

June 1, 2008

Honorable Mayor Carlos Alvarez  
Honorable Board Members of the County Commission  
Mr. George Burgess, County Manager  
Miami-Dade County Citizens

The Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust is pleased to present its 2007 Annual Report.

Without a real increase in resources and due to greater efficiencies, the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics had its most productive year to date. Demand for ethics training and presentations was at an all-time high. The number of complaints handled and investigations commenced exceeded the output of prior years.

Community collaborations remained a critical component of the Ethics Commission's educational activities. Whether it involved working with other local government agencies or co-hosting events with local colleges and universities, the Ethics Commission seized on these relationships in 2007 to deliver its message to the community. Some examples included the Sixth Annual Environmental Ethics Conference, the Model Student Ethics Program, Campaign Skills Seminars, and Procurement Ethics Training. The Ethics Commission hosted several luncheons for municipal attorneys and continued to play an integral role in the County's Department Ethics Officers Program.

In total, the Ethics Commission took part in more than 300 workshops, seminars, training sessions, and other community events during the year. One of the highlights was to collaborate with Do The Right Thing, a local nonprofit agency, to offer the Model Student Ethics Program to more than two hundred students attending alternative schools in Miami-Dade County and honoring the graduates with a luncheon. Another significant educational program in 2007 was the implementation of whistleblower training for management personnel and eventually preparing an on-line whistleblower course for all County personnel.

Advice-giving, in the form of responding to requests for ethics opinions, continued to be a major source of activity for the legal staff. For the fourth consecutive year, the number of opinions issued surpassed three hundred, almost totaling three hundred fifty. By upgrading our website and having a quicker turnaround time for posting opinions, the final opinions are more accessible now than ever before.

Investigations and ethics prosecutions still represent the lifeblood of the Commission on Ethics. There was a substantial increase in the number of investigations opened in 2007 than in the previous year, and the Ethics Commission heard a record number of complaints and appeals.

The Ethics Commission created the EIA Task Force in 2007, consisting of seventeen community leaders and local area experts, to examine the state of ethics legislation and regulations in Miami-Dade County and to prepare a report with recommendations to be shared with the Board of County Commissioners in 2008.

Legislatively, the Ethics Commission urged the County Commission to adopt stronger whistleblower protections by giving employees the right to use the Ethics Commission as a forum for retaliation claims. The Ethics Commission continued to support County policy that would enable the Ethics Commission to hold expedited hearings involving ethical campaign practices violations. The Commission maintained its commitment to offer municipal governments in Miami-Dade and outside Miami-Dade assistance in adopting or evaluating ethics legislation and other ethics-related initiatives.

As always, I appreciate your support of our operations and your pledge to promote the highest standard of public service within our County government and the municipal governments located within Miami-Dade County.

Sincerely,

Robert Meyers  
Executive Director

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Mission	1
Functions & Authority	1
History	2
Commission Members	3
Staff & Budget	6
Education & Outreach	7
Enforcement Procedure	11
Formal Complaint Process	12
Advice-Giving Actions	13
Inquiries Summary	14
Enforcement Summary	15
Legislative Activities & Initiatives	16
Goals for 2008	17



# MISSION STATEMENT

---

The Ethics Commission was founded on the principle that integrity is essential to both the governmental decision-making process and the process whereby candidates are elected. Toward this end, we seek to strictly enforce the ethics ordinances within our purview. Another critical component of our mandate includes educating both the public as well as those serving in government. Each group has an important role to play in ensuring that our community leaders and staff are accountable and public trust in them is warranted. Only by requiring the highest ethical behavior from those in public service can fairness, openness, and transparency in government be achieved.

## FUNCTIONS & AUTHORITY

The Ethics Commission has jurisdiction in both Miami-Dade County and the 35 municipalities within its borders, provided the subject matter falls within one of the following ordinances under its authority:

**Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance**  
**Election Campaign Financing Trust Fund Ordinance**  
**Citizens' Bill of Rights**  
**Ethical Campaign Practices Ordinance**

Our specific statutory authority is derived from Miami-Dade County Code §2-1072. This ordinance grants the Ethics Commission the power to review, interpret, enforce, and render opinions regarding the above-mentioned County ordinances as well as municipal ordinances.

