

Frigo, Victoria (COE)

From: Frigo, Victoria (COE)
Sent: Thursday, June 27, 2013 11:24 AM
To: Altarac, Darren (MDFR)
Cc: Cominsky, Alan (MDFR); Centorino, Joseph (COE); Diaz-Greco, Gilma M. (COE)
Subject: Outside Employment as Private Investigator (INQ 13-157)
Attachments: INQ 13-132 Cominsky.pdf; Outside_Employment_Guidelines_2013.pdf

Lt. Altarac,

We have reviewed the facts you presented in your request for an ethics opinion about engaging in outside employment through your private investigation agency in Port St. Lucie.

Your facts are the same as those recently presented to us by Chief Cominsky. We responded to Chief Cominsky on June 10, 2013, recommending that he deny employees permission to engage in outside employment if they worked privately for insurance companies and attorneys who were very likely to have matters before Miami-Dade County. We expressed concerns that the fire investigators, acting in their capacity as County employees, could have divided loyalties were they to be involved in County matters involving their private clients. *See* Ethics Opinion INQ 13-132, attached.

We also provided guidelines developed for directors related to granting permission to engage in outside employment. These are attached to this email as well.

It is important to emphasize that denial of outside employment does not imply that a County employee failed to perform his/her responsibilities appropriately or that the employee is not trustworthy. Rather, by avoiding outside employment that may impair our independence of judgment, we exercise the transparency, fairness, and integrity that is essential in the performance of our public duties. *See* the Miami-Dade County Code at Sec. 2-11.1 (j).

Sincerely,

VICTORIA FRIGO, SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEY

Direct Phone: 305 350-0601
Main Number: 305 579-2594
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Miami, FL 33130

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From: Ethics (COE)
Sent: Monday, June 24, 2013 3:53 PM
To: Frigo, Victoria (COE)
Subject: FW: Outside Employment

From: Altarac, Darren (MDFR)
Sent: Monday, June 24, 2013 3:38 PM

To: Ethics (COE)

Subject: Outside Employment

To whom it may concern,

Attached, is a request for an opinion of outside employment. Thank you for reviewing my request.

Lt. Darren Altarac

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue

772-618-5756

REQUEST FOR AN OPINION
Outside Employment

Darren Altarac
Employee # 118611
Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue
June 24, 2013

I am currently a Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue Lieutenant, assigned to the Fire Investigations Bureau (FIB). I have incorporated my own private investigation agency, All-Trac Investigations, LLC. The agency is fully licensed and insured, and is regulated by the Florida Department of Agriculture. I am seeking an opinion of my outside employment. My place of business is located in Port Saint Lucie, FL approximately 130 miles north of Miami-Dade County. My company will provide independent contracted services to private individuals, insurance companies, and private attorneys. The work will be performed outside of Miami-Dade County and will include, but not limited to:

1. Background checks (Pre-employment screening for companies looking to hire individuals)
2. Missing person searches
3. Fraudulent worker's compensation Investigations
4. Security consulting (offer clients advice to prevent and plan for many security risks they face)
5. Fire consulting (Critical Expert Review of Fire loss Cases, Evaluation of Strengths & Weaknesses of Further Activities, and Render an opinion during Expert Testimony)

If given the opportunity, My Company shall adhere to the following rules:

1. My outside employment will not impair my independent judgment with the performance of my public duties.
2. Under the Miami-Dade County Code, I will submit a "Request for Outside Employment" statement annually by July 1 of each year indicating my outside employment income of All-Trac Investigations, LLC
3. I will not provide services within the Miami-Dade County jurisdiction.
4. I will conduct all business for All-Trac Investigations during my days off, when I am not working for Miami-Dade County.
5. I will never use government resources/equipment to conduct outside employment.
6. I will never use my official position to secure special benefits or privileges for All-Trac Investigations, LLC

I am confident that a conflict will be avoided due to the distance of my business. I want to thank the Ethics Commission of Miami-Dade County for giving me this opportunity to submit a request for an opinion of my outside employment. Your response will be greatly appreciated.