

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION, ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN



PREPARED FOR THE
COMMITTEES ON
APPROPRIATIONS

March 2023

OGE
U.S. OFFICE OF
GOVERNMENT
ETHICS

FISCAL
YEAR
2024

MISSION

PROVIDE OVERALL
LEADERSHIP AND
OVERSIGHT OF THE
EXECUTIVE
BRANCH
ETHICS PROGRAM
DESIGNED TO
PREVENT AND
RESOLVE
CONFLICTS OF
INTEREST

The American people expect honest government that works on their behalf, that is transparent, and that responds to the needs of everyday people. With strong leadership and cooperation, the U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) can deliver for the American people, but not without focus and resources.

OGE works tirelessly with agencies across the executive branch to build and retain the public's trust. OGE's mission of providing leadership and oversight to prevent and resolve conflicts of interest in the executive branch is an essential component of the public's confidence in the integrity of executive branch programs and operations. This past year, OGE has taken steps to increase transparency, hold agencies accountable for compliant ethics programs, and make sure that government leaders have well-trained ethics officials to help them navigate their ethical responsibilities.

An investment in ethics, and in OGE, is an investment in government success. This plan is about the essential work OGE will do in the next two years, why that work is crucial to the country's success, and why OGE must be adequately resourced to be able to perform its unique and critical mission.

“THE ISSUE OF ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT IS VIEWED AS A SERIOUS PROBLEM BY ABOUT AS MANY PEOPLE (67%) AS DRUG ADDICTION – THE TOP ISSUE, AT 70%.”

*Pew Research Center
Report on Trust and
Distrust in America,
July 2019*

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Table of Contents | 4 |
| Section I – Budget Request Overview | 5 |
| Section II – About U.S. Office of Government Ethics | 12 |
| Section III – Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024 Performance Plan | 14 |
| Strategic Goal 1: Advance a Strong, Consistent Executive Branch Ethics Program | 18 |
| Strategic Goal 2: Hold the Executive Branch Accountable for Carrying Out an Effective Ethics Program | 27 |
| Strategic Goal 3: Help Top Executive Branch Officials Resolve Conflicts of Interest and Demonstrate Ethical Leadership | 34 |
| Strategic Goal 4: Use Transparency to Further the Oversight of the Executive Branch .. | 41 |
| Crosscutting Objective | 45 |
| Stewardship Objectives | 47 |
| Section IV – Conclusion | 54 |
| Section V – Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024 Performance Goals | 55 |

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS

Section I – Budget Request Overview

Appropriations Language

OGE proposes the following appropriations language: “For necessary expenses to carry out functions of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) pursuant to the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, the Ethics Reform Act of 1989, and the Representative Louise McIntosh Slaughter Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act of 2012, including services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, rental of conference rooms in the District of Columbia and elsewhere, hire of passenger motor vehicles, and not to exceed \$1,500 for official reception and representation expenses, \$23,037,000.”

Budget Request Overview Narrative

Mindful of overall budget constraints and of remaining a good steward of taxpayer resources, OGE is requesting \$23,037,000, to carry out its important mission work in safeguarding the public’s trust in government by preventing conflicts of interest.

OGE’s Executive Branchwide Responsibilities Necessitate the Full Requested Funding Level of \$23,037,000 to Support a Strong and Agile Executive Branch Ethics Program

To strengthen OGE and the overall ethics program, \$23,037,000 is necessary to: (1) retain the well-trained and highly skilled workforce essential for OGE to accomplish its core mission activities; (2) continue to securely operate and enhance the functionality of *INTEGRITY*, OGE’s signature electronic public financial disclosure filing system; and (3) address Administration priorities, including equity, the future of work, and IT modernization/cybersecurity. This includes efforts to continually improve OGE’s understanding of its customers and stakeholders, reduce administrative hurdles and

| BUDGET REQUEST | |
|--|---------------------|
| FISCAL YEAR 2024 | |
| FY24 REQUEST | \$23,037,000 |
| (1) Cost Increases: | +\$1,521,000 |
| (a) Workforce | +\$1,275,000 |
| (i) Compensation + benefits | +\$1,240,000 |
| (ii) Paid interns (x2) | +\$35,000 |
| (b) Systems (<i>INTEGRITY</i> transition) | +\$235,000 |
| (c) Administration priorities (Equity, DEIA) | +\$11,000 |
| (2) Cost Reductions: | -\$2,984,000 |
| (a) Office space | -\$237,000 |
| (b) Supplies + printing | -\$42,000 |
| (c) Equipment (IT Refresh) | -\$605,000 |
| (d) Relocation Expense | -\$2,100,000 |
| NET Change over FY23 | -\$1,463,000 |

paperwork burdens, enhance transparency, create greater efficiencies across government and redesign compliance-oriented processes to improve customer experience. (see, e.g., pages 41-42 and 47-53).

To accomplish its core mission activities in fiscal year 2024, OGE must make investments in human capital to retain its well-trained and highly skilled workforce and in necessary system improvements to *INTEGRITY*, its public financial disclosure filing system. Both its workforce and systems are essential for OGE to meet its statutory responsibilities, including its role in providing timely, high-quality support to the President and the U.S. Senate in the Presidential appointments process.

OGE is requesting \$23,037,000 for fiscal year 2024 to ensure that OGE, as the government's ethics expert, continues to provide strong support to the White House, the U.S. Senate, and the entire executive branch. Specifically, in fiscal year 2024, OGE must be fully resourced to carry out its unique responsibilities under the Presidential Transition Act and its vital role in supporting the President and Senate in the Presidential nominations process while conducting the full range of its statutory advice, training, oversight, and transparency responsibilities. At the requested funding level, OGE will be just able to keep pace with increased demands and deliver its key programs as described more fully below.

Funds are needed to support OGE's well-trained, expert, cross-functional staff and electronic systems in supporting the President and U.S. Senate in the Presidential appointments process

Without a fully resourced, highly skilled, cross-functional workforce, OGE could not meet its statutory responsibilities to promulgate and maintain enforceable standards of ethical conduct for approximately 2.7 million employees in over 140 executive branch agencies and the White House; oversee a financial disclosure system for more than 26,000 public and 390,000 confidential financial disclosure report filers; hold agency ethics programs accountable for complying with applicable ethics laws and rules; provide expert advice and training to more than 5,000 ethics officials; and ensure transparency and engage the public in holding government accountable. OGE's staff are the foremost experts on executive branch ethics and nominee financial disclosure – a process necessary to ensure that senior government leaders are free from financial conflicts of interest and understand their obligations both as individuals and as leaders in their organization's ethics programs.

A fully resourced staff is never more vital than during the period leading up to and following a Presidential election, such as fiscal year 2024, when OGE must fulfill its preparatory duties under the Presidential Transitions Act and its ongoing role in the Presidential appointments process. The chart below highlights examples of the impact and benefit that just a single one of OGE's talented, cross-functional, and multi-disciplinary staff has in carrying out the agency's mission programs.

Examples of OGE's Cross-Functional Staff

| | Legislative | Nominee Financial Disclosure Review | Annual Financial Disclosure Review | Int'l Outreach | Domestic Outreach | Training | Legal Policy and Advice | Agency Desk Officer | Program Review and Compliance | Agency Compliance and Internal Operations |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Program Reviewer | | | | | | | | | | |
| Attorney | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ethics Specialist | | | | | | | | | | |

Fiscal year 2024 staffing costs are expected to grow by \$1,240,000 due to anticipated pay and benefits increases in fiscal years 2023 and 2024 alone. These costs constitute the largest portion of the increase in OGE’s budget request and, if not funded, can only be covered by taking funds from other vital agency needs or furloughing staff.

Continued investment in INTEGRITY, OGE’s congressionally mandated electronic public financial disclosure filing system, is necessary to support the Presidential appointments process and appointment of senior leaders in the executive branch

OGE operates *INTEGRITY*, the electronic filing system necessary to the Presidential appointments process and public financial disclosure for the highest level officials in the executive branch. Consistently receiving over 90% satisfaction rates, *INTEGRITY* is a secure, web-based system that OGE provides as a quality shared service at no cost to agencies, saving government resources, increasing efficiency, and decreasing duplication and fragmentation across the executive branch. In fiscal year 2024, the demands on the system will continue to increase due to the record number of filers (over 25,700) using the system and due to the cyclical turnover of high-level leadership positions in the executive branch. OGE must continue to invest in this congressionally-mandated system that has revolutionized public financial disclosure filing – both by increasing accuracy through the use of wizards and by creating a seamless virtual review, routing, and signature process that has been particularly vital during the pandemic.

In fiscal year 2024, the annualized costs for *INTEGRITY* are \$2.9 million including the IT services contract, a full, independent security assessment, and hosting and authentication services. In addition, in fiscal year 2024, *INTEGRITY* will require funding for two one-time costs: the transition to a new services contract (+\$190,000) and a mandatory operating system upgrade (+\$45,000). Accordingly, funding at the request level is required to support and maintain *INTEGRITY*’s continued operation and functionality, including the many features highlighted below.

INTEGRITY Features

| | | Central system for careful coordination of system design & ethics requirements | Reduced administrative burden in report & data management | Improved accuracy through context-dependent instructions & data validations | Improved internal controls over reports | Central authentication service | Program oversight via central data repository for aggregated data reports | Remote access/telework | Concurrent viewing of reports by authorized users | Automated deadline reminder emails to prompt users | Report tracking and review | Data prepopulation | Data import from spreadsheet (transactions) | Filer designee to draft report for filer | Comparison view | Auto-suggest data entry (e.g., ticker symbols) |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--|---|---|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|--------------------|---|--|-----------------|--|
| Agency Users | Filers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Reviewers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Ethics Program Managers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OGE Users | PAS Reviewers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Oversight/compliance | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Funds are required for OGE to carry out the Administration’s priorities, including the future of work, IT modernization, and equitable service to underserved communities

Future of work and expiring lease

OGE’s fiscal year 2024 request includes funds to support the agency’s future of work initiatives and account for the uncertainty surrounding the expiration of its current lease on February 1, 2024. In accordance with its future of work plans, the agency’s \$23,037,000 request includes ongoing funding for the technology necessary to work from any location and for office space based on estimates provided by GSA using current lease utilization rates (-\$237,000 less than current costs). OGE’s future work plans anticipate the continuation of a hybrid work environment, but are contingent on the results of employee surveys, employee performance, and agency progress in meeting its strategic objectives. All of this data will be used to assess the effectiveness of the enhanced telework policy and remote work pilot program that OGE implemented in March 2022.

OGE’s current GSA lease expires on February 1, 2024. Progress has been made on a new lease but uncertainty remains pertaining to the relocation site, space footprint, annual lease (rent) costs, and other unknown expenses. As such, implications for OGE vary widely based on the outcome. Although OGE’s pilot may reveal the need for a greatly reduced office footprint and possibly reduced rent expenses in the future, it is equally likely that if OGE’s lease process be further delayed, the agency’s rent costs could increase significantly, potentially doubling in fiscal year 2024 if OGE is forced to hold over in its current space.

IT modernization and cybersecurity

OGE's budget request prioritizes investments in IT modernization and cybersecurity initiatives, with a specific emphasis on the use of secure cloud technology and the implementation of Zero Trust Architecture. Funding at the request level of \$23,037,000 will enable OGE to adopt security best practices, advance toward more secure architecture, and maintain its use of secure cloud services. OGE is implementing a plan to migrate its full network to a FedRAMP-certified cloud environment, which would result in all OGE high-value assets being so secured for the first time. And, as outlined in Executive Order 14028, "Improving the Nation's Cybersecurity" and "M-22-09: Federal Zero Trust Strategy," OGE is making significant efforts to improve its ability to identify, deter, protect against, and respond to cybersecurity challenges, all while minimizing costs by leveraging DHS-provided tools. For a detailed table with OGE's cybersecurity funding broken out using the National Institute of Standards and Technology categories (Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover), please see the cybersecurity section beginning on page 50.

DEIA initiatives and Equity for underserved communities

Consistent with the President's Management Agenda and in alignment with Executive Order 14035, "Diversity Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) in the Federal Workforce," OGE requests funds to support a seasonal paid internship program for two interns (+\$35,000) and is planning to offer its staff DEIA training and to leverage federal expertise to revise its policies and procedures. OGE's budget submission also prioritizes its executive branchwide DEIA initiative of removing barriers within the ethics profession through new education and training programs. Specifically, OGE's request enables OGE to leverage its expert, cross-functional staff to carry out its new certification programs for aspiring ethics officials, as well as continuing education for the more than 5,000 ethics officials who carry out the executive branch ethics program. These education efforts are intended to both remove barriers to entry, increase inclusion, and increase diversity in the executive branch ethics community.