# HISTORY

---

In 1996, the citizens of Miami-Dade County voted to amend the Home Rule Charter to create an Ethics Commission. Subsequently, the Board of County Commissioners, through Ordinance 97-105, established the Commission on Ethics and Public Trust, an independent agency with advice-giving and quasi-judicial powers.

The Ethics Commission is composed of five volunteer members who serve staggered terms of four years each. Members are appointed by the following individuals or institutions:

**Chief Judge of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit**—two appointments with the following qualifications:

- (1) Former Federal Judge, or former U.S. Magistrate, or former State Court Judge
- (2) Former U.S. Attorney or Assistant U.S. Attorney, former State or Assistant State Attorney, former County or Assistant County Attorney, or former City or Assistant City Attorney.

**Dean of the University of Miami School of Law and Dean of the St. Thomas University School of Law**—one shared appointment with the following qualifications:

Faculty member from the law school who has taught a course in professional legal ethics or who has published or performed services in the field of professional legal ethics.

**Miami-Dade League of Cities**—one appointment with the following qualifications:  
Member who has held local elective office prior to appointment.

**Director of the Florida International University Center for Labor Research & Studies**—one appointment.

Each member must be a resident of Miami-Dade County. Additionally, while serving on the Commission, each member cannot hold or campaign for an elective office or hold office in any political party or political committee.

The Ethics Commission is empowered to appoint the Executive Director, who must be a member of the Florida Bar. Robert Meyers was named Executive Director in 1998.

# COMMISSION MEMBERS

---

## **KERRY E. ROSENTHAL, CHAIR**

Kerry Rosenthal was appointed by the Miami-Dade League of Cities in 1998. Mr. Rosenthal is a Miami attorney and partner with the law firm of Rosenthal, Rosenthal, Rasco. His primary areas of practice include real estate and development, business transactions, and corporations.

In addition to his role as Chair of the Ethics Commission, Mr. Rosenthal also serves on the Real Estate Certification Committee of the Florida Bar and as pro-bono legal counsel for Stop Hunger, Inc. He is a former Director and President of the North Dade Bar Association and former Vice-Mayor and Councilman of the Town of Golden Beach. He is active in several bar associations and charitable organizations.

Mr. Rosenthal received his B.A. degree from the University of Florida and his Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Miami.

## **GAIL ASH DOTSON, VICE-CHAIR** (through May 2007)

Gail A. Dotson was appointed in December 2001 by Chief Judge Joseph P. Farina of the Eleventh Circuit. Currently, Ms. Dotson is an attorney with the City of Miami. Previously, she was with the law firm of Wagenfeld Levine. Ms. Dotson was also the Assistant Dean in the Career Planning and Placement Department of Florida International University College of Law.

Ms. Dotson served as the Director of Law Development and Alumni Relations at the University of Miami School of Law. A graduate of the University of Miami School of Law, Ms. Dotson was formerly an associate attorney with Fowler, White, Burnett, Hurley, Banick & Strickroot, P.A., and an assistant attorney in the Miami-Dade County Attorney's Office, where her focus was in administrative advocacy and commercial litigation. She is a member of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and a graduate of Leadership Miami, Class of 1987.

In addition to her law degree, Ms. Dotson holds a B.S. degree from Florida A & M University and a Master's in Business Administration from Nova Southeastern University.

**DAWN E. ADDY, VICE-CHAIR** (as of June 2007)

Dawn E. Addy, Ph.D., serves as Director of the Center for Labor Research and Studies at Florida International University (FIU). Professor Addy's academic efforts have focused primarily on issues of workplace diversity and community building. She has designed specialized training programs, curricula, and other materials in numerous areas, including harassment, cultural diversity, workplace violence, conflict resolution, effective communication skills, problem solving, leadership skills, electronic publishing skills, labor law, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, HIV-AIDS, stress and self-image, bridging the gender gap, workplace literacy, and adult education techniques. She served on the Equal Opportunity Board for Miami-Dade County for five years prior to her appointment on the Ethics Commission in the fall of 2001.

