



District of Columbia

BEGA February 2026 Newsletter*District of Columbia sent this bulletin at 02/18/2026 07:54 AM EST*

Ethically Speaking

Board of Ethics and Government Accountability Newsletter

Volume 11, Issue 1**February 2026**

A Message From the Director

February is an exciting month. We've settled into a new year and its time to celebrate Valentine's Day, Mardi Gras, and Black History Month. Join me in celebrating these African American leaders within the ethic community.



Ashley D. Cooks
Director of Government Ethics

Marc Crenshaw serves as the Compliance Manager for the Jefferson County Ethics Commission.

LaTanya Richardson serves as a Board Member for the Detroit Board of Ethics.

Raymond Robinson serves as the Director of Innovation at the Atlanta Ethics Board.

Morenike Irvin serves as a Board Member at the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission.

Seymour W. James Jr. serves as Chairman of the New York State Commission on Ethics and Lobbying.

New and Notable



2026 Financial Disclosure Season

District agency heads and ethics counselors should have received the materials for the start of the 2026

Financial Disclosure Season. The memorandum included links to FDS filing resources and guidance on how to complete and submit the required listing of public and confidential financial disclosure filers. Each agency must submit its lists of Public and Confidential Filers to BEGA by close of business on **Monday, March 2, 2026**.

To assist ethics counselors with designating filers and completing the filer lists, BEGA is holding mandatory training sessions for ethics counselors. Each ethics counselor must attend at least one training session. If you

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have not completed the mandatory training, you can sign up for one of the two remaining sessions:

- February 19, 2026 at 2:30 pm: Session III
- February 27, 2026 at 10:00 am: Session IV

All Financial Disclosure Statements are due on **Friday, May 15, 2026**.

Each agency must also submit a Financial Disclosure Review Report to BEGA by close of business on **Monday, June 1, 2026**.

Hatch Act Resources

While this edition of **Ask BEGA** touches on the rules governing political activity that apply to District government employees under the Local Hatch Act, District government employees whose work is funded in whole or in part by federal loans or grants may also be subject to the Federal Hatch Act administered by the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (USOSC). Additional Guidance on the Federal Hatch Act is available through USOSC: State, D.C., or Local Employee Hatch Act Information.

Upcoming Events

General Ethics Training

- 3/11/26 – 1:00 pm
- 4/8/26 – 1:00 pm

Local Hatch Act Training

- 2/18/26 - 2:00 pm
- 3/18/26 – 2:00 pm
- 4/15/26 – 2:00 pm

Board and Commission Training

- 4/29/26 – 11:00 am

Outside Employment Training

- 4/7/26 – 2:00 pm

Lobbyist Registration & Reporting and E-Filing Training

- 3/18/26 - 10:30 am

Ethics Counselor Brown Bag

- Reviewing FDS for Conflicts of Interest
- 2/23/26 – 1:00 pm

- Ethics and Social Media
- 3/30/26 – 1:00 pm

Enforcement Updates

25-0075-P In re C. Franklin

The Board approved a negotiated disposition with Respondent, a special education teacher with DCPS. The agreement included a \$6,000 civil penalty for violations of DPM §§ 1800.3(m) and 1807.1(b). Respondent performed as a paid actor in a touring production in several states while on paid family leave for the purpose of being a "round-the-clock" caregiver for a

relative. The use of paid family leave for other than the purpose approved by the District resulted in Respondent fraudulently receiving payment under the Family Medical Leave Act.

25-0002-F In re Trayon White

The Board held an adversarial hearing involving alleged violations of D.C. Official Code D.C. Official Code § 1-1162.24(a)(1) by failing to submit a Public Financial Disclosure Statements in November 2024, May 2025, and November 2025. The Board will resume the adversarial hearing in this matter on March 5, 2026.

Ethics in the News

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel issued a new advisory opinion regarding the application of the federal Hatch Act. After a Merit Systems Protection Board Administrative Law Judge confirmed that the MSPB has jurisdiction over federal Hatch Act complaints filed against former federal employees, OSC added a note to its April 2025 Advisory Opinion on the application of the law to former employees. Read the updated opinion [here](#).



The House Ethics Committee found that there was "substantial reason to believe" that Representative Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick violated the House Code of Official Conduct or other laws, rules, and regulations applicable to House members. The Statement of Alleged Violations adopted by the committee charged Representative Cherfilus-McCormick with 27 counts of conduct that does not reflect creditably on the House and failure to uphold the laws and regulations of the United States stemming from alleged violations of the campaign finance and financial disclosure laws as well as allegations relating to the use of official resources and conduct during the investigation. The committee has scheduled an adjudicatory hearing for March 5, 2026. Read more [here](#).

State and Local Ethics

A Pennsylvania state representative who assumed a leadership position at a trade association that lobbies the state government resigned from his position as of January 31st. Pennsylvania State Rep. Seth Grove began serving as president and CEO Of the Pennsylvania Concrete and Aggregated Association on January

1st. State legislators are allowed to hold outside employment while serving in the Pennsylvania General Assembly and more than half of the members engage in outside employment. Outside ethics experts raised concerns about the potential conflict of interest between Grove's official responsibilities and his outside employment. Read more [here](#).

The Oregon Ethics Commission found that Oregon State Rep. Greg Smith violated state ethics laws by using his position as a public official to secure a higher salary in his role as executive director of the Columbia Development Authority, an intergovernmental organization. The Oregon Ethics Commission unanimously found that Rep. Smith used his position at the Columbia Development Authority to raise his own pay by \$66,000 through funding from the Department of Defense. The commission charged that Smith did not indicate the board of the Columbia Development Authority that the grant application included a pay raise and did not repay the extra money when directed by the board. Read more [here](#).

Ask BEGA



Question: Right now, DC government is in transition. The Mayor has announced that she will not run for re-election and there are about 12 people running for her seat. There are also several Councilmembers seeking re-election and some others leaving their Council seats to seek other office or pursue other endeavors. What are my ethical responsibilities when the District government is in transition?

Answer: The ethics rules on misuse of government resources, seeking and negotiating for employment, outside employment, conflicts of interest and Hatch Act are implicated by all of this change. District government employees and public officials should be mindful that once they begin seeking and negotiating for employment with an entity or individual, that entity or individual becomes closely affiliated with the employee and the employee is then prohibited from taking official action at work regarding that entity or individual and must [recuse themselves](#). Elected officials who are running for reelection or a different elected office are prohibited from using District government resources in furtherance of their campaigns. Also, District government employees are prohibited from running for partisan political office, while employed with the District and are prohibited from running for the Council, even if they are running on a ticket other than Democrat or Republican. For more information and materials click [here](#).



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