Consistent with the President's Management Agenda and in alignment with Executive Order 13985, "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government," OGE's request (+\$11,000) supports the three prongs of its equity action plan. This plan commits to advancing equity through: ethics education, public access to ethics documents, and use of its purchasing power. OGE's request includes procuring expertise and maintaining the staff needed to support ethics officials across the executive branch in creating and delivering more inclusive and accessible ethics training to the 2.7 million federal workers who, in turn, serve underserved communities. OGE's budget submission also supports maintaining the staff and technology necessary to improve underserved communities' awareness of and ability to effectively request ethics documents and supports using the agency's purchasing power to reduce inequities by allowing OGE to choose vendors that further the goals of the Administration's equity initiative (see pages 45-46).

Budget Request Conclusion

Public trust in government is low, while public interest and overall demand for OGE's work is high. It is imperative that Congress invest in OGE – both its staff and technical resources – so that OGE can fully carry out its vital mission work of preventing conflicts of interest in the executive branch and ensuring that public service is a public trust.

For the reasons set forth more fully above, OGE respectfully requests fiscal year 2024 funding of \$23,037,000. These funds are necessary to conduct OGE's essential mission work preparing for a Presidential election when demands for the agency's services and expertise are at their height and are needed to support OGE's vital role in deterring conflicts of interest and supporting ethical behavior in public service.

Budget Request by Object Classification

The object classification table set forth below summarizes OGE’s request (in thousands of dollars).

Table: Budget Request by Object Classification (in 000s)

| | | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-------|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | <u>Object Class</u> | <u>Enacted</u> | <u>Enacted</u> | <u>Request</u> |
| 11.1 | Salaries | \$10,210 | \$11,356 | \$12,244** |
| 12.1 | Benefits | \$3,560 | \$4,000 | \$4,387 |
| 21.0 | Travel | \$1 | \$2 | \$2 |
| 22.0 | Transportation (Freight) | \$1 | \$1 | \$2 |
| 23.1 | Rental Payments to GSA | \$1,501 | \$1,664 | \$1,426 |
| 23.3 | Communications and Utilities and Postage | \$70 | \$89 | \$74 |
| 24.0 | Printing and Reproduction | \$42 | \$32 | \$17 |
| 25.0 | Other Services | \$3,660 | \$6,613* | \$4,759 |
| 26.0 | Supplies and Materials | \$44 | \$54 | \$42 |
| 31.0 | Equipment | \$69 | \$689 | \$84 |
| 99.00 | Subtotal | \$19,158 | \$24,500 | \$23,037 |
| 99.00 | Reimbursable | <u>\$725</u> | <u>\$725</u> | <u>\$725</u> |
| 99.0 | Totals | \$19,883 | \$25,225 | \$23,762 |
| | FTEs | 75 | 78 | 78 |

* Denotes \$2.1M one-time increase for OGE relocation expenses

** 4.6% (actual) FY23 and 5.2% (projected) FY24 pay increases

Section II – About U.S. Office of Government Ethics

OGE’s Mission

The U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) was established by the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to provide “overall direction of executive branch policies related to preventing conflicts of interest on the part of officers and employees of any executive [branch] agency.” As this statutory language makes clear, the primary objective of the executive branch ethics program is one of prevention.

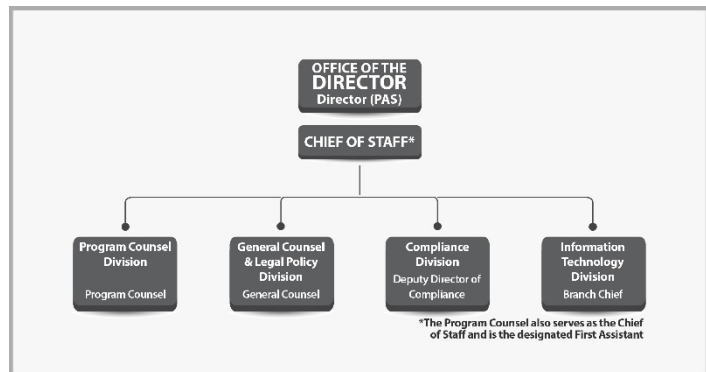
Under OGE’s leadership, thousands of ethics officials are engaged every day in preventing ethical lapses and protecting the impartiality of government decision-making by implementing ethics programs and applying the ethics laws and rules in the more than 130 agencies across the executive branch.

If these efforts at prevention fall short, agencies may be crippled by scandal, important work may be delayed or derailed, leaders may be forced from office, and ultimately the public’s trust in government may be eroded.

Organizational Structure

Office of Government Ethics: A Small but Agile Agency

OGE is a lean organization, operating at fewer than its 80 authorized full-time equivalents (FTE). OGE’s greatest resource is its multidisciplinary staff of attorneys, ethics and financial experts, as well as other key personnel. OGE is headed by a Director who is appointed to a five-year term by the President after confirmation by the Senate. In addition to the Office of the Director, OGE is divided into four divisions, guided by OGE’s career Chief of Staff and senior leadership, who work in concert to carry out OGE’s mission.



OGE and Executive Branch Agencies: A Shared Responsibility

Maintaining the trust of the citizens OGE serves is a shared responsibility between OGE and executive branch agencies. OGE ensures that the ethics program remains an effective prevention mechanism to guard against conflicts of interest and violations of ethical standards. As the supervising ethics office, OGE sets policy for the entire executive branch ethics program. This program involves a variety of elements, including leadership

support, financial disclosure, education and training, ethics counseling, remediation of conflicts of interest, and transparency.

The head of each executive branch agency is statutorily responsible for leading the ethics program in their agency. This responsibility includes creating an ethical culture by demonstrating a personal commitment to ethics and providing the necessary resources to implement a strong and effective agency ethics program.



The head of each agency is also responsible for selecting a Designated Agency Ethics Official (DAEO). The DAEO, with the support of professional ethics staff, is the employee with primary responsibility for directing the daily activities of an agency's ethics program and coordinating with OGE.

Each agency's employees, including supervisors, human capital officials, and the agency's Inspector General, play a significant role in maintaining the integrity of government programs and operations.

Further, OGE, and the ethics officials across the government, are not alone in promoting trust in government. Other executive branch agencies and entities focus on additional areas of government integrity, such as merit system protections in the civil service; full and open competition in procurement; fiscal controls; transparency programs; investigation of waste, fraud, and abuse; and criminal, civil, and administrative enforcement.

Section III – Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024 Performance Plan

OGE’s planned work reflects the agency’s commitment to fulfilling its vital mission of preventing conflicts of interest in the federal executive branch. Through this work, OGE strives to ensure the integrity of government programs and operations and to increase public confidence in the impartiality of government decision-making. OGE translates its important mission into strategic goals and objectives (see Figure 1). OGE then assesses its success in achieving these goals and objectives by measuring progress on its performance goals.

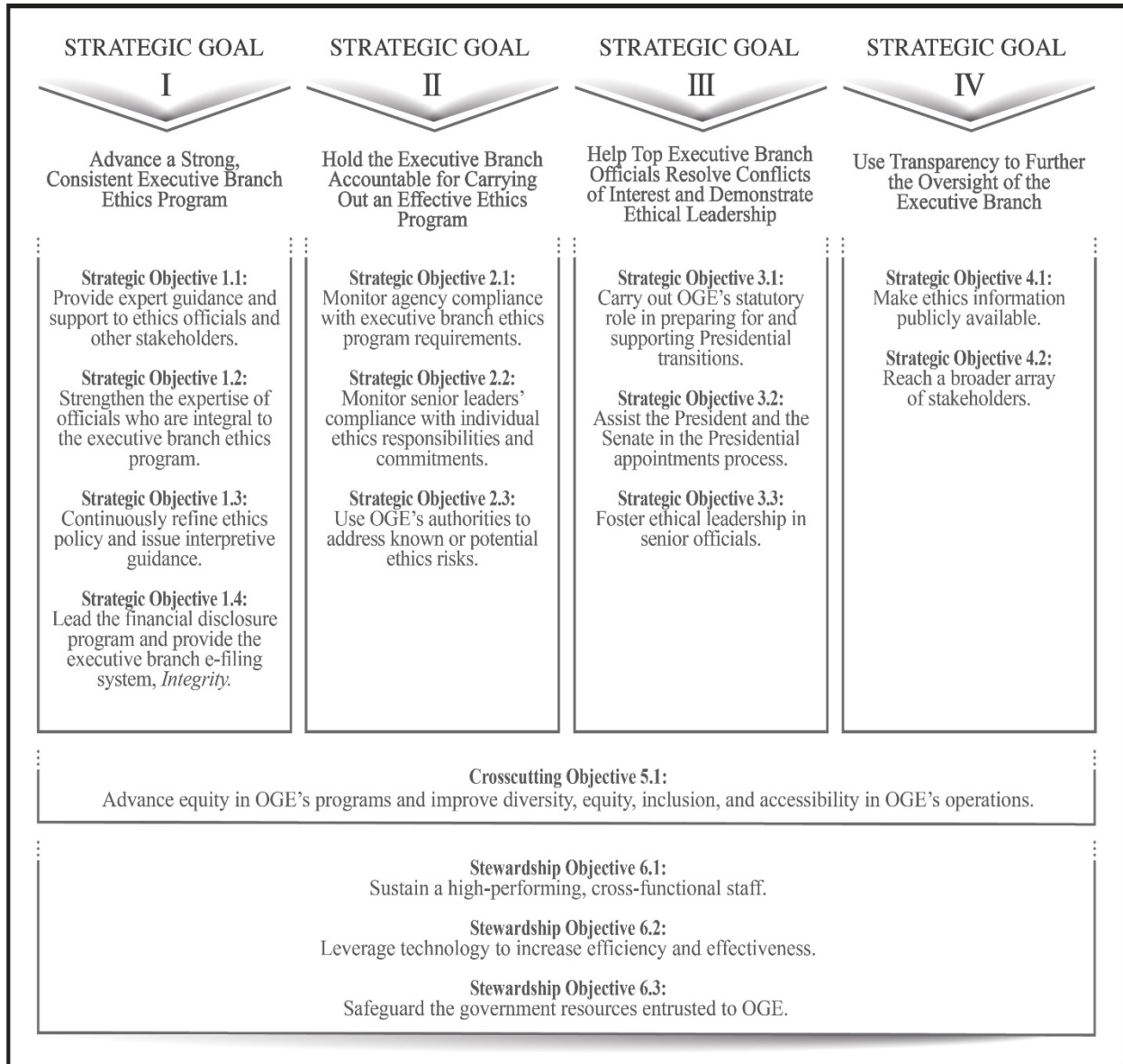


Figure 1: OGE’s Strategic Plan

Organized by strategic goal and objective, this section describes OGE's planned work for fiscal years 2023 and 2024. Information on how OGE will measure progress toward achieving its strategic goals can be found in Section V.

Priority Work

OGE's budget request directly supports OGE's mission-critical work, including providing direct support and training to ethics officials, refining and issuing guidance, conducting program reviews, reviewing public financial disclosures, and providing the public with access to a wide array of ethics documents. Beyond its crucial ongoing work, OGE has identified the following planned work as priorities in fiscal years 2023 and 2024:

- Election Readiness – see page 35
- Ethics Regulations – see page 24
- Professional Development of Ethics Officials – see page 20
- Reviews of Agency Ethics Programs – see page 28

Significant External Factors

These external factors could cause OGE to incur costs, impede its mission, or necessitate reallocating staff resources.

- IT Threats: With a hybrid workforce, the availability of OGE's virtual network is more critical than ever and any unscheduled downtime has an even greater impact on operations. As potential security threats against automated systems grow and become more complex, OGE must remain proactive to ensure that any threats are reduced and mitigated, if not eliminated.
 - OGE has taken a number of steps to secure its IT systems, including: undergoing independent, third-party assessments; complying with key government-wide directives; and leveraging both internal and external expertise and resources. OGE will continue to address IT security threats and to commit significant resources to secure its important IT systems and network. OGE will also seek, despite its small staff and limited resources, to remain responsive and compliant to new cybersecurity directives. In addition, OGE will implement a comprehensive replacement of its IT infrastructure through procuring new equipment and by migrating to a secure, FedRAMP-certified government cloud environment. Without these actions, OGE runs the risk of being unable to carry out its mission work. For a detailed table with OGE's cybersecurity funding broken out using the National Institute of Standards and Technology categories (Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover), please see the cybersecurity section beginning on page 50.