Prior to her work at FIU, Dr. Addy was on the faculty of the Labor Education Service of the Industrial Relations Center at the University of Minnesota. She completed her graduate work at the University of Minnesota, earning a Master's degree in Industrial Relations and a Ph.D. in Work, Community, and Family Education. She is currently president of the group "Many Voices: One Community," which facilitates dialogue on issues of racism and immigration throughout southern Florida. Dr. Addy also serves on the Access and Equity Committee for FIU as Diversity Committee Chair.

**JUDGE SEYMOUR GELBER**

Judge Seymour Gelber was appointed to the Commission on Ethics in 2005 by the Chief Judge of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit. Currently he sits as a Senior Judge with the Circuit Court Juvenile Division, where prior to retirement he served as Administrative Judge of that court. He has held office with the Dade county State Attorney, the Florida Attorney General's Office and as Mayor of the City of Miami Beach (1991-1997).

Judge Gelber is a graduate of the University of Miami Law School (1953) and holds a Masters Degree in Criminal Justice and a Ph D., in Higher Education from Florida State University. He has held teaching positions at four Florida Universities – (FSU, FIU, Nova, U of M.)

## **REGINE MONESTIME**

Regine Monestime was sworn in as the newest member of the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust on October 24, 2007, filling the seat vacated by Gail Dotson. Ms. Monestime heads up her own law firm, which focuses on civil, criminal, and immigration state and federal appeals. Ms. Monestime began her legal career as a judicial law clerk at the Third District Court of Appeal, subsequently practicing as an Assistant Attorney General in the criminal appeals division representing the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office in its state and federal appeals.

She then joined the City of Miami Attorney's Office where she was the sole appellate counsel in the litigation division, primarily responsible for handling the firm's general civil, municipal, and land use appeals as well as advising her colleagues and the City of Miami Commission on a range of legal issues. She has also been involved in several community services, such as serving as the past president of the Haitian Lawyers Association, a member of the National Bar Association, Wilkie D. Ferguson Bar Association, and the Florida Association of Women Lawyers. Among non-legal affiliations, she is a distinguished alumna of the Dade Community Foundation Miami Fellows Class III and a Board Member of Casa Valentina, a program that supports the needs of young women transitioning out of the foster care system.

Ms. Monestime is also an advocate for the Haitian-American community and routinely participates in community discussions, educational radio programs, and other forums that educate this community. She graduated from the University of Florida with both a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology in 1992 and a Juris Doctorate Degree in 1996.

## **ROBERT MEYERS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Robert Meyers has served as Executive Director of the Ethics Commission since 1998. He regularly addresses audiences on the topic of government and ethics—frequently appearing on local television programs and on panels sponsored by municipalities, chambers of commerce, bar associations, and universities.

Prior to his appointment at the Ethics Commission, Mr. Meyers was a professor at the University of Tennessee, where he taught courses in criminal law, legal ethics, government law, and public administration. He is frequently published in local newspapers, and his article titled "Professionalism and the Practice of Ethics in Local Land Use Planning" has been published in an environmental law treatise.

Mr. Meyers holds a B.A. degree from the University of Florida, a Master's degree in Public Administration from Florida International University, and a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Miami School of Law.

# STAFF & BUDGET

---

The Ethics Commission operates in four major areas:

- Advice-Giving**
- Ethics Code Enforcement**
- Education and Community Outreach**
- Legislative Analysis and Review**

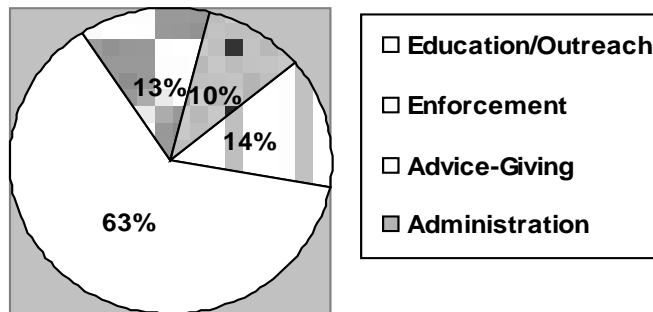
In 2007, the Ethics Commission issued 155 opinions and 190 responses to inquiries. Staff duties were also adjusted to expand community outreach efforts. The request for community outreach from both public and private sectors for ethics training, conferences, and workshops has steadily increased each year. The hiring of an investigator enabled the Ethics Commission to deal with more complex investigations and to ensure compliance with advisory opinions.

