6

Continuation of the Law School legal internship program to afford training and augment the legal staffing compliment.

7

The reassignment and reclassification of an existing position to support the enforcement function and serve as the Clerk to the Commission on Ethics.



PHYSICAL LOCATION MOVE ONGOING PROJECT

OVERTOWN VILLAGE

- ***Larger Ethics Commission Chamber***
- ***Additional Office Space***
- ***Increased Security***
- ***More Accessible to Public Transportation***
- ***Cost Savings for the County***



During the FY 18-19, the Miami Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust restarted and refocused on the stalled proposed move from its current location to an expanded location at Overtown Village, North Tower 8th Floor East Suite. The new location should prove to be a much more accessible location and space for the public.

Several meetings with County Budget Officials, Planning and Design Officials, and the Deputy Mayor resulted in additional funding to secure the move.

In addition, the previously proposed floor plan was reconfigured to include additional and improved work space for legal staff.

The anticipated move date is set for mid FY 19-20.



CIVIL LITIGATION



There were two civil cases litigated on behalf of the Commission on Ethics during the closed fiscal year. One Circuit Court matter was successfully resolved by stipulation of the parties and dismissal of the claims filed by the plaintiff against the Commission. The second matter is pending in the County Court and involves an action filed by the Commission to collect fines and costs assessed by the Commission against a former elected official in an enforcement case.

- John E. Dubois v. Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust, Case No: 16-17761 CA 31. (Dismissed)
- Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust v. Frantz Pierre, Case No. 2019-009201-SP-05. (Pending)

With the participation of Commission on Ethics staff as part of the overall County management negotiating team, a successor collective bargaining agreement (2017-2020) was successfully negotiated and ratified by the Board of County Commissioners. The agreement strengthens job benefits for the Commission on Ethics Investigators.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING



ETHICS TRAINING

2019

Ethics Commission staff continued on-site and in-the-field training for elected officials, candidates, County and municipal advisory and quasi-judicial board members, and expanded their partnerships with municipal associations to provide additional and expanded training opportunities. Each training contact with a government, not-for-profit, or private educational entity, also serves the Commission's outreach charge by including not only ethics training but Commission on Ethics messaging.



- Ethics Training for Medley Elected and Appointed Officials, Commission Chambers, Medley, December 2018.
- Ethics Training for Elected Officials, with Miami-Dade County League of Cities, Northwest Miami-Dade County, Commission Chambers, Miami Gardens, December 2018.
- Ethics Training for Elected Officials, Northeast Miami Dade County, McDonald Center, North Miami Beach, December 2018.
- City of North Miami Beach, Commissioners' Ethics Ordinance Workshop, Commission Chambers, North Miami Beach, January 2019.
- Miami-Dade County, District 8, Training for Elected Official and Staff, Ethics Code Sunshine Board & Public Records, South Dade Government Center, January 2019.
- Ethics Training for Elected Officials, Northeast Miami-Dade County, Commission Chambers, Bal Harbour, March 2019.
- Ethics Training for Elected Officials, with Miami-Dade County League of Cities, Central Miami-Dade County, Grapeland Heights Community Center, Miami, June 2019.
- Ethics Training for Elected Officials, North Miami-Dade County, Commission Chambers, North Miami, June 2019.
- Clean Campaign Practices Training for Candidates and Incumbents with the Miami-Dade Elections Department, South Miami-Dade County, Commission Chambers, Homestead, August 2019.

TRAINING

LOBBYIST TRAINING

Lobbyist training was greatly expanded this year to reach over 1,000 registered lobbyists resulting from formal ethics opinion guidance and increased enforcement particularly for vendors advocating procurement decisions at Jackson Health Systems hospitals. Expanded training was also facilitated by moving training off-site to other more appropriate County training locations.

1,000+

Lobbyists Trained



Monthly New Lobbyist and Refresher Lobbyist Ethics Training Courses (Covering County Ethics Code, Procurement Code of Silence, Sunshine Board & Public Records Laws, and Current Topics) at the Stephen P. Clark Center, County Commission Chambers, and the Miami-Dade County Main Library, October 2018 to September 2019.