- Potential disruption and cost of relocation under a new lease: GSA’s current lease for OGE’s space ends February 2024. OGE is working with GSA to review its current space needs and negotiate a new lease. Depending on the outcome of the lease negotiations, OGE could incur millions in additional costs and its work could be disrupted by being forced to relocate its staff.
 - As part of this effort, OGE is actively re-evaluating the use of its current space given the impact of COVID-19 and expanded workplace flexibilities. OGE is regularly evaluating performance, employee engagement, and staff feedback to inform future workspace needs.

- Future of Work: OGE continues to prioritize employee health and safety, evaluate its personnel policies and work environments, and pilot new operating approaches and workplace innovations, while carefully considering trends related to the federal workplace. Based on both strong performance and data on preferences of its employees, OGE has expanded telework and created a pilot remote work policy to move OGE toward the “future of work.” While significant progress has been made, there continue to be operational challenges as OGE navigates this unprecedented time.

- Move from MAX.gov for INTEGRITY Support Functions and Authentication: In addition to continuing to resource *INTEGRITY* on behalf of the entire executive branch ethics program, OGE must move system support functions to new providers because OMB MAX.gov will no longer operate. The full impact of this transition will require as-yet-unknown total costs, because an alternative solution to the system’s unique authentication requirements has yet to be identified. OGE has begun migrating other services provided by MAX.gov to new providers; however, OGE’s ability to continue to secure, operate, enhance, and update the system, with a very small contingent of staff and a small agency budget, and to continue to provide the system to all agencies at no cost, may be affected by this transition. In addition, the system may be vulnerable to disruption during the Presidential election year period if a cost-effective solution cannot be identified.

- Potential Legislative Reform: OGE is the subject of significant and intense congressional and stakeholder interest. OGE is tracking numerous bills that would make significant statutory revisions to the Ethics in Government Act or the criminal conflict of interest statutes, or create entirely new ethics-related statutes. Passage of major ethics reform would present significant challenges for OGE.
 - Legislation to reform and expand OGE’s operations has been considered by Congress in recent years, such as HR 1, which passed the House in the 117th Congress. Additional bills have been introduced, such as the Executive Branch Comprehensive Ethics Enforcement Act, to reform and expand OGE’s operations, including by authorizing OGE to investigate and adjudicate ethics violations in the executive branch. The Congressional Budget Office analyzed

this legislation, and estimated that implementing the bill would cost \$140 million over a five-year period.

- Workload and Unfunded Mandates: OGE produces a remarkable amount with a small staff by carefully managing the cyclical nature of the agency's work and leveraging its highly cross-functional professional employees. Although agile, significant unanticipated changes in workload have impacts across programs. For example, a dramatic increase in public, press, congressional, and FOIA requests in 2017 strained staff resources, stretched cross-functional abilities, and required additional cross-training to keep pace with unprecedented demands.
 - There are also ongoing and growing compliance requirements that must be addressed with no lead time or new resources to support them, such as unanticipated human resources, privacy, and data-focused executive orders, OMB directives, laws, and regulations.

Strategic Goal 1: Advance a Strong, Consistent Executive Branch Ethics Program

OGE was created to prevent conflicts of interest on the part of executive branch employees. The absence of a strong, consistent executive branch ethics program with clear rules, guidance, support, training, and financial disclosure could lead to ethical lapses, improper use of taxpayer funds, and a loss of public confidence in government.

To achieve its strategic goal of advancing a strong, consistent executive branch ethics program, OGE developed four strategic objectives. These objectives are:

- (1.1) Provide expert guidance and support to ethics officials and other stakeholders;
- (1.2) Strengthen the expertise of officials who are integral to the executive branch ethics program;
- (1.3) Continuously refine ethics policy and issue interpretive guidance; and
- (1.4) Lead the financial disclosure program and provide the executive branch e-filing system, *INTEGRITY*.

Strategic Objective 1.1: Provide expert guidance and support to ethics officials and other stakeholders

OGE provides expert guidance and support to ethics officials and other stakeholders to promote consistent interpretation and application of ethics laws and regulations across the executive branch. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to provide quality Desk Officer services and effective assistance to a wide variety of key stakeholders, including Congress and Inspectors General. OGE will also continue to disseminate relevant information and create opportunities for ethics practitioners to engage with OGE and each other. Key highlights of OGE's planned work are described below.

Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to respond to questions timely, leaving agency employees and leaders without protection from ethics risks.
- OGE is unable to consult with Inspectors General, delaying investigations while ethics violators remain in positions of public trust.

Supply ethics officials with access to on-demand ethics expertise to respond to real-time questions from their agencies' leaders and employees

OGE will continue to provide extensive support to agency ethics officials so they can provide consistent and effective ethics guidance to the more than 2.7 million federal employees in the executive branch who serve the American people. This support includes providing timely, expert advice on applying the ethics laws and regulations, as well as furnishing other resources ethics practitioners need to do their jobs effectively. On average, OGE Desk Officers respond to 1,200 calls for assistance per year (see page 23). Desk

Officers help ethics officials navigate difficult policy and programmatic issues and proactively provide those officials with resources and services to assist them.

Communicate helpful, written guidance that is disseminated widely

OGE will continue to provide ethics officials with up-to-date ethics information so that they can carry out effective programs for the employees they serve. OGE publishes advisories and other guidance in a searchable

format on its website, and provides notices of new guidance via the OGE listserv, which reaches approximately 3,500 ethics officials and ethics support staff. OGE also continues to host quarterly meetings with senior agency ethics officials to inform them of new guidance, resources, requirements, and trends.



Respond to requests for expert advice from critical stakeholders

OGE continues to provide ethics expertise in response to requests from a variety of external stakeholders, such as Congress, government watchdogs, professional associations, non-governmental organizations, academia, state and local governments, and employee groups. OGE's assistance builds a better, consistent understanding of the executive branch ethics program.

Support the vital work of the ethics enforcement communities



OGE continues to support the vital work of the ethics enforcement communities, including Inspectors General, the Department of Justice, and executive branch employee relations personnel, who are responsible for holding agency employees accountable for abiding by the ethics laws and rules. OGE responds to numerous requests for expert consultations from offices of the Inspectors General. OGE also participates actively as a member of the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE). Information on the training OGE provides to the enforcement communities is described on page 23.

Participate actively in U.S. government anti-corruption efforts

To support and enhance U.S. foreign policy initiatives, OGE continues to provide its expertise to international anti-corruption and good governance programs at the request of U.S. foreign policy agencies. OGE also continues to assist the State Department by providing information about U.S. implementation of ethics and good governance programs to foreign delegations. On average, OGE each year provides dozens of these briefings to individuals

from countries across the globe.

Strategic Objective 1.2: Strengthen the expertise of officials who are integral to the executive branch ethics program

OGE seeks to strengthen the expertise of all officials who are integral to carrying out an effective executive branch ethics program, including ethics officials, agency leaders, Inspectors General, and human capital (HR) professionals. Without competent ethics officials, engaged leaders, informed investigators, and collaborative HR officials, the ethics program cannot succeed in implementing a consistent program that helps executive branch agencies mitigate risk. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will introduce a significant array of new professional development initiatives for ethics officials, promote ethical leadership, and provide training to support an ethical workforce. Key highlights of OGE's planned work are described below.

Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to train new ethics officials, leaving agencies without competent counsel.
- OGE is unable to deliver orientations for newly designated agency ethics officials, leaving senior ethics officials without guidance needed to successfully lead their programs, placing the ethics program at risk.

Develop senior ethics officials (DAEOs & ADAEOs) so that they have the skills and knowledge to lead effective ethics programs

To promote consistent implementation of agency ethics programs, OGE will continue to provide orientations for new agency ethics leaders (DAEOs and ADAEOs). These orientations result in DAEOs and ADAEOs understanding their roles as advocates for the ethics program and the regulatory requirements of their new positions, as well as ways that OGE can support their programs.

Prepare ethics officials at all levels to train, advise, and support their employees and further their agencies' missions

OGE will continue to support the development of ethics officials through its [Institute for Ethics in Government Education Library](#). OGE's virtual library is publicly available and includes more than 100 education resources designed for use by ethics officials, including recordings of training presentations, slide decks, and job aids, which can be searched and sorted by topic, type, and complexity. See page 36 for a discussion of OGE's work to support agency ethics officials to ensure that they are prepared for their enhanced responsibilities and the increased workload associated with a Presidential election.

NEW INITIATIVE

As part of OGE's efforts to advance equity, OGE has worked to assess potential inequities in access to entry and advancement within the ethics workforce in the executive branch. In fiscal year 2022, OGE conducted a data call to agencies to understand the demographics of the ethics

community in order to better direct its efforts and understanding of these barriers. OGE created a new flexible approach to ethics officials' professional development designed to:

- assist new and aspiring ethics officials to navigate rewarding career paths;
- help experienced ethics officials maintain and sharpen their skills, and remain engaged with OGE and the ethics community; and
- support ethics program leaders to direct ethics programs that protect their agencies; hire, support, and develop the next generation of ethics officials; and lead innovative ethics programs that protect the trust of the public we serve.

In fiscal year 2023, OGE will launch four new offerings: (1) Accelerated Certification in Ethics (ACE); (2) Skill Builders; (3) the Annual Professional Ethics Practitioner (PEP) Certificate; and (4) Interactive Trainings.

ACE: OGE developed ACE for new and aspiring ethics officials who would like to be able to support all aspects of an executive branch ethics program. Over four months, the virtual program will provide a comprehensive introduction to all aspects of the ethics program, including program administration and leadership, advice and counsel, financial disclosure, and education and communication.

Skill Builders: OGE developed Skill Builders for ethics officials and others who support the ethics program in a targeted way and who would like to build their skills in a particular program area or add to their ethics competencies over time. OGE will offer several Skill Builders each year on topics such as confidential financial disclosure, public financial disclosure, nominee financial disclosure, advice and counsel, program management, communication, and education

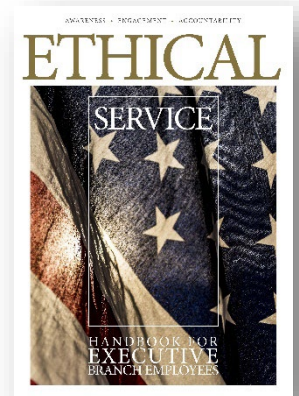
Annual PEP Certificate: OGE designed the annual PEP certificate for ethics officials who are performing some or all functions of an ethics program at full competency and who wish to maintain their skills and stay current with policy changes and developing practices in the ethics profession. By offering an annual certificate, OGE intends to signal an expectation of ongoing professional development by ethics officials, and participation enables ethics officials to demonstrate their commitment to the practice of ethics. OGE will hold a variety of PEP offerings each year, such as virtual lectures on recent advisories, peer-to-peer and other workshops, networking opportunities, community meetings, and recorded and interactive trainings on a wide range of ethics topics.

Interactive Trainings: In support of the new annual PEP certificate, OGE created a new offering - interactive training. These interactive trainings, on a wide range of ethics topics, will follow a new model that includes a recorded lecture followed by an opportunity to participate in a live, virtual debrief of a practical exercise to apply the content covered in the recorded lecture. A recorded debrief of the exercise also will be available for those unable to participate in the live debrief. These interactive trainings are in addition to recorded trainings, curricula, and workshops already offered by OGE.

Improve the delivery and content of ethics education at agencies, including a focus on equity

As part of OGE’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA) efforts, OGE will conduct a review of OGE’s collection of resources for delivering ethics education to new and current federal employees and update resources, as needed, so that these resources reflect the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. OGE will also share resources, through presentations and/or written guidance, with ethics officials on how to incorporate DEIA principles into the delivery of ethics education to their agencies’ federal employees and hold interactive workshops for ethics officials so that they can implement the principles they have learned into the training they will deliver to employees and receive feedback from their peers. OGE will evaluate its training materials for barriers to equity and any necessary inclusivity improvements, such as making them gender neutral. In addition, in fiscal year 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to hold one-on-one consultations with agency ethics officials to provide direct support to them with regard to their ethics education programs.