## BUDGET

In 2007 the Ethics Commission staff was comprised of 16 employees. Budget projections for 2007—2008 are shown below.

### Budget Breakdown

**2007- 2008**



These percentages reflect personnel costs, which comprise the majority of the Ethics Commission general budget of \$2.1 million. Approximately \$266,000 is budgeted for training materials, office supplies, and equipment.

# EDUCATION & OUTREACH

---

The continued major focus of the Ethics Commission for 2007 was to increase citizen understanding and participation in governmental accountability efforts. Several projects were part of this extensive and proactive community education and outreach campaign.

## WORKSHOPS, CONFERENCES, FORUMS

***Campaign Skills Seminar:*** In March and August of 2007, the Ethics Commission, the Miami-Dade County Elections Department, the State Attorney's Office, and the Miami Dade County League of Cities held campaign skills seminars. These seminars continue to provide invaluable information to incumbents and candidates on campaign contributions, the Ethical Campaign Practices Ordinance, post-election audits, prohibited uses of public funds, and other requirements related to expending public funds.

***Municipal Attorneys' Luncheons:*** The Ethics Commission sponsored three luncheon events in 2007 on matters of special interest to local government attorneys. Robert Meyers, Executive Director, led the discussions, and participants received free continuing legal education credit in ethics.

The municipal attorneys' spring event addressed establishing legal standards for elected officials and government employees whose behavior appears to be improper. Some citizens have asked that the Ethics Code include an "appearance of impropriety" sanction; others contend that the appearance standard may encourage the outward show of ethical behavior rather than encouraging truly ethical actions. These and other arguments were discussed, along with examples of "appearance of impropriety" standards adopted for federal government employees as well as for judges.

The summer luncheon for municipal attorneys addressed outside employment and financial disclosure requirements applicable to municipal personnel. The Ethics Code places several restrictions on government workers to insure that conflicts between public duties and personal financial interests are avoided. The discussion focused on the definitions of key words within the ordinance, which are frequently misunderstood, and several recent Ethics Commission opinions and rulings that serve as precedent in this area.

The end-of-year luncheon for municipal attorneys addressed best practices for establishing salaries, expenses, and perquisites for elected officials. The discussion began with policy considerations for enacting fair and equitable salary and reimbursement procedures, foremost including the need to maintain the public's trust in government accountability. Representative laws, charters, and policies from several cities within the

County were compared for salary ranges and criteria used for reimbursing officials for expenses incurred while discharging government duties.

## **MISCELLANEOUS PRESENTATIONS/SPEECHES**

The Commission on Ethics continues to make presentations regarding the work of our agency and issues of local concern before professional and private organizations, local chambers of commerce, area colleges, universities, nonprofits, and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools System.

***Orange County Charter Review Subcommittee on Ethics and Elections:*** In May 2007, Robert Meyers spoke to the subcommittee on the topics of ethics and election reforms in Miami-Dade County.

***American Society of Public Administrators:*** In April 2007, at the Miami-Dade ASPA Conference, Robert Meyers, COE Executive Director, and Ardyth Walker, COE Staff General Counsel, participated in the Ethics and Public Service Panel.

***National Association of Housing Boards:*** In September 2007, Robert Meyers, Executive Director, spoke at the annual meeting of the National Association of Housing Cooperatives on the topic “Ethics and Conflicts of Interest on Housing Boards.”

***Economic and Development Workshop:*** In October 2007, Robert Thompson, COE Community Outreach Coordinator, spoke on “Ethics and Leadership in the Nonprofit Sector” at Mayor Alvarez’s Community and Economic Development Workshop: Helping Nonprofits Build a Better Miami-Dade.