COUNTY & MUNICIPAL ADVISORY BOARD TRAINING (ON-SITE)

Monthly County and Municipal Ethics Training for Advisory Board Members, Commission on Ethics Conference Room, October 2018 to September 2019.

COUNTY EMPLOYEES ON-LINE ETHICS TRAINING

Ethics Commission staff developed content for county-wide, ordinance required ethics refresher training for all county employees. The content was formatted for video presentation with test questions and link to County Human Resources. Several thousand County employees have taken the training that included several modules covering the County Ethics Ordinance; Employee Protection Ordinance; and the Employee Honor Code.

ENFORCEMENT

ANNUAL STATISTICS

The Enforcement Section has been significantly engaged during the fiscal year in over 100 preliminary and formal investigations, 50 complaints, and responding to over 80 hotline calls from the general public. Additionally, the section's Investigators, Advocate, and assisting Staff Attorneys have partnered with the State Attorney's Office on several matters that originated with Commission on Ethics preliminary and formal investigations.

52

No Actions (NA's) are responses to alleged ethics violations, logged and/or referred to other agencies

50

Preliminary Inquiries (PI's) are initiated based on alleged ethics violations, logged and investigated

53

Formal Investigations (K's) are initiated based on alleged ethics violations, logged and investigated

50

Complaints (C's) by outside third parties or self-initiated by the Commission on Ethics

6

Miami Beach Lobbyist Appeals filed by lobbyists that have been sanctioned by Miami Beach for late or insufficient expenditure filings

2

Expedited Election Campaign Practices Violation Hearings on complaints filed by candidates or third parties alleging election cycle violations of the Clean Campaign Practices Ordinance

81

Ethics Hotline Calls logged and responded to

HIGHLIGHTED CASES

C 16-31, Christopher Sirkis

Complaint C 16-31 was filed against Christopher Sirkis, a lobbyist representing helicopter manufacturer and proposer Agusta Westland in the County's solicitation for the purchase of new and/or replacement of helicopters for the County's Fire Rescue, a 70-million-dollar procurement. Mr. Sirkis' enforcement action resulted in his being found to have repeatedly violated the Ethics Ordinance and he was assessed \$6,000.00 in fines and costs.

As a result of the investigation, Mr. Sirkis was terminated from his employment with Agusta Westland and his supervisor was administratively sanctioned. Additionally, the County terminated the original tainted procurement that had taken place over several years and rebid the entire request to purchase fire rescue helicopters. Additionally, the investigation suggested multiple violations of the Cone of Silence by senior members of the Fire Rescue Department and those persons are now under administrative disciplinary review and the County Mayor has publicly suggested that they will be sanctioned for their misconduct. Ethics Commission staff briefed the Mayor and his staff, several County Commissioners, and publicly spoke regarding the investigation before the Board of County Commissioners.

C 18-48-10, Miami Freedom Park / Melreese Golf Course

Complaint C 18-48-10 was filed against David Beckham, several developers, lobbyists and City of Miami officials, alleging violations of the lobbying section of the County Ethics Ordinance in the matter of significant public interest concerning Miami Freedom Park's proposal to build a soccer stadium and ancillary commercial development at the City of Miami owned, Melreese Golf Course. Investigation into the allegations generated numerous interviews and the review of voluminous material.

The complaint was dismissed based on a lack of legal sufficiency and lack of probable cause. However, during the Commission's investigation, Ethics Commission staff uncovered that the City of Miami's and the Miami-Dade County Clerk of Board's lobbyist registration process were not in compliance with the County Ethics Ordinance. This discovery caused both the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County to revise its lobbyist registration procedures to conform with the ordinance requirements and effectively enforce the ordinance.



PROPOSED LEGISLATION & MACRO PROCEDURE PROJECTS

In FY 2018-2019, the Ethics Commission continued collaborations with elected officials and policy makers regarding refinement and strengthening of the County Ethics Code, municipal ethics codes, as well as County and municipal policies and procedures to promote good and ethical governance and transparency.