OGE recognizes that maintaining strong ethical standards across the executive branch is the shared responsibility of every employee who takes the oath of office. To support the ethical service of all executive branch employees, OGE maintains a collection of training resources for new and current federal employees, creating templates for ethics officials to use when communicating about ethics within organizations. In fiscal year 2024, OGE will specifically focus on materials for supervisors to assist them in meeting their ethical responsibilities (see page 39 for more information). OGE will also continue to identify and leverage opportunities to directly discuss ethical standards with groups of federal employees.



Create opportunities for knowledge exchange and collaboration between ethics officials across executive branch agencies



OGE will continue to create opportunities for knowledge exchange and collaboration between ethics officials across executive branch agencies. For example, OGE holds workshops for ethics officials to discuss practices for implementing different aspects of their program. By creating subsequent training resources, such as job aids and videos that are shared executive branchwide, the knowledge shared during the workshops expands beyond the small group and enables the broader community to learn and potentially implement practices to improve their own ethics programs. In addition, in fiscal year 2022, OGE introduced a series of flash networking events to provide ethics officials with an opportunity to build their

professional development. OGE will also continue to host these event and seek additional opportunities to help foster a sense of community for ethics practitioners.



Educate other officials who are integral to the executive branch ethics program

In support of OGE's goal of a strong, consistent ethics program, OGE will continue to train and collaborate with members of the ethics enforcement and human capital communities. Without knowledgeable enforcement communities the ethics laws may not be effectively enforced. Therefore, OGE will continue to provide training as part of the Inspector General Criminal Investigator Academy's Public Corruption Investigations Training Program and to present at meetings of the Council of Counsels to the Inspectors General.

Strategic Objective 1.3: Continuously refine ethics policy and issue interpretive guidance

OGE is responsible for interpreting the statutes and rules that form the building blocks of the executive branch ethics program, including the criminal conflict of interest laws and Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, and must act to keep pace with evolving challenges to the consistency and strength of the program. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to review, refine, and issue interpretive guidance on the ethics rules to ensure their continued relevance, consistency, and effectiveness. Key highlights of OGE's planned work are described below.

Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to issue guidance, particularly on new and evolving ethics issues, resulting in inconsistency and confusion across the executive branch on ethics policies. OGE is unable to timely update ethics regulations, leaving outdated and less effective rules in place and delaying reforms that would improve ethics policies.

Provide timely ethics guidance

In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE plans to issue advisories providing interpretive guidance on emerging issues in the application of conflict of interest laws, as well as financial reporting requirements, as they apply to an employee's holdings in virtual assets and virtual currencies. OGE also anticipates issuing legal advisories on the relevant legislative activity of the 117th Congress, employees' use of official social media accounts as part of their job duties, financial disclosure requirements, conflicts of interest analysis for complex financial instruments, and election readiness, as well as OGE's annual prosecution survey. OGE plans to issue further interpretive guidance on the post-government employment provisions contained in Executive Order 13989: Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Personnel.

OGE will continue to seek feedback from agency ethics officials prior to issuing guidance, to ensure the usefulness and clarity of the guidance, and to use an evidence-based approach to determine topics to be addressed. OGE will use its listserv, website, desk

officer services, and training broadcasts to ensure its guidance is widely disseminated.

Publish proposed and final ethics rules

In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to review and refine the ethics rules to ensure their continued relevance, consistency, and effectiveness by publishing proposed and final ethics rules. For example, OGE expects to modernize the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch (the Standards) by publishing a proposed regulation in fiscal year 2023 and a final rule in either fiscal year 2023 or 2024. The proposed amendments seek to update the Standards based on OGE's experience gained from application of the regulation since its inception, as well as based on the principles contained in Executive Order 14035 to advance equity. The proposed amendments also will incorporate past interpretive guidance, add and update regulatory examples to make them more inclusive, improve clarity, update citations, and make technical corrections.

In fiscal year 2022, OGE published a proposed regulation further modifying the Standards to address the conditions under which an executive branch employee may accept a gift of legal expenses. In fiscal year 2023, OGE plans to publish a final legal expense fund regulation.

In fiscal year 2024, OGE plans to publish a proposed rule amending the regulatory exemptions at 5 CFR part 2640. The planned amendments will provide more clearly delineated exemptions with more efficient implementation. In addition, the exemptions will be targeted to better address potentially conflicting financial interests. In fiscal year 2022, OGE solicited ideas from agency ethics officials and received comments from over 100 executive branch agencies. In fiscal year 2023, OGE will continue its review of these comments and its in-depth review of the existing regulations governing financial disclosure conflict of interest exemptions.

In fiscal year 2023, OGE will issue a final regulation increasing the gift and travel reimbursement reporting thresholds for financial disclosure reports as well as the widely attended gatherings gift exception ceiling for nonsponsors of events. These increases are tied to or based upon the increase to the General Services Administration's increase of the "minimal value" of an acceptable gift for the purposes of the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act for the three-year period 2023-2025.

In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to consult with agencies that seek to publish agency-specific supplemental ethics regulations. Supplemental ethics regulations enable agencies to tailor their ethics program requirements to meet specific agency needs. OGE will also publish regulations in response to agencies' request to establish separate agency component designations applicable to the post-employment statutes.

Lastly, in both fiscal year 2023 and 2024, OGE will issue a final regulation increasing the civil monetary penalties applicable to employees who violate certain financial disclosure, qualified trust, or outside employment laws under OGE’s jurisdiction.

Strategic Objective 1.4: Lead the financial disclosure program and provide the executive branch e-filing system, *INTEGRITY*

OGE leads the executive branchwide financial disclosure systems, public and confidential, that serve to prevent conflicts of interest through a systematic review of the financial interests of both current and prospective employees. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will operate *INTEGRITY*, renew financial disclosure forms, review key financial disclosure regulations, and update related resources. Key highlights of OGE’s planned work are described below.

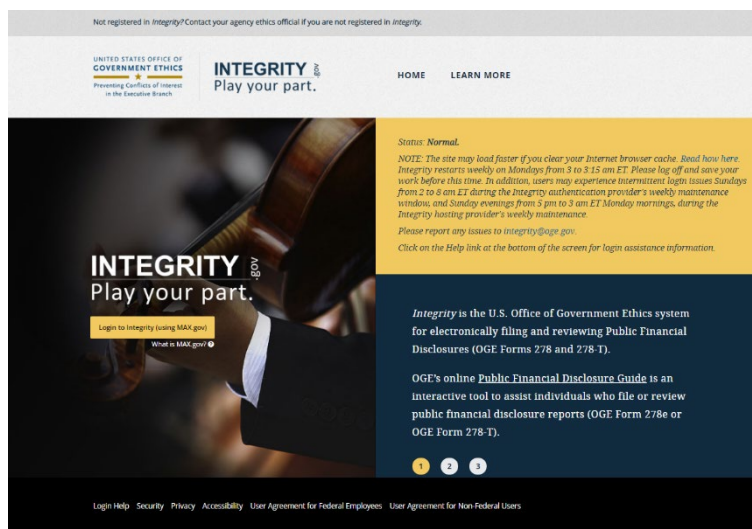
Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to maintain its electronic financial disclosure filing system, resulting in more than 25,000 senior officials reverting to less efficient and less accurate paper filing of financial disclosure reports, significant delays in review and certification, and unresolved conflicts of interest left unidentified and unaddressed.

Operate INTEGRITY, OGE’s public filing system that serves more than 90% of all public filers

In fiscal year 2023 and 2024, OGE will work to ensure that *INTEGRITY* can sustain a potential increase in the number and complexity of filings of nominees using the system during the post-election period, and can continue to produce high-quality financial disclosures by helping filers more accurately report required information. OGE will also work to ensure that *INTEGRITY* continues to reliably and securely operate for the thousands of current filers and reviewers who rely on the web-based system every year at no cost.

In addition, OGE will continue providing high-quality support for users and agencies, including OGE by convening *INTEGRITY* Advisory Council meetings to provide a forum for agencies to discuss and prioritize enhancements to the system. To support the system’s more than 37,000 users (filers, administrators, and reviewers), OGE will also continue to make available training resources and tutorials, and provide regular training opportunities for both new and experienced users. OGE plans to update these online resources to provide shorter, more targeted instructional videos and written



instructions for commonly recurring questions. Lastly, OGE will continue to provide centralized, real-time help desk services and on-demand resources to system users. OGE will also provide support on *INTEGRITY* to the Presidential campaigns (see page 35 for more information).

Maintain and update uniform ethics forms

OGE is responsible for maintaining uniform public and confidential ethics forms for use across the executive branch. To carry out this responsibility, OGE conducts periodic review, revision, and solicitation of stakeholder input prior to requesting renewal of an existing form or creation of a new form. In fiscal year 2023, OGE will review OGE Form 201 (release of ethics documents) and Executive Branch Qualified Trust documents. In fiscal year 2024, OGE will review both the public and confidential financial disclosure forms. OGE will seek approval for renewal for all of these forms from OMB in fiscal years 2023 and 2024. In addition to work on renewal of existing forms, OGE will seek approval for any forms that will be used in connection with OGE’s proposed legal expense fund regulations.

The image shows a screenshot of the OGE Form 278e, titled "Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Report (OGE Form 278e)". The form is a structured document with several sections:

- Header:** OGE Form 278e (Updated July 2020) (Expires 12/31/21), U.S. Office of Government Ethics, 5 C.F.R. part 2634, Form Approved, OMB No. (3209-0001), UNITED STATES OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS, Preventing Conflicts of Interest in the Executive Branch.
- Form Fields:** Report Type (dropdown), Year (Annual Report only) (dropdown), Date of Appointment/Termination (text).
- Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Report (OGE Form 278e)**
 - Officer Information:** Table with columns: Last Name, First Name, MI, Position, Agency.
 - Other Federal Government Positions Held During the Preceding 12 Months:** Text area.
 - Name of Congressional Committee Considering Nomination (Nominees only):** Text area.
 - Officer's Certification:** "I certify that the statements I have made in this report are true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge." Includes Signature and Date fields.
 - Agency Ethics Official's Opinion:** "On the basis of information contained in this report, I conclude that the filer is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations (subject to any comments below)." Includes Signature and Date fields.
 - Other Review Conducted By:** Includes Signature and Date fields.
 - U.S. Office of Government Ethics Certification (if required):** Includes Signature and Date fields.
 - Comments of Reviewing Officials:** Text area.

Provide guidance on confidential and public financial disclosure program and reporting requirements

In fiscal year 2023, OGE will update both of its key financial disclosure resources: the Public and Confidential Financial Disclosure Guides. The Guides are interactive tools to assist individuals who file or review either the public financial disclosure (OGE Form 278e) or confidential financial disclosure (OGE Form 450). OGE will also provide targeted training as well as workshops for individuals with a role in the public and confidential financial disclosure systems.

Evaluate and respond to requests from agencies to use alternative financial disclosure forms

In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to evaluate and respond to requests from agencies to use alternative financial disclosure forms. Because of special or unique agency circumstances, the alternative procedure approval process is intended to provide an agency with the most effective tools possible for preventing and detecting conflicts of interest. For example, an agency may have separate authority to collect information under OGE-approved supplemental ethics regulations or specific statutory authority.

Strategic Goal 2: Hold the Executive Branch Accountable for Carrying Out an Effective Ethics Program

As the supervising ethics office of the executive branch, OGE is responsible for conducting oversight to ensure that each of the more than 130 executive agencies has a compliant ethics program and that senior leaders comply with their ethical commitments. OGE's work in this area is vital because when an ethics program fails or a senior leader fails to meet their ethical commitments, the executive branch is less able to deliver for the American people.

To achieve its strategic goal of holding the executive branch accountable for carrying out an effective ethics program, OGE has developed three strategic objectives. These objectives are:

- (2.1) Monitor agency compliance with executive branch ethics program requirements;
- (2.2) Monitor senior leaders' compliance with individual ethics responsibilities and commitments; and
- (2.3) Use OGE's authorities to address known or potential ethics risks.

Strategic Objective 2.1: Monitor agency compliance with executive branch ethics program requirements

The executive branch ethics program is decentralized and its success relies on each agency implementing the ethics program requirements established by OGE. OGE regularly conducts oversight of agency compliance with these requirements in order to mitigate ethics program

vulnerabilities at each agency and to identify executive branchwide trends. Without this oversight, systemic problems may multiply and result in ethics program failures. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to conduct reviews of agency ethics programs, and collect data about each agency's program and the overall executive branch ethics program. OGE also will continue to request ethics program data from agencies to address in real time issues that require oversight. Key highlights of OGE's planned work are described below.

Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to ensure that agencies are maintaining compliant ethics programs, leaving systemic problems unaddressed and agency programs vulnerable to ethical lapses and scandal.

Identify program weaknesses (non-compliance) with ethics program requirements on an accelerated review cycle

OGE conducts agency ethics program reviews as a key part of its strategy to maintain high standards of accountability and compliance with applicable ethics requirements throughout the executive branch. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to review agencies on a three-year or four-year risk-based review cycle. This risk-based approach uses data and stakeholder feedback to assist in identifying agencies and specific issues to review.



OGE reviews agency programs to identify and report on the strengths and weaknesses of the programs by evaluating (1) agency compliance with ethics requirements established in relevant laws, regulations, and policies, and (2) ethics-related systems, processes, and procedures for administering the program. Cabinet agencies and other agencies determined to be at high risk, based on OGE's risk assessment, are reviewed every three years. Other agencies are reviewed at least once every four years. If needed, OGE will also conduct real-time consultations and other compliance-based interventions.

OGE examines all elements of an agency ethics program, including: program administration; financial disclosure; education and training; ethics counseling; agency-specific ethics rules on outside employment; conflict remedies; enforcement; and special

government employees. OGE conducts follow-up reviews to evaluate agencies' progress in implementing any recommendations made in OGE's program review reports. To enhance transparency and accountability, OGE continues to publish all program reviews and follow-up program reviews on its website.

Collect, evaluate, publish, and act on ethics program data

As part of OGE's oversight role, agencies are statutorily required to submit annual reports to OGE. OGE collects the data through its Annual Agency Ethics Program

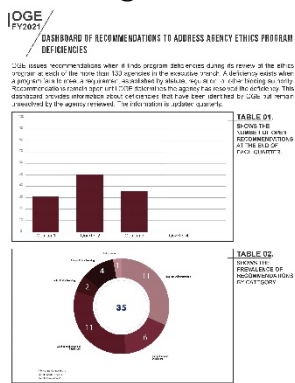


Questionnaire. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to seek 100 percent agency compliance with this requirement and to rigorously review agency responses. OGE will continue to build capacity to analyze trend data to identify areas of concern at individual agencies and across the executive branch. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE also will continue its practice of publishing a summary report of the aggregate data and posting individual agency responses on its website to increase transparency and oversight. Lastly, OGE will continue to use the data to provide training on the results, and to encourage agencies to use the questionnaire both as a self-assessment tool and to benchmark their own agency against similarly situated agencies.

OGE also continues to serve as the repository for biannual reports (1353 Travel Reports) that document payments of travel accepted from non-federal sources. Although OGE has no role in providing guidance on the travel regulations, OGE makes these reports available as required by statute.

Collect, analyze, and publish information on potential ethics violations by executive branch employees

Agencies are required to concurrently notify OGE's Director when referring any



matter to the Department of Justice involving a potential violation of a criminal conflict of interest law by an executive branch employee. OGE tracks and follows up on these referrals to ensure that agencies are considering disciplinary or other corrective action in the event prosecution is declined. While OGE primarily works to give the public reasons to trust their government, OGE also acknowledges when officials violate that trust. For example, OGE annually publishes a survey of ethics-related prosecutions, which shows the consequences for failing to abide by the ethics laws. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to post quarterly dashboards displaying information regarding

referrals to the Department of Justice involving potential violations of the criminal conflict of interest statutes.

Strategic Objective 2.2: Monitor senior leaders' compliance with individual ethics commitments

OGE monitors senior leaders' compliance with their individual ethics commitments to confirm that they keep the promises they made when entering government and continue to serve impartially throughout their government service. Without this oversight, the public cannot be certain that government leaders are acting in their interest. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to monitor agency leaders' compliance with their ethics commitments and provide a second-level review of the most senior officials' financial disclosure reports. Key highlights of OGE's planned work are described below.

Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to ensure that senior leaders have timely complied with their ethics commitments, decreasing public confidence that their decision making is in the best interest of the government and is not being driven by their personal financial interests.
- OGE is unable to timely review and certify public financial disclosure reports, leaving potential conflicts of interest unaddressed and leaders vulnerable to inadvertent criminal violations.

Collect and publish documentation of senior agency leaders' compliance with their individual ethics commitments

| CERTIFICATION OF ETHICS AGREEMENT COMPLIANCE Senate Confirmed Presidential Appointee | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Appointee's Information | a. Appointee's Name: | to be completed by OGE |
| | b. Position Title: | to be completed by OGE |
| | c. Agency: | to be completed by OGE |
| | d. Date Ethics Agreement Signed: | to be completed by OGE |
| | e. Date Confirmed: | to be completed by OGE |
| | f. Due Date for Certification of Ethics Agreement Compliance: | to be completed by OGE |
| 2. Resignations | I completed all of the resignations indicated in my ethics agreement before I assumed the duties of my current government position. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> N/A |
| 3. Divestitures | a. I have completed all of the divestitures indicated in my ethics agreement. I also understand that I may not repurchase these assets during my appointment without OGE's prior approval. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> N/A |
| | b. I have filed a periodic transaction report, or periodic transaction reports, (OGE Form 278-T) to disclose the completion of these agreed upon divestitures. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> N/A Filing Date(s) of OGE Form 278-T Report(s): |
| 4. Managed Accounts | If I have a managed account or use the services of an investment professional, I have notified the manager or professional of the limitations indicated in my ethics agreement. In addition, I am continuing to monitor purchases. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> N/A |
| 5. Interim Receipts | I complied with my interim receipt obligations pending the divestitures required by my ethics agreement. | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> N/A |

OGE continues its efforts to ensure that executive branch leaders appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate (PAS) remain free of conflicts of interest after taking office, by collecting a Certification of Ethics Agreement Compliance from each appointee. This Certification requires each appointee to personally attest that they have complied with the terms of their ethics agreement. In support of transparency and accountability, OGE will continue to post these certifications, as well as notices of late compliance and extensions, on its website. In the event that a PAS official is more than 30 days late in submitting their Certification or submits a Certification that indicates a substantive deficiency in complying with the terms of their ethics agreement, OGE will notify the Senate committee of jurisdiction, as appropriate.

Conduct expert, second-level reviews of senior agency leaders' periodic and annual financial disclosure reports

OGE will continue to collect and review the periodic transaction, annual, and termination reports of PAS filers to ensure that filers continue to comply with their ethics agreements and that agencies timely review these disclosures for conflicts of interest. In fiscal year 2022, OGE closed 1,423 reports. OGE will continue to provide each agency head with a year-end status letter regarding their agency's compliance with financial disclosure responsibilities under the Ethics in Government Act, including the requirement to timely submit reports to OGE and to promptly provide any additional information necessary for OGE to certify the reports. Lastly, OGE will continue to provide the public with timely access to these disclosures on its website, as described on page 42.

Analyze, respond to requests for Certificates of Divestiture and make available to the public those approved/issued by OGE

Executive branch agencies or OGE can direct an executive branch employee to sell, or otherwise divest, an asset in order to comply with a federal conflict of interest statute, regulation, rule, or executive order. If selling the asset will result in a capital gain, certain employees may be eligible for a Certificate of Divestiture (CD). A CD allows an eligible person to defer paying capital gains taxes on property that is sold to comply with conflict of interest requirements. OGE continues to review, on average, 150 requests for CDs and to make those issued available electronically through the Request an Individuals Ethics Document (OGE Form 201) process.

Consult with agencies on waivers for their employees to the primary criminal conflict of interest law, 18 U.S.C. § 208

The primary criminal conflict of interest law, 18 U.S.C. § 208, prohibits employees from participating in certain government matters affecting their own financial interests or the interests of certain persons with whom they have ties outside the government. In some cases, a waiver to these restrictions may be appropriate if the financial interest is "not so substantial as to be deemed likely to affect the integrity of the services which the government may expect from such officer or employee." OGE will continue to consult with agencies prior to the issuance of such waivers and collect copies of final waivers. Lastly, OGE is considering ways to make the public aware of the existence of such waivers.

Strategic Objective 2.3: Use OGE's authorities to address known or potential ethics risks

Although limited by statute,¹ OGE uses its authorities and oversight role to address known or potential ethics risks that come to its attention. Without OGE's inquiry and

¹ The responsibility for investigating alleged wrongdoing and taking disciplinary or other action against an executive branch employee rests with the management of the employing agency, the relevant Inspector General's office, or in

intervention, ethics vulnerabilities may go unaddressed, undermining public confidence and impairing the operations of the executive branch.

Inquire and potentially intervene if an agency ethics program appears to OGE to be out of compliance with ethics requirements

Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to address systemic or individual issues that result in the public losing trust in government operations.

In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to conduct real-time inquiries and reviews in response to data or external sources that may indicate that an agency ethics program is out of compliance. OGE will also formalize its written procedures to establish when OGE conducts such inquiries and reviews.

Inquire and potentially hold the employing agency accountable for action when one of its employees appears to OGE to be out of compliance with ethics requirements

Although OGE’s primary mission is prevention, when OGE is made aware that an employee appears to be out of compliance with ethics requirements, OGE may take one of the following steps: make inquiries to the employee’s agency ethics officials; determine whether the agency is taking sufficient remedial actions; recommend that the agency investigate or take corrective or disciplinary action; and determine whether further investigation is required. If further investigation is required, OGE may recommend that the agency refer the matter to the agency’s Inspector General. After an investigation by the agency and/or an Inspector General, OGE will consider whether any further action is required. If OGE determines the noncompliance was the result of a systemic problem with the management of the agency ethics program, OGE may evaluate the program through an unscheduled program review.

In very rare cases, OGE may directly refer a case to the Inspector General for investigation but only when OGE is in the best position to know the facts. OGE can also use its authority to decline to certify a public financial disclosure report that comes to OGE for review. While OGE can make referrals and decline to certify reports, OGE is statutorily prohibited from making determinations that a past action constitutes a violation of a criminal ethics law.

the case of alleged crimes, the Justice Department. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 13122. OGE cannot issue subpoenas, question witnesses, compel the production of documents, or take action against individuals who refuse to cooperate. When questions arise as to an appointee’s compliance with ethics requirements, the law authorizes OGE only to make a recommendation that the employing agency look into the matter and consider taking appropriate action. If an agency were to decline the recommendation, OGE's only recourse would be to notify the President. *See* 5 U.S.C. . § 13122(f)(2)(A).

Use transparency to hold agency leaders and ethics programs accountable

OGE uses transparency to hold agency leaders and ethics programs accountable. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to publish individuals' ethics documents and agency ethics program documents. This includes oversight correspondence, program review reports, Annual Questionnaire responses, 1353 travel reports, as well as public financial disclosures, ethics agreements, related compliance documents, waivers to the Ethics Pledge, and Certificates of Divestiture. Without this transparency, the public could not as meaningfully oversee the integrity of its government. See page 42 for more information.

Strategic Goal 3: Help Top Executive Branch Officials Resolve Conflicts of Interest and Demonstrate Ethical Leadership

OGE has a vital role in supporting the President's constitutional duty to nominate and appoint officers to the executive branch. OGE helps top executive branch officials resolve conflicts and demonstrate ethical leadership. Ethical culture begins with demonstrated ethical leadership throughout an organization.

To achieve its strategic goal of helping top executive branch officials resolve conflicts of interest and demonstrate ethical leadership, OGE has developed three strategic objectives. These strategic objectives are:

- (3.1) Carry out OGE's statutory role in preparing for and supporting Presidential transitions;
- (3.2) Assist the President and the Senate in the Presidential appointments process; and
- (3.3) Foster ethical leadership in senior officials.

Strategic Objective 3.1: Carry out OGE’s statutory role in preparing for and supporting Presidential transitions

OGE has a unique and important statutory role in supporting Presidential transitions. OGE actively prepares the agency and the executive branchwide program in advance of each Presidential election to be ready to carry out its important Presidential appointments work. Failure to effectively prepare to assist the President and the Senate in the Presidential appointments process can result in critical senior leadership positions remaining vacant for extended periods, putting the safety and security of the nation at risk. Key highlights of OGE’s planned work are described below.

Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to prepare for Presidential transitions, resulting in delayed nominations and agencies without leadership.