## **TRAINING**

The Ethics Commission introduced training projects in the following area:

***Whistleblower Workshops:*** In October 2007, the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust conducted a series of workshops on whistleblowing and retaliation. These workshops provided essential information to County officials and personnel concerning the amendments to the County whistleblowing ordinance that established additional safeguards for employees willing to report serious acts of official misconduct. Topics included newly instituted procedures for those who believe they have suffered retaliation after filing a whistleblower complaint.

The Ethics Commission continued training projects in the following areas:

***Municipal Ethics Training:*** The Ethics Commission continues to provide a two-hour overview of the Code of Ethics to elected municipal officials within the County. Specifically, in the fall of 2007, the COE staff attorney presented information on the Florida Sunshine Law, the Public Records Act, and the County Ethics Code to newly elected officials in Homestead. Similar training has been

well received by municipal employees, community agencies, and local advisory boards as well.

***Initial County Ethics Training and Refresher Courses:*** In 2007, the Ethics Commission worked with the Employee Relations Department in implementing the on-line ethics refresher training course for County employees. As of December 2007, more than 8,282 County employees have benefitted from the on-line course.

## **COLLABORATIONS**

The Commission operates under the principle that community collaboration is fundamental to the success of our outreach and education campaign. The following are some examples of our collaborative efforts:

***Model Student Ethics Commission Program:*** In the fall of 2007, the Commission on Ethics introduced its Model Student Ethics Program to high school students enrolled in the Women of Tomorrow Mentoring & Scholarship Program. Women of Tomorrow is a nonprofit Miami-based organization that pairs professional women with small groups of at-risk teenage girls for a four-year mentoring program at their public high schools. Additionally, Student Ethics Programs will continue to be offered to all students in high schools throughout Miami-Dade County.

***Procurement Ethics Training:*** The Miami-Dade Ethics Commission joined forces with the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office and the County's Procurement Management Department to offer a series of workshops to procurement, contracting, and purchasing personnel on legal and ethical issues in public procurement. Several hundred County employees attended the five sessions, which included discussions of relevant sections of Florida's Criminal Code, the County's Ethics Ordinance, and case studies developed specifically for these workshops.

***Public Health Trust Ethics Training:*** The Ethics Commission partnered with administrators and staff at the Public Health Trust to offer a number of training sessions to employees and selection committees on the subjects of Conflicts of Interest, the Cone of Silence, the Sunshine Law, and Public Records Act.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

The Ethics Commission publishes a newsletter titled *The New Ethics Beat*. Each issue features the latest information about the work of the Ethics Commission as well as a column by the Executive Director on an ethical issue of relevance to the community. Also included is succinct advice on a variety of situations that typically come before those in public service.

*Spring 2007:* This issue highlighted proposed legislative changes with regard to whistleblowing and retaliation issues. Other articles addressed mandatory training for County Advisory Boards, outside employment for County employees, and an ethics opinion requiring medical sales representatives to register as lobbyists (RQO 06-63). Also included was a brief biography of a newly appointed Ethics Commissioner.

*Fall 2007:* This issue presented information on whistleblowing and retaliation procedures that resulted from the legislative changes advanced by the Ethics Commission. The newsletter also covered recommendations being discussed by the Ethics, Integrity & Accountability Task Force and various state-wide presentations that had been made by Ethics Commission staff.

# **ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURE**

---

## **FILING A COMPLAINT**

Citizens can register a grievance with the Ethics Commission by submitting a written notarized complaint executed on a form prescribed by the Ethics Commission. The complaint must allege a violation within the jurisdiction of the Ethics Commission, be based on substantial personal knowledge of the complainant, and include as much evidence as possible. Within 30 days after receipt of the complaint, the Ethics Commission shall send a copy of the complaint to the alleged violator.

In addition, citizens can leave information and tips anonymously on the Commission on Ethics hotlines at (305) 579-9093 and (786) 314-9560. The legal unit of the Commission on Ethics reviews this information, and the Advocate may, in good faith, file a complaint based on the information provided, even in the absence of personal knowledge. The Advocate is also authorized to initiate complaints without citizen initiative.

