

October 18, 2016
PA-16-07

PROGRAM ADVISORY

TO: Designated Agency Ethics Officials

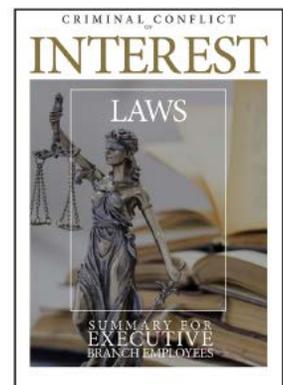
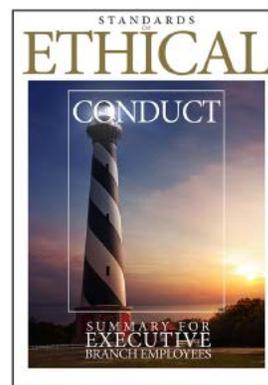