Develop comprehensive training plans

To be able to effectively carry out its unique role in the Presidential transition, OGE in fiscal year 2023 will develop comprehensive training plans for ethics officials based on feedback about transition-related training materials collected from ethics officials in 2021. The training will occur throughout fiscal year 2024 and is intended to prepare ethics officials to provide post-employment training to departing employees, review nominee financial disclosure for conflicts and technical completeness, and communicate the importance of ethics to new leaders.

OGE will also ensure it has internal staff capacity to handle the potential surge in volume of nominee financial disclosure reports associated with a Presidential election.

Engage and actively participate on government-wide transition councils

As part of its statutory role under the Presidential Transition Act, OGE will actively participate in the Agency Transition Directors Council. This Council is responsible for coordinating transition activities among the Executive Office of the President, agencies and departments, the campaigns of eligible candidates, and the transition team of the President-elect. OGE will also timely prepare and submit statutorily required information for inclusion in the Transition Directory and reports to Congress. OGE will also participate in events hosted by non-governmental organizations, such as the Partnership for Public Service’s Presidential Transition Service Providers’ Council.

Review disclosures and provide ethics support to Presidential candidates

In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will complete a review for technical completeness of public financial disclosure reports of individuals who declare their candidacy for the Office of the President of the United States.

In fiscal year 2024, OGE will also collaborate with the General Services Administration (GSA) to provide on-site assistance as part of GSA’s responsibility to provide pre-election services and facilities to eligible candidates for President or Vice President. OGE will offer early and ongoing ethics support and training on *INTEGRITY*, OGE’s secure, web-based system for collecting and reviewing public financial disclosure reports.

Support and hold agency ethics officials accountable to prepare for a Presidential election

In fiscal year 2024, OGE will provide significant support to agency ethics officials to ensure that they are prepared for their enhanced responsibilities and the increased workload associated with a Presidential election. OGE will support agency ethics officials’ ability to successfully manage a potential surge in financial disclosure filings related to a high volume of incoming nominees, provide each new agency employee with an initial ethics orientation, and educate a high-volume of officials leaving government about the ethics rules that apply to seeking employment and post-government employment. In addition, OGE will train and collaborate with a variety of external stakeholders. For example, because of its unique role, OGE will provide training to Senate staff on OGE’s role in the nomination process.

Update key resources for campaigns, transition teams, nominee financial disclosure filers, and reviewers

OGE will review and update key resources such as those described below:

| | |
|---|---|
| Transition Guide | The Transition Guide is a resource for Presidential Transition Teams to prepare for the upcoming transition so that top leadership positions can be filled quickly and free from conflicts of interest. |
| Excel Workbook of PAS Nominee Positions Subject to OGE Financial Disclosure Review | OGE publishes the list of Presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed (PAS) positions subject to its review to complement this publication. |
| Quick Guide to PAS Reports OGE Reviews | This Quick Guide describes which PAS reports are or are not subject to OGE review. |
| Ethics Agreement Guide | The Ethics Agreement Guide is an extensive collection of guidance and model language for agency reviewers who draft ethics agreements for PAS nominees. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Nominee Ethics Guide | The Nominee Ethics Guide is a resource for potential PAS nominees. The Guide contains helpful guidance for incoming PAS nominees, including an introduction to the nominee process, guidance on financial disclosure, and an overview of key ethics rules and regulations. |
| Nominee Public Financial Disclosure Review Checklists | OGE developed this collection of public financial disclosure checklists for prospective incoming Presidential nominees who file public financial disclosure reports, as well as for agency reviewers. |
| Public Financial Disclosure Guide | OGE maintains a comprehensive guide to assist filers and reviewers of public financial disclosure reports. |
| <i>INTEGRITY</i> User Guide and Job Aids | This guide is a reference manual for agency ethics officials using <i>INTEGRITY</i> , the web-based system developed by OGE for filing and reviewing executive branch public financial disclosure reports (OGE Form 278e and OGE Form 278-T). |

Prepare for a Potential Agency Review Team

OGE will take the steps required by the Presidential Transition Act to update its succession plan and prepare briefing materials for a potential incoming Agency Review Team. These materials include OGE’s Agency Profile, which provides an overview of the executive branch ethics program and OGE. It also includes detailed information about OGE’s leadership, structure, and components; major functional areas; and management practices.

Strategic Objective 3.2: Assist the President and the Senate in the Presidential appointments process

Following a Presidential election (regardless of whether this results in a new administration or a second term of a sitting administration) and throughout an administration, OGE continuously assists the President and the Senate in the Presidential appointment process. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to collect and thoroughly review the financial disclosure reports of individuals being considered for the highest-level positions in the executive branch: Presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed (PAS) nominees. The reports for these positions are the most complex financial disclosure reports in the government. In connection with the review of these reports, OGE reviewers work with officials at various federal agencies and the White House to resolve potential conflicts of interest through written ethics agreements. Key highlights of OGE's planned work are described below.

Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to review nominee reports and craft ethics agreements, leaving the President unable to timely appoint agency leaders.
- OGE is unable to timely transmit nominee financial disclosure reports to the Senate, delaying hearings and leaving agencies without leaders.
- Potential conflicts of interest may be undetected or inadequately remedied, resulting in loss of public trust and disruption to the government.

Conduct expert, second-level reviews of financial disclosure reports of nominees to the highest-level executive branch positions

In fiscal year 2024, OGE will review for financial conflicts of interest and certify a greatly increased volume of public financial disclosure reports resulting from the 2024 Presidential election, regardless of the outcome of the election. Based on OGE's experience with Presidential elections, prior to and for two years after an election, OGE expects a more than doubling of its workload for reviewing financial disclosure reports of nominees requiring Senate confirmation. The rate of confirmations by the Senate also affects OGE's workload.

OGE will continue to work with agency ethics officials to identify and resolve any conflicts of interest that incoming PAS leaders may have. OGE identifies and resolves potential conflicts of interest of nominees by establishing written ethics agreements with all nominees prior to their confirmations. OGE leverage the process to provide these leaders with an introduction to their new ethical responsibilities as public servants.

Strategic Objective 3.3: Foster ethical leadership in senior officials

Ethical leadership and building an ethical culture are necessary components of the executive branch ethics program because organizational culture is one of the strongest

drivers of employees' behavior. Therefore, OGE continually seeks opportunities to engage senior leaders on the importance of ethics and to sensitize federal managers to their ethics responsibilities.

Communicate directly with agency heads regarding their unique responsibilities under the ethics regulations

The agency head is responsible for, and must exercise personal leadership in, establishing and maintaining an effective agency ethics program and fostering an ethical culture in the agency. OGE will continue its practice of engaging with senior leadership directly by delivering written welcome letters from OGE's Director on the importance of ethical leadership. OGE will also continue providing targeted communications and resources, and leveraging the nominee financial disclosure reports and ethics agreement process to increase understanding of the ethical role and responsibilities of the agency head, as both a leader and as an individual.

Encourage senior leaders' support of the ethics program

OGE will continue its practice of engaging with senior leadership directly and indirectly, through external communications and involvement in nominee financial disclosure reports and ethics agreements, as well as through publications and educational offerings. For example, OGE will continue to provide briefings to new Senior Executive Service members about the importance of ethics and their vital role in maintaining the public's trust. Through these training opportunities, OGE and agencies convey

"One of our most important responsibilities as leaders is to ensure that the public servants we lead understand and are fully committed to our singular duty: to serve the public."

- Welcome Letter to new PAS officials from OGE's Director

the importance of and techniques for leading ethical organizations. Finally, through ongoing research and partnerships with others, OGE will share tools and tactics for senior leaders to use to effectively communicate the ethical expectations for their organizations.

Maintain specific regulatory ethics standards for senior leaders and managers

OGE will maintain specific regulatory ethics standards for senior leaders and managers. Ethical leadership and building an ethical culture are key components of the executive branch ethics program. Culture is one of the strongest drivers of behavior. Ethics officials can take concrete steps to help build an ethical culture and assist leaders in supporting it.

Educate senior leaders and managers on their personal and programmatic ethics obligations

OGE will create and share trainings and tools targeted to senior leaders and managers on their personal and programmatic ethics obligations. Supervisors are responsible for working with agency ethics officials to help resolve conflicts of interest and

enforce government ethics laws and regulations, including those requiring certain employees to file financial disclosure reports. In addition, supervisors are responsible, when requested, for assisting agency ethics officials in evaluating potential conflicts of interest and identifying positions subject to financial disclosure requirements. In fiscal year 2024, OGE will specifically focus on developing materials for supervisors to assist them in meeting their ethics responsibilities.

Strategic Goal 4: Use Transparency to Further the Oversight of the Executive Branch

Transparency plays an essential role in strengthening trust in government. OGE works hard to fulfill this responsibility by making ethics documents available and helping to make the American people aware that there are systems in place and mechanisms available to hold their government accountable. Without this transparency, the public could not meaningfully oversee the integrity of its government.

To achieve its strategic goal of using transparency to further oversight of the executive branch, OGE has developed two strategic objectives:

- (4.1) Make ethics information publicly available; and
- (4.2) Reach a broader array of stakeholders.

Strategic Objective 4.1: Make ethics information publicly available

In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to make ethics documents publicly available. Key highlights of OGE's planned work are described below.

Provide timely access to ethics information and make ethics information easy to locate and understand

Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to timely publish ethics documents, leaving the public unable to verify that leaders are free from conflicts of interest and to hold OGE accountable.

To ensure that ethics information is publicly available and to promote overall transparency in governmental decision-making, in fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to timely post a variety of critical ethics documents on its website. Available documents include agency program review reports, policy guidance, data about each agency's ethics program, documentation of senior leaders' compliance with ethics commitments, and financial disclosure reports of high-level officials.

Improve document release across executive branch

In fiscal year 2023, OGE will also take steps to help ethics officials embrace transparency as an element of the executive branch ethics program. In fiscal year 2022, OGE held its triennial Data Call for Agency Practices. This data call focused on agency practices for fulfilling requests for ethics documents released under the Ethics in Government Act. OGE will use this information to inform any support provided and oversight conducted in connection with the release of ethics documents.

Maintain a responsive Freedom of Information Act program



OGE will maintain its strong FOIA program. In recent years, OGE's volume of FOIA requests has remained higher than its historical average, driven in part by the public's ongoing interest in government ethics issues. To increase transparency and respond

to burgeoning public interest, OGE will continue its practice of proactively posting on its website documents released in response to FOIA requests that are of particular interest to the public.

Strategic Objective 4.2: Reach a broader array of stakeholders

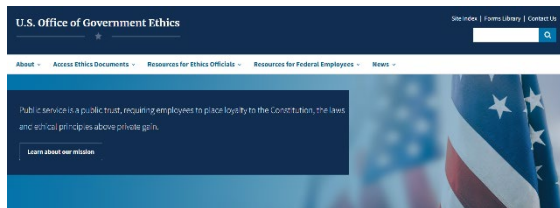
OGE seeks to reach a broader array of stakeholders to raise awareness of the systems and processes in place to detect and resolve conflicts of interest. Without accurate information the public cannot make informed judgments about the integrity of their government. When the public feels that information is being withheld, they may become suspicious, and their confidence in the executive branch may erode.

Consequences of Underresourced Ethics:

- OGE is unable to help the public and the media understand ethics requirements, resulting in less accurate news coverage and unwarranted criticism of government leaders.
- OGE is unable to maintain its website, resulting in less timely and accurate ethics information, confused government officials, and less informed Americans.

In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue its external communications efforts to increase understanding of the executive branch ethics program. Key highlights of OGE's planned work are described below.

Create communications that are accurate, compelling, relevant, and tailored to each target audience



In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to ensure that its communications are accurate, compelling, relevant, and tailored to each targeted audience, as well as delivered through effective communication channels.

These channels include its website, publications, and social media. When appropriate, OGE will also seek input from the public on ways the agency can improve its communications efforts.

Implement new strategies for reaching a broader array of stakeholders

OGE will implement new strategies to reach a broader array of stakeholders, to include targeted outreach to regional news outlets, affinity, and advocacy groups including groups that represent underserved communities. In addition, OGE will use different tools and approaches, such as increasing the use of video content and infographics to visually describe its work in effort to reach broader array of stakeholders.

Respond timely to external requests for information and assistance

Outside interest in the executive branch ethics program has grown significantly in recent years. Inquiries from the public, the press, Congress, and associations require OGE's timely attention and response. If OGE does not respond promptly, they may publish

inaccurate stories, take hasty action, or simply lose confidence in the integrity of the executive branch.