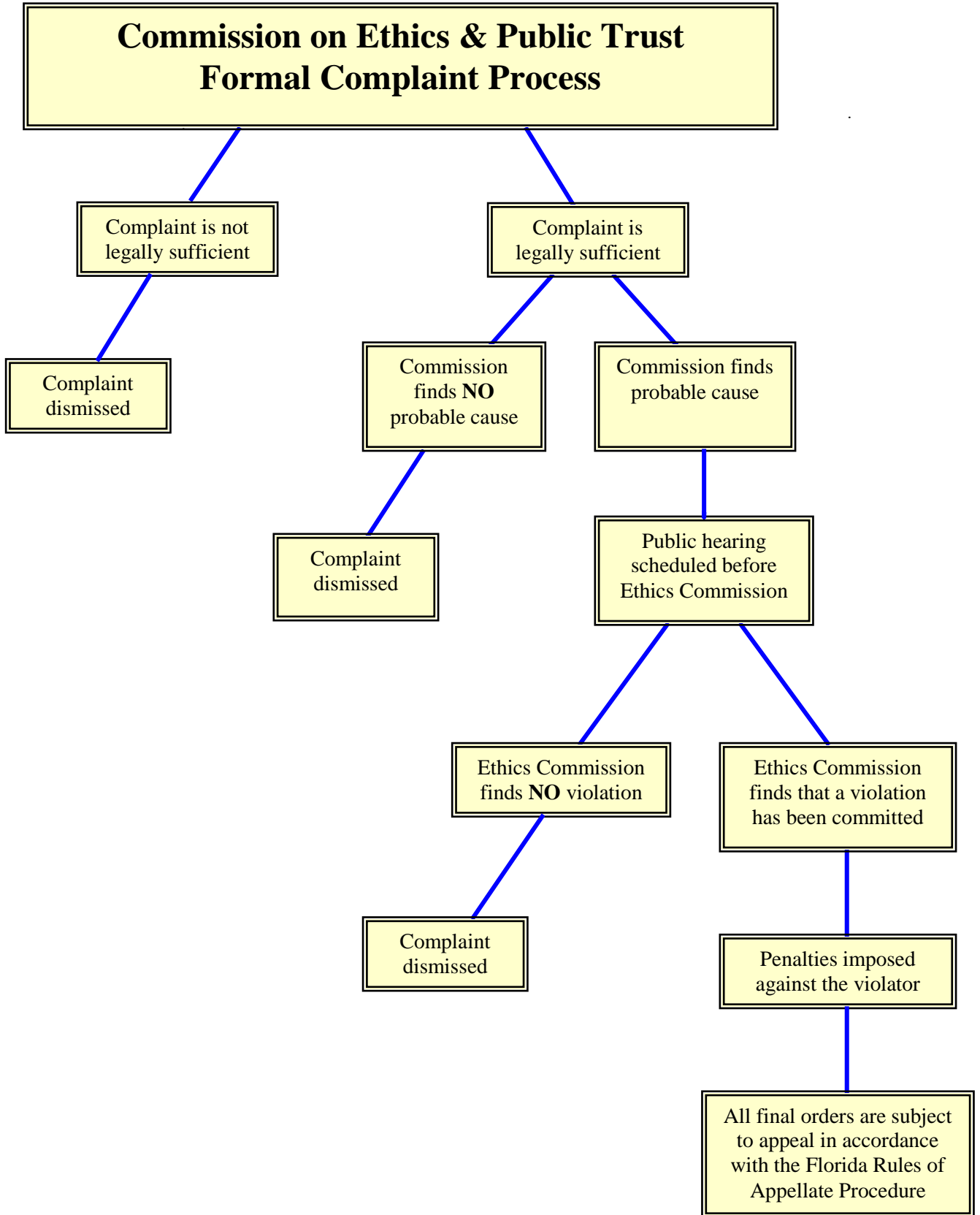
The Ethics Commission does not hear complaints involving County personnel or other matters that require the complainant to exhaust municipal remedies first.