1. Collaboration with City of Miami officials and the Miami-Dade Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners resulting in changes to the in-person and electronic lobbyist registration procedures and increasing compliance with lobbyist registration requirements in the County Ethics Code.
2. Collaboration with Miami-Dade County Commission on the Expansion of the County Employee Protection Ordinance into the various municipalities resulting in standardized and expanded whistleblower and employee retaliation protections for municipal employees.
3. Collaboration with Miami-Dade County Commission regarding a strengthening of the elected official voting conflict of interest provisions in the County Ethics Code.
4. Collaboration with Miami-Dade County Commission, the Office of the Inspector General and County's Chief Procurement Officer regarding increased efficiency and transparency revisions to the Lobbyist and Cone of Silence provisions in the County Ethics Code.

***"Building Trust and Confidence in
Local Government"***



PROPOSED LEGISLATION & MACRO PROCEDURE PROJECTS (CONT'D)

5. Collaboration with the City of North Miami Beach City Commission and City Attorney resulting in revisions and strengthening of the North Miami Beach ethics ordinance.
6. Collaboration with the Miami-Dade Commission regarding increased efficiency and transparency revisions to County Ordinances and Resolutions relating to conflict lobbying activities by County contracted lobbyists.
7. Collaboration with the Miami-Dade Human Resources Department, Supervisor of Elections, and Information Technology Department resulting in the enactment of an automated County-wide outside employment permission process and procedure.
8. Collaboration with the Miami-Dade Human Resources Department, Supervisor of Elections, and Information Technology Department resulting in the enactment of an automated County-wide financial disclosure process and procedure.
9. Collaboration with Miami-Dade Supervisor of Elections regarding revisions to Financial Disclosure reporting procedures.
10. Collaboration with executive staff for the Public Health Trust regarding revisions to lobbying procurement procedures at all Jackson Health Systems (JHS) hospitals.



SPECIAL OUTREACH TRAINING & CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Continued special outreach training for students, local leaders, professional and paraprofessional groups, high profile quasi-government entities, and visiting foreign delegations.

1. Global Ties Miami (for U.S. State Department), Ethics Training for Visiting African Dignitaries, Miami, April 2019.
2. Circuit Court Judges, 17th Judicial Circuit of Florida, Ethics Training for Circuit Court Judges, Broward County Courthouse, Fort Lauderdale, April 2019.
3. Global Ties Miami (for U.S. State Department), "Prosecuting the Powerful: Lessons Learned from the Unsuccessful Public Corruption Prosecution of Former Hialeah Mayor Raul Martinez," Ethics Training and Panel Presentation for African Dignitaries and Public, Miami Police Training Center, Miami, June 2019.
4. Citrus Family Care Network (Child Welfare Community Based Care Lead Agency for the Southern Region for the Florida Department of Children and Families), Sunshine Board & Public Records Training for Board of Directors, Rhode Building, Miami, June 2019 .
5. Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, South Florida Chapter, "Ethics Concepts from the Miami-Dade Ethics Code," Marlins Stadium, Miami, July 2019.
6. Ethics Training and Panel Presentation for Local Government Attorneys (CLE), with the Miami-Dade County League of Cities, "Limitations of Self-Opining by Municipal Counsel," Miami Shores Country Club, Miami Shores, July 2019.
7. Institute of Internal Auditors, Miami Chapter, 2019 Soft Skills Conference, "Basic Institutional Ethics Concepts," Florida International University, North Campus, Kovens Center, September 2019.



SPECIAL OUTREACH TRAINING & CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (CONT'D)

8. Miami Dade Police Training Institute (for U.S. State Department), Local Government Ethics Training for Visiting Dignitaries from North Macedonia, Richard Gerstein Courthouse, Miami, September 2019.
9. Seventh Annual Ethical Governance Day, with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Multiple High Schools County-Wide, with over 150 Volunteer Speakers, October 2018.
10. Ethics Training for Local Government Attorneys (CLE), "Impact of Constitutional Revisions to Local Governments," Miami Shores Country Club, Miami Shores, October 2018.
11. Miami Dade County League of Cities, Best Practices Conference, Panel Presentation, "Can I Speak at City Hall? Free Speech in the Public Forum," Hilton Miami Downtown Conference Center, October 2018.
12. Global Ties Miami (for U.S. State Department), Ethics Training for Visiting African Dignitaries, Miami, October 2018.
13. Miami's Next Leaders Institute, Ethics Training, Edward and Arleen Feller Community Center at Ludovici Park, Palmetto Bay, February 2019.
14. South Florida Paralegal Association, Ethics for Paraprofessional Legal Staff, Miami, February 2019.
15. South Florida Behavioral Health Network, Ethics, Sunshine Meeting & Public Records Training for Board of Directors, Doral, March 2019.