To ensure that these stakeholders have the information they need, when they need it, OGE will timely respond to the expected 1,000 external requests for information and assistance received each year from the public, the press, Congress, and various associations. Through these interactions, OGE aims to increase awareness and understanding of the executive branch ethics laws and regulations, and to disseminate accurate information about the executive branch ethics program. In particular, OGE will further its relationship and information sharing with regional media outlets, industry-focused media, and organizations that represent underserved communities by creating a media kit that describes how and why the media may want to review ethics documents. In addition, OGE will continue to ensure its website content is accurate and up to date to assist these stakeholders.

Participate and collaborate with ethics practitioners across various segments of society

Ethics in government is a shared concern across all segments of society. To succeed, OGE must learn from experts in diverse fields. Therefore, OGE continues to participate as a member of private sector, state, and local ethics organizations such as the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws ([COGEL](#)), in addition to federal interagency groups, such as the [Small Agency Council](#). Through meetings, presentations, and online forums, OGE continues to engage and share information with non-governmental organizations, such as good governance groups, watchdog organizations, the academic community, and professional associations. OGE also conducts outreach and participates with organizations that share common interests related to OGE's mission, such as the [Partnership for Public Service](#). In addition, OGE will continue to collaborate with the most senior ethics practitioners from all three branches of government to discuss issues of common interest and to build valuable relationships among the three branches.

Crosscutting Objective

Crosscutting Objective 5.1: Advance equity in OGE's programs and improve diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in OGE's operations

OGE strives to advance equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. By advancing equity within its programs and operations, OGE can create opportunities to better serve those who have been historically underserved.

Advance equity in OGE's programs

Delivery of Ethics Education – see page 22

Access to Key Ethics Records – see page 42

Procurement – see page 49

OGE has determined that it can most effectively advance equity and remove barriers for underserved communities in three key program areas: (1) ethics education, (2) release of ethics records, and (3) procurement. As described throughout this document, OGE plans to undertake, or has already implemented, a variety of actions to further equity among federal employees, the general public, members of the greater executive branch ethics community, and disadvantaged businesses.

Improve diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in OGE's operations

OGE strives to be a model for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA), so that all employees are treated with dignity and respect. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to take steps to implement the Executive Order on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce and more specifically, to make progress on the five goals outlined in OGE's DEIA Strategic Plan:

- *Recruitment and Hiring:* Expand outreach during the hiring process; mitigate bias in the hiring process; and promote the agency as an organization that supports diversity in its workforce.
- *Professional Development for Ethics Officials:* Increase access to and development opportunities within the ethics profession for federal employees executive branchwide (see page 20).
- *Professional Development for OGE Staff:* Modify the Employee Development Plan (EDP) program to create more uniformity and to better serve employees who are members of underserved communities.
- *Reasonable Accommodations (Disability and Religion):* Ensure employees are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding reasonable accommodations.
- *Safe Workplace and Harassment:* Ensure that the OGE workplace is safe for all employees and free of harassment.

In fiscal year 2024, OGE will develop a second-year plan and take steps to continue to improve outcomes related to DEIA, as well as maintain the progress made in the previous year.

Stewardship Objectives

To effectively lead in ethics, OGE must be a strong, well-run agency in order to carry out its critical mission of preventing conflicts of interests in the executive branch. Therefore, OGE endeavors to be a model agency with regard to its workforce, technology, and compliance. OGE invests in the development, diversity, and retention of its most valuable asset: its staff, who work tirelessly to accomplish the agency's vital mission. OGE leverages technology to amplify its impact by increasing the reach of its limited resources. OGE also strives to maximize every taxpayer dollar entrusted to the agency and to remain compliant with the wide array of requirements applicable to federal agencies.

In support of its mission and strategic goals, OGE has developed three stewardship objectives:

- (6.1) Sustain a high-performing, cross-functional staff;
- (6.2) Leverage technology to increase efficiency and effectiveness; and
- (6.3) Safeguard the government resources entrusted to OGE.

Stewardship Objective 6.1: Sustain a high-performing, cross-functional staff

OGE is able to successfully meet its mission because of its high-performing, cross-functional staff. OGE’s continued attention to the development and retention of staff is of critical importance to the agency’s operations and successful performance of its mission activities.

Accountability and Performance: OGE will continue to track its progress toward annual performance goals by holding quarterly all-hands meetings; conducting a mid-year strategic objective review; holding regular executive and senior staff meetings to discuss agency goals, priorities, and the status of significant program activities; and reviewing the Employee Viewpoint Survey results and holding supervisors accountable for ensuring ongoing communication regarding OGE goals and priorities with all staff.

Employee Recognition: OGE will continue to recognize employees through its awards program, which includes spot awards and year-end performance bonuses. In fiscal year 2020, OGE updated its spot award program to ensure more awards are granted throughout the year and that they are based on a set of criteria. In addition, OGE will continue its staff-run Employee Recognition Group, which provides management with new, non-monetary ways to recognize staff based on employee input. OGE also will continue to hold its annual employee recognition event. Lastly, OGE will conduct a survey and focus groups with staff to identify additional recognition opportunities.

Workforce Development: OGE is committed to meeting its employees’ professional development needs by providing significant education and training opportunities, and providing employees with dedicated time and resources to pursue development. OGE will continue to incorporate the requirements of the Employee Development Plan (EDP) into employees’ performance standards. In this way, OGE confirms its commitment to continuous learning and employee professional development. OGE also will continue to identify agency knowledge and skills gaps, and will use the EDP to train employees to fill those gaps. As part of its DEIA efforts, OGE will review the EDP process and will improve it, as needed.

In addition, OGE will continue to provide internal and external training and development opportunities to its employees at all levels, as resources permit. These actions, collectively, will ensure the ability of OGE and its employees to offer the highest quality products and services to its stakeholders.

| OGE EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PLAN | | | | |
|--|---|---|------|--|
| Employee's Last Name | First Name, MI | | | |
| Division and Branch | Title | | | |
| Period Covered | Phone | Signature | Date | |
| Employee's Commitment | I agree to carry out the planned activities and participate in the measurement of progress toward the objective(s), which will inform the continuous learning requirements of my performance standards. | | | |
| Other Employee Information or Comments | | | | |
| Supervisor Name | Phone | Signature | Date | |
| Supervisor's Commitment | I have agreed to these learning objectives and will support and assist the employee in attaining them. | | | |
| A. Learning Objective(s) | | | | |
| B. Reference to Agency Objectives | Strategic Objective 1.1- Provide expert guidance and support to stakeholders | | | |
| | Strategic Objective 1.2- Strengthen the expertise of officials who are integral to the executive branch ethics program | | | |
| | Strategic Objective 1.3- Continuously refine ethics policy and issue interpretive guidance | | | |
| Identify the strategic objective(s) advanced by the planned activities. | Strategic Objective 2.1- Monitor agency compliance with executive branch ethics program requirements | | | |
| | Strategic Objective 2.2- Monitor senior leaders' compliance with individual ethics commitments | | | |
| | Strategic Objective 3.1- Prepare for a Presidential transition | | | |
| Identify the division or branch objective(s) advanced by the planned activities. | Strategic Objective 3.2- Provide assistance to the President and Senate in the Presidential appointment process | | | |
| | Strategic Objective 4.1- Inform the public about OGE and the executive branch ethics program | | | |
| | Strategic Objective 4.2- Make ethics information publicly available | | | |
| Identify the division or branch objective(s) advanced by the planned activities. | Management Objective 5.1- Sustain a strong culture of performance management | | | |
| | Management Objective 5.2 - Strengthen organizational compliance and fiscal stewardship | Management Objective 5.3 - Continuously enhance OGE's information systems and processes | | |
| | Division or Branch Objective(s) Targeted | | | |

Stewardship Objective 6.2: Leverage technology to increase efficiency and effectiveness

OGE leverages technology to increase its efficiency and effectiveness in all aspects of its work. Without strong, secure information systems and processes, the agency cannot carry out its executive branchwide mandates, operate effectively, or efficiently perform its mission-critical activities.

Implement a comprehensive IT replacement

In fiscal year 2022, OGE reached the end of the four-year life-cycle for its IT infrastructure and associated equipment. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will implement a comprehensive replacement of its IT infrastructure by migrating to a secure, FedRAMP-certified government cloud environment.

Enhance the functionality of information technology tools, resources, and systems

OGE has developed numerous applications that have improved agency and program efficiency, increased data access, enhanced management practices, and strengthened compliance activities. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to devote resources to applications that support major mission programs, such as the Desk Officer Program, the Annual Questionnaire, the records management program, the privacy program, FOIA, and financial disclosure, as well as those that support internal operations, such as requisition processing, budget formulation, and inventory control, including the tracking of IT equipment.

Maintain and refine OGE's website

OGE's website is the agency's main communication tool and the most valuable resource for OGE's stakeholders, including agency ethics officials, the media, and the general public. OGE will continue to maintain and refine its website, which OGE redesigned in fiscal year 2020, in conformance with the IDEA Act. OGE leveraged the redesign to improve public access to ethics documents, ethics officials' access to key resources needed to perform their jobs, and to strengthen IT security. In fiscal year 2023, OGE will continue to refine its website. In addition, OGE will update its Public Financial Disclosure Guide in conformance with the IDEA Act.

Stewardship Objective 6.3: Safeguard the government resources entrusted to OGE

In addition to its mission work, OGE conducts its agency operations following the principle that "public service is a public trust." OGE takes seriously its compliance with government-wide directives and their important policy objectives, including OGE carefully safeguarding the government resources entrusted to the agency.

Fiscal stewardship: OGE will remain a good steward of taxpayer dollars, as reflected by its record of strong financial management. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to pursue efficiencies, such as the economies of scale received from using shared service centers for a significant number of support services, and OGE cost-cutting initiatives. For example, OGE uses in-house information technology specialists to design, develop, and create internal applications, significantly increasing staff efficiency and reducing contracting costs. In addition, OGE leverages its existing low-cost phone contract to access free virtual collaboration and meeting tools to meet the demands of its hybrid workforce.

Internal controls: OGE will continue to maintain effective internal controls over its financial reporting, including those needed to prepare and fairly present financial statements that are free from material misstatements. OGE will continue to monitor and evaluate its internal controls, constantly seeking improved methods and increased accountability to guard against potentially fraudulent practices.

Tracking purchases, inventory, and procurement: Using a dedicated application on its internal network, OGE will continue to maintain its effective process for approving requisitions, which includes additional internal controls and tracking to ensure that OGE remains fiscally responsible. With regard to procurement, OGE will continue to ensure a significant percentage of its purchases are made from disadvantaged businesses to increase equity among the historically underserved. OGE also will continue to carefully track its property inventory to protect against loss.

Independent audit: OGE will continue to undergo independent audits of its financial statements to ensure that they are presented fairly in all material respects, and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. OGE will continue to ensure that there are no material weaknesses in internal controls over financial reporting and that OGE continues to comply with applicable laws, regulations, and contracts.

Facilities Management: GSA's current lease for OGE's space ends February 2024. OGE is working with GSA to review its current space needs and will work with them on the negotiation of a new lease. Depending on the outcome of the lease negotiations, OGE will incur significant costs and its work could be disrupted by being forced to relocate.

Cybersecurity: In accordance with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) of 2014, OGE's security program will continue to provide mandatory annual cybersecurity awareness training; review weekly network perimeter scans performed by the Department of Homeland Security; conduct and review monthly scans of the internal OGE network; procure and participate in annual security assessment reviews conducted by accredited independent auditors using FISMA CIO and FISMA IG metrics; and prepare for *INTEGRITY's* annual security assessment. OGE will also continue to take steps to comply with the Executive Order on Improving the Nation's Cybersecurity and subsequent guidance. This work is critical to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of OGE's information and information systems, and to protect against unauthorized access and use.