## **QUASI-JUDICIAL PROCESS**

Section 2-1074 of the Miami-Dade County Code outlines the process and powers for conducting investigations. The Ethics Commission is empowered to subpoena, audit, and investigate all facts and persons materially related to the complaint at issue.

If the Commission finds no probable cause that a violation has been committed, it shall dismiss the complaint and issue a report to the complainant and alleged violator. However, if the Ethics Commission finds probable cause, it shall notify the alleged violator and the complainant of the determination and schedule a public hearing.

Penalties may include fines, letters of instruction, letters of reprimand, restitution, and other consequences imposed by law. All final orders may be appealed pursuant to the Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure. The following chart illustrates the process.



# ADVICE-GIVING ACTIONS

Anyone within the jurisdiction of the Ethics Commission may submit a written Request for an Opinion (RQO) or an Inquiry as to the proper interpretation or applicability of ordinances within the Ethics Commission's purview. The request must pertain to the particular facts of the individual's situation. In 2007, the Ethics Commission issued 345 advisory opinions and responses to inquiries.

## SUMMARY OF 155 REQUESTS\* FOR OPINIONS (RQO)

CODE §	ISSUES	NO. OF CASES*
(b)	Definitions of Terms	1
(c)	Doing Business with One's Government	97
(d)	Voting Conflicts	99
(e)	Gifts	4
(g)	Exploitation of Official Position	4
(h)	Disclosure of Confidential Information	3
(i)	Financial Disclosure	1
(j)	Conflicting Employment	7*
(k)	Outside Employment/Disclosure Requirements	2*
(l)	Prohibition on Certain Investments	1
(m)	Appearances before County Boards	6
(n)	Taking Official Action with Financial Interests	8
(o)	Prohibition on Acquiring Financial Interests	2
(q)	Two-year Rule	2
(s)	Lobbying	1
(v)	Voting Conflicts on Advisory Boards	8
(w)	Accepting Travel Expenses from County Vendors	3
(y)	Powers and Jurisdiction of the Ethics Commission	2
Other	Contracting	15
	County Administrative Order 7-1 (Gift Policy)	1

*\*Some requests apply to more than one provision of the Code.*

# INQUIRIES SUMMARY

---

Inquiries are informal advisory opinions rendered by the Ethics Commission legal staff and reviewed by the Executive Director. Oftentimes, officials or personnel may have questions that require immediate assistance, such as a pending issue regarding a voting conflict. An inquiry is rendered only when the issue is one that the Ethics Commission has formally addressed in previous opinions.

## SUMMARY OF 190 INQUIRIES\* RENDERED

CODE §	ISSUES	NO. OF CASES*
(b)	Definition of Terms	3
(c)	Doing Business with One's Government	27
(d)	Voting Conflicts	36
(e)	Gifts	26
(g)	Exploitation of Official Position	7
(i)	Financial Disclosure	6
(j)	Conflicting Employment	18
(k)	Outside Employment/Disclosure Requirements	28
(m)	Appearances before Government	9
(p)	Recommending Professional Services	1
(q)	Two-year Rule	16
(s)	Lobbying	19
(t)	Cone of Silence	11
(v)	Voting Conflicts on Advisory Boards	30
(w)	Prohibition on Accepting Travel Expenses from Vendors	10
Other	Contracting/Miscellaneous	5

---

*\*Some requests apply to more than one provision of the Code.*

# ENFORCEMENT SUMMARY

---

## COMPLAINTS FILED

The following individuals and agencies filed 45 complaints in 2007.

County Ethics Commission/Office of the Independent Advocate	21
Public at-large	24
Office of the Inspector General	0

The following summarizes the outcome of the 45 cases\* filed in 2007.

Dismissed for procedural reasons	3
Dismissed for legal insufficiency	16
Dismissed in the interests of justice	4
Issuance of Letters of Instruction	7
Issuance of Letters of Reprimand	3
Settlements	15
—No Contest	11
—Admission	4
Pending	2
Withdrawal of complaint	0
Dismissed for procedural reasons	3
Default Final Order	3

*\*Some cases resulted in more than one administrative action.*

## INVESTIGATIONS INITIATED

The Office of the Independent Advocate's (OIA) investigative staff opened 159 investigations during 2007. These investigations were initiated in response to formal complaints, anonymous letters, "hotline" calls, newspaper articles, confidential informants, and other sources.

# LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES & INITIATIVES

---

The Ethics Commission has the authority and responsibility to review County and municipal ethics laws and recommend changes that support fairness, openness, and transparency in government. During the past year, the Ethics Commission gave guidance to a number of municipalities considering ethics reform and endorsed the following legislation before the County Commission:

*Amend the employee protection ordinance* to, among things, enable the Ethics Commission to hear retaliation and to establish mechanism to punish retaliators.

*Support an Administrative Order to implement the expedited hearing examiner ordinance* for ethical campaign practices violations.

# GOALS FOR 2008

---

## **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

- Continue collaborating with Miami-Dade League of Cities to offer more programs to newly elected public officials and managers.
- Conduct ethics training for County board members.
- Hold several campaign seminars for individuals seeking elective office.
- Host a major conference in Procurement Ethics.
- Further expand the Model Student Ethics Commission Program by reaching out to private and parochial schools.
- Organize a series of ethics workshops for nonprofit board members and executives.
- Redesign Ethics Commission website to provide easier access and more detailed information about the work of the Ethics Commission.
- Continue to participate in the County Ethics Officers Program.
- Hold Tenth Anniversary Luncheon.

## **ENFORCEMENT**

- Take on more complex investigations, open more investigations, and secure more resources for investigative functions.
- Assign personnel to monitor Conflict of Interest opinions issued to construction contractors and subcontractors.
- Allocate more resources to the investigation and enforcement of the County employee protection ordinance.
- Appropriate resources to investigate election-related claims and refer more violations of state law to the Florida Elections Commission.
- Prepare a report on local public officials and employees disclosing gifts in 2007.
- Prepare a report on salaries, benefits, and expense accounts of local public officials.
- Begin audits of candidates received funding from the County's Campaign Financing Trust Fund.
- Continue to collaborate with the Office of the State Attorney, the Miami-Dade Office of Inspector General, the Office of the United States Attorney, and the Public Corruption Bureau of the Miami-Dade Police Department.

## **LEGISLATION**

- Work closely with the Ethics Task Force to bring forward recommended changes to the County's Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance.
- Support changes to the Ethics Commission's enabling ordinance in the areas of pre-complaint investigations, subpoenas, sanctions, and utilization of hearing examiners.
- Advocate for increased accountability in procurement and purchasing activities.
- Support legislation to eliminate exemption for certain advisory boards from the County's ethics ordinance.
- Participate in discussions related to the Cone of Silence.
- Advance recommendations pertaining to campaign finance reforms.

## **RESOURCE NEEDS**

- Acquire more resources to hire another investigator, an outreach specialist, and one administrative assistant to respond to increased workload.

# MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST

---

19 West Flagler Street, Suite 820  
Miami, FL 33130

Main Number: (305) 579-2594  
Fax Number: (305) 579-0273  
Hotline: (786) 314-9560  
Request a Speaker: (305) 350-0630  
e-mail: [ethics@miamidade.gov](mailto:ethics@miamidade.gov)

## COMMISSION MEMBERS

Kerry E. Rosenthal, Chair  
Gail A. Dotson, Vice-Chair  
Dawn E. Addy, Vice-Chair  
Judge Seymour Gelber  
Magda Abdo-Gomez  
Regine Monestime  
Brenda Rivera

## STAFF MEMBERS

**Robert Meyers, Executive Director**  
Ardyth Walker, Staff General Counsel  
Michael Murawski, Advocate  
Miriam Ramos, Assistant Advocate  
Victoria Frigo, Staff Attorney  
Christina Topley, Auditor  
Sylvia Batista, Investigator  
Manuel Diaz, Investigator  
Breno Penichet, Investigator  
Kennedy Rosario, Investigator  
Karl Ross, Investigator  
Arthur Skinner, Investigator  
Rodzandra Sanchez, Coordinator of Administration  
Rachelle Cedeno-Ross, Administrative Assistant  
Robert Thompson, Community Outreach Coordinator