Training

County & Municipal Departments & Entities (In-The-Field)

City of Miami Quarterly Ethics Briefing for Executive Directors of Boards or Committees and Board Members, City of Miami Commission Chambers, October 2018.

City of Miami Quarterly Ethics Briefing for Executive Directors of Boards or Committees and Board Members, City of Miami Commission Chambers, October 2018.

Miami-Dade County, Procurement Selection Committee Training, Stephen P. Clark Center, October 2018, November 2018, January 2019, March 2019, April 2019, July 2019, September 2019.

Miami-Dade Aviation Department, Outside Employment Training, Miami International Airport, Miami, November 2018.

Miami-Dade Internal Services Department, Procurement Expo, Competitive Procurement Processes for Vendors, Stephen P. Clark Center, Miami, November 2018.

Advisory Board Member Ethics Briefing for North Bay Village Advisory Board Members, North Bay Village Chambers, November 2018.

Miami-Dade Community Council Ethics Briefing, Stephen P. Clark Center, November 2018.

Miami-Dade County, Procurement Selection Committee Training, Stephen P. Clark Center, November 2018.

Ethics Briefing for all Newly Elected and Re-Elected County Community Council Members, Stephen P. Clark Center, December 2018.

Advisory Board Member Ethics Briefing for North Bay Advisory Village Board Members, North Bay Village Chambers, January 2019.

Mayor's Executive Leadership Program, Introduction to Ethics Commission Practice and Procedures, Commission Chambers, Stephen P. Clark Center, January 2019.

The Children's Trust, Ethics Training for Trust Members, Miami, January 2019.

Miami-Dade County, Departmental Personnel Representatives, County-Wide Ethics Training, Stephen P. Clark Center, January 2019.

Training (cont'd)

County & Municipal Departments & Entities (In-The-Field)

Miami-Dade County, Internal Services Department, Ethics Training for Procurement Staff - Strategic Procurement and Department Liaisons, Commission Chambers, Stephen P. Clark Center, January 2019.

Miami-Dade County, Procurement Selection Committee Training, Stephen P. Clark Center, January 2019.

Public Health Trust, Ethics Training for Trustees, Jackson Memorial Hospital, Miami, February 2019.

Miami-Dade County, Departmental Personnel Representatives, County-Wide Ethics Training, Stephen P. Clark Center, February 2019.

Miami-Dade Community Council Briefing, Stephen P. Clark Center, February 2019.

Miami-Dade Community Council Briefing, Stephen P. Clark Center, March 2019.

Advisory Board Member Ethics Briefing for Opa Locka Advisory Board Members, Opa Locka City Hall, March 2019.

City of Miami Code Compliance Officers, Ethics Department-Wide Training for Compliance Officers, Miami Riverside Center, Miami, March 2019.

Miami-Dade County, Procurement Selection Committee Training, Stephen P. Clark Center, March 2019.

Miami-Dade County, New Courthouse Initiative Negotiation Teams, Special Lobbyist Training, Miami-Dade Main Library Auditorium, Miami, March 2019.

Miami-Dade County Census 2020 Task Force, Ethics Training for Task Force Members, Miami-Dade Main Library Auditorium, Miami, April 2019.

Miami-Dade County, Procurement Selection Committee Training, Stephen P. Clark Center, April 2019.

Public Health Trust, Ethics Training for Trustees, Jackson Memorial Hospital, Miami, May 2019.

Ethics Training for Miami Lakes Employees, City of Miami Lakes, May 2019.