Included below is a table with OGE's fiscal year 2024 cybersecurity submission broken out using the National Institute of Standards and Technology categories (Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover).

| NIST Framework/Capability | FY2024 Submission (in 000s) | Purpose/Outcome |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Identify - Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation (CDM) | \$70 | Implement and maintain the tools associated with the CDM program. |
| Identify - Non-CDM Information Security Continuous Monitoring | \$16 | Implement and maintain ISCM capabilities not provided through CDM Phase 1. |
| Identify - Mobile Device Management | \$6 | Manage the security of government owned mobile devices and ensuring that mobile devices connecting to Federal networks are secure. |
| Identify - Authorization and Policy | \$12 | Attainment and renew authorizations to operate (ATOs) for agency information systems. |
| Protect - Trusted Internet Connections | \$40 | Acquire and maintain Managed Trusted Internet Protocol Services (MTIPS) provider. |
| Protect - Credentialing and Access Management | \$20 | Acquire and maintain Personal Identity Verification (PIV) cards or other tokens to authenticate system users. |
| Protect - Insider Threat | \$4 | Establish and maintain an Insider Threat Program. |
| Protect - System Security Testing and Analysis | \$17 | Assess the vulnerability of an enterprise by multiple means of vulnerability scanning and penetration testing, including automated penetration testing. |
| Protect - Security Training | \$20 | Create and utilize cybersecurity awareness and training materials, including tools, design, and training completion tracking. |
| Protect - Cloud Security | \$3 | Ensure sufficient security of systems and information that have been moved to cloud-based platforms. |
| Protect - Data Safeguarding | \$20 | Safeguard data at rest. |
| Protect - Secure Data Transmission | \$20 | Safeguard data in motion. |
| Detect - Anti-Phishing and Malware Defense | \$36 | Implement technologies and processes that reduce the risk of malware, both generally and that which may be introduced through email and social engineering. |
| Detect - Data Loss Prevention | \$2 | Implement Data Loss Prevention (DLP) technology. |
| Detect - Intrusion Prevention | \$10 | Implement intrusion prevention technology. |

| NIST Framework/Capability | FY2024 Submission (in 000s) | Purpose/Outcome |
|--|--|--|
| Respond - Incident Management and Response | \$10 | Respond to and manage information security incidents. |
| Respond - Prosecution and Investigation of Cyber Intrusions | \$3 | Gather evidence in support of investigating and prosecuting cyber intrusions. |
| Recover - Disaster Recovery | \$12 | Return a system or systems to operating capability following a disaster. |
| Recover - Incident Recovery | \$2 | Return a system or systems to operating capability following a cyber-related incident. |
| Recover - Incident Notification | \$9 | Provide public/internal notifications to potentially impacted persons following cybersecurity incidents involving the possible loss of PII. |
| Identify - Data Categorization and Classification | \$5 | Implement security monitoring and enforcement rules based on existing and newly developed data categorization and "tags" within enterprise datasets and documents |
| Identify - Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM) and Acquisitions Management | \$5 | Establish the program and to operate and maintain the Information & Communications Technology (ICT) SCRM and Acquisitions management program |
| Protect - Zero Trust Network Architecture | \$15 | Moving the organization's enterprise architecture towards an end state where every distinct application they run is inside its own perimeter (or is itself its own perimeter), and is treated as internet-accessible |
| Protect - Security Log Management | \$7 | Planning, processing, implementing, and improving log management. |
| Protect - Secure Patch Management | \$5 | Planning, implementing, and integrating patch management processes. |
| Detect - Endpoint Detection and Response | No cost to OGE. EDR is paid for by DHS as part of the CDM Program. | Implement EDR capabilities, this includes gap-filling activities and/or standing up the capability. |
| M-22-16 - Cyber Human Capital | \$10 | |
| M-22-16 - Securing Infrastructure Investments | 0 | |
| M-22-16 - Sector Risk Management Agency (SRMA) | 0 | |

Compliance: OGE will continue to strive to remain compliant with the wide array of requirements applicable to federal agencies. Key highlights of OGE's planned work are described below.

Data: OGE will continue to ensure the agency's compliance with the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act. OGE will expand its data activities by building its data governance around key systems, providing data skills training, and maintaining a data inventory. OGE will continue to actively participate in the Chief Data Officers Council. OGE will also continue to prioritize the use of data in its decision making, including in the development of legal advisories and determining OGE staffing associated with work resulting from the Presidential election.

Privacy: OGE will continue to ensure the agency's compliance with the Privacy Act, as well as privacy requirements established by OMB. In fiscal years 2023 and 2024, OGE will continue to protect privacy by reviewing proposed IT systems and projects that collect and manage privacy protected information, including any related to planned legal expense fund regulations. OGE also will comply by recertifying existing IT systems and projects, reviewing Privacy Threshold Analyses, and preparing and updating privacy-related documents, such as Systems of Records Notices and Privacy Impact Assessments. OGE will continue to review and update privacy controls that are required as part of the annual security reviews for OGE's network and *INTEGRITY*. In addition, OGE will continue to actively participate in government-wide privacy councils and to provide annual privacy training and role-based privacy training to OGE staff and contractors.

Records: OGE will maintain a robust records program in fiscal years 2023 and 2024. OGE will continue to work with NARA to refine and update existing records schedules, as well as to create schedules for new records, such as those that will be generated as a result of the new legal expense fund regulations. OGE will also continue to work toward digitizing all agency records, as required by NARA. In addition to focusing on employee training, OGE will also continue to update its processes and create standard operating procedures that facilitate good records management practices.

Section IV – Conclusion

The important work OGE does is critical to the public’s confidence in executive branch officials and operations. OGE simply cannot carry out its crucial work without the necessary resources.

OGE requires its full requested funding of \$23,037,000 in fiscal year 2024 to undertake its important mission of providing leadership and oversight to prevent and resolve conflicts of interest in the executive branch. An underresourced OGE creates significant risk, undermines the integrity of government operations, and further strains public confidence. Funding at the requested level will allow OGE to make mission-critical investments in expert staff, ensure operational stability for *INTEGRITY*, prepare for the Presidential election, and advance the President’s management priorities. These investments are critical to OGE’s ability to continue to successfully undertake its vital work. Cutting or underfunding OGE’s budget would increase risk to the executive branch ethics program operations.

For all of the vital reasons outlined here and in its justification, OGE urges the approval of its request for \$23,037,000 to fund the agency in fiscal year 2024.

Section V – Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024 Performance Goals

| Strategic Goal I: Advance a Strong, <u>Consistent</u> Executive Branch Ethics Program | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| Strategic Objectives | Performance Goals | Fiscal Year 2023 Target | Fiscal Year 2024 Target |
| 1.1: Provide expert guidance and support to ethics officials and other stakeholders | Ethics officials are aware of the resources available to support them in performing their ethics job duties. | Indicators: % of ethics officials on the listserv #of listserv messages sent | Indicators: % of ethics officials on the listserv # of listserv messages sent |
| | OGE Desk Officer assistance helps officials perform their ethics job duties. | 80% | 80% |
| 1.2: Strengthen the expertise of officials who are integral to the executive branch ethics program | In lieu of performance goals, OGE tracks a variety of milestones | Milestones: Deliver one Skill Builder and one Accelerated Certification in Ethics | Milestone: Review and refine, if needed, the Accelerated Certification in Ethics |
| | After participating in an OGE event, ethics officials believe they can more effectively perform their ethics job duties. | 80% | 80% |
| 1.3: Continuously refine ethics policy and issue interpretive guidance | Legal and Program Advisories help officials perform their ethics job duties. | 80% | 80% |
| | In lieu of performance goals, OGE tracks a variety of milestones. | Milestone: Complete an in-depth review of 5 CFR 2640 | Milestone: OGE will take steps necessary to publish the final rule (SOC Modernization) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| 1.4: Lead the financial disclosure program and provide the executive branch e-filing system, <i>Integrity</i> | Agency administrators are satisfied with the support provided by OGE on <i>Integrity</i> , its electronic public financial disclosure filing system. | 80% | 80% |
| | Continuously update and renew materials | Milestones: Update OGE Form 450 and OGE Form 278e Guides | Milestone: Publish an updated Ethics Agreement Guide (Guide to Drafting Nominee Ethics Agreements) |
| | OGE addresses all security reviewing findings. | Address all security review findings | Address all security review findings |
| | Financial disclosure resources provided by OGE (e.g., Confidential Financial Disclosure Guide, Financial Disclosure Playlist, etc.) assist reviewers in the review of financial disclosure reports. | 80% | 80% |
| Strategic Goal II: Hold the Executive Branch Accountable for Carrying Out an Effective Ethics Program | | | |
| Strategic Objectives | Performance Goals | Fiscal Year 2023 Target | Fiscal Year 2024 Target |
| 2.1: Monitor agency compliance with executive branch ethics program requirements | Agency ethics programs are reviewed within established time frames. | 3 Year cycle – 32 agencies 4 Year cycle – 10 agencies | 3 Year cycle – 27 agencies 4 Year cycle – 15 agencies |

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| 2.1: Monitor agency compliance with executive branch ethics program requirements | In cases in which OGE identifies a program weakness, OGE’s program review results in improvements in the agency’s ethics program. | 80% | 80% |
| 2.2: Monitor senior leaders’ compliance with individual ethics responsibilities and commitments | Public financial disclosure reports (new entrant, annual, termination, and transaction) required to be submitted to OGE for second-level review are closed within established time frames. | 90% | 90% |
| Strategic Goal III: Help Top Executive Branch Officials Resolve Conflicts of Interest and Demonstrate Ethical Leadership | | | |
| Strategic Objectives | Performance Goals | Fiscal Year 2023 Target | Fiscal Year 2024 Target |
| 3.1: Carry out OGE’s statutory role in preparing for and supporting Presidential transitions | In lieu of performance goals, OGE tracks a variety of milestones. | <p style="text-align: center;">Milestones:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Complete an OGE staffing plan</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Develop a training plan for OGE staff and ethics officials</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Milestones:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Implement the training plan for OGE staff and ethics officials</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Update the Transition Guide</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Update the Nominee Ethics Guide and Appendix</p> |

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| 3.2: Assist the President and the Senate in the presidential appointment process | Initial comments on draft financial disclosure reports of presidential nominees for Senate-confirmed appointments are provided to the agency within established time frames. | 90% | 90% |
| | Final financial disclosure reports of presidential nominees for Senate-confirmed appointments are certified by OGE within established time frames. | 90% | 90% |
| 3.3: Foster ethical leadership in senior officials | In lieu of performance goals, OGE tracks a variety of indicators. | Indicators: # of communications to senior officials # of senior officials that received a communication | Indicators: # of communications to senior officials # of senior officials that received a communication |
| Strategic Goal IV: Use Transparency to Further Oversight of the Executive Branch | | | |
| Strategic Objectives | Performance Goals | Fiscal Year 2023 Target | Fiscal Year 2024 Target |
| 4.1: Make ethics information publicly available | In lieu of performance goals, OGE tracks a variety of indicators. | Indicators: # of ethics documents requested Milestone: Make one additional dataset available on OGE's website | Indicators: # of ethics documents requested Milestone: Make one additional dataset available on OGE's website |

| 4.2: Reach a broader array of stakeholders | In lieu of performance goals, OGE tracks a variety of indicators | Indicators: # of website pageviews # of inquiries from the publics # of outreach/feedback activities OGE's Twitter account engagement rate | Indicators: # of website pageviews # of inquiries from the publics # of outreach/feedback activities OGE's Twitter account engagement rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| Crosscutting Objective | | | |
| Cross-cutting Objective | Performance Goal | Fiscal Year 2023 Target | Fiscal Year 2024 Target |
| 5.1: Advance equity in OGE's programs and operations | In lieu of performance goals, OGE tracks a variety of milestones. | <i>Milestones:</i> Make progress on a majority of items in OGE's Equity Action Plan Make progress on a majority of items in OGE's DEIA Strategic Plan | <i>Milestones:</i> Make progress on a majority of items in OGE's Equity Action Plan Make progress on a majority of items in OGE's DEIA Strategic Plan |
| Stewardship Objectives | | | |
| Stewardship Objectives | Performance Goals | Fiscal Year 2023 Target | Fiscal Year 2024 Target |
| 6.1: Sustain a high-performing, cross-functional staff | OGE's Employee Engagement Index score on the Employee Viewpoint Survey. | 80% | 80% |
| 5.2: Leverage technology to increase efficiency and effectiveness | In lieu of performance goals, OGE tracks a milestone. | <i>Milestone:</i> Complete migration of the OGE Network to a FedRAMP-certified cloud environment | <i>Milestone:</i> Develop essential SOPs/user support resources for network operations in a cloud environment |
| 6.3: Safeguard the government | Results of annual financial audit | An unqualified opinion | An unqualified opinion |

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| resources entrusted to OGE | Results of Cybersecurity Risk Management Assessment. | Managing risk for majority of categories | Managing risk for majority of categories |
| | Percentage of OGE employees that take required training (i.e., records, security, privacy, ethics). | 90% | 90% |