Training (cont'd)

County & Municipal Departments & Entities (In-The-Field)

Miami-Dade Aviation Department, Department-Wide Ethics Training for all Employees, Miami International Airport, Miami, May 2019.

Miami-Dade County, Selection Committee Training for Miami-Dade County Aviation Department, Miami International Airport, May 2019.

Miami-Dade Sea Port Department, Public Procurement Cone of Silence Training for Port Director and Senior Staff, Port of Miami, Miami, June 2019.

Biscayne Bay Task Force, Overtown Transit Village, Miami, Ethics Advisory Board Training, June 2019.

Miami-Dade County, Selection Committee Training for Miami-Dade County Corrections and Rehabilitation Department, Dr. Martin Luther King Office Plaza, Miami, June 2019.

Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics Elder Affairs Advisory Board Training Stephen P. Clark Center, July 2019.

City of Miami Quarterly Ethics Briefing for Executive Directors of Boards or Committees and Board Members, City of Miami Commission Chambers, July 2019.

Miami-Dade County, Procurement Selection Committee Training, Stephen P. Clark Center, July 2019.

Ethics Training for Village of Biscayne Park Advisory Board Members, Village of Biscayne Park Chambers, August 2019.

Miami-Dade County, Selection Committee Training for Miami-Dade County Aviation Department, Miami International Airport, August 2019.

City of Coral Gables Biennial 2019 Advisory Boards & Committees Ethics Seminar, Coral Gables Memorial Youth Center Theater, September 2019.

Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics, Board Ethics and Sexual Harassment Training, September 2019.

Miami-Dade County, Procurement Selection Committee Training, Stephen P. Clark Center, September 2019.

ETHICS OPINIONS & LEGAL GUIDANCE

Prior informal opinions issued by the Commission on Ethics took the form of electronic mail exchanges. These emails between covered parties seeking ethics guidance on the one hand and the Executive Director or Staff Attorneys were then assigned INQ numbers and logged as informal opinions. While this process may have facilitated expediency, the appearance, completeness and format of the opinions has been changed. Commencing this year, informal opinions are issued in a uniform opinion memorandum format, with an identified fact pattern, issue presented, discussion, and conclusion section. The newly formatted opinions should serve as clear and easily understood ethics guidance for local government officials, board members, and employees.



200

*approximately 200
informal and formal
opinions were issued*

INFORMAL OPINIONS (INQs)

Approximately 200 informal and formal opinions were issued during the year including “regular” ethics logged as INQs, housing benefit ethics opinions logged as H-INQs, Section 8 housing ethics opinions logged as SECs, and formal ethics opinions of the Commission on Ethics logged as RQOs.

EYE ON ETHICS

Newsletter of the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust



In September, the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust began the production and distribution of its monthly electronic newsletter, *Eye on Ethics*. The newsletter is a new proactive approach that has served to augment and improve the Ethics Commission's outreach and education efforts throughout Miami-Dade County. One of the commission's goals this past year was to reach out to populations in our community that may not be fully informed of the Ethics Commission's public charge and *Eye on Ethics* and its expanding readership has served to realize this goal.



THE MIAMI-DADE COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST STAFF



Staff Pictured From Left to Right:

Leonardo Mendoza, Public Information Officer
Michael Murawski, Advocate
Rodzandra Sanchez, Administrative Officer
Rachelle Ross, Commission Clerk
Sylvia Batista, Investigator
Susannah Nesmith, Investigator
Jose Arrojo, Executive Director

Radia Turay, Staff Attorney,
Machell Anderson, Executive Assistant
Gilma Diaz - Greco, Staff Attorney
Martha D. Perez, General Counsel
Robert Steinback, Investigator
Nilda Olmo, Investigator
Robert Thompson, Outreach Coordinator
Karl Ross, Investigator and Auditor

**HAVE YOU SEEN UNETHICAL
CONDUCT IN OUR GOVERNMENT?**

REPORT AN ETHICS
VIOLATION

YOU MAY REMAIN ANONYMOUS

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EMAIL: ETHICS@MIAMIDADE.GOV
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2019 Annual Report

MIAMI-DADE COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST

*Building Trust and Confidence in
Local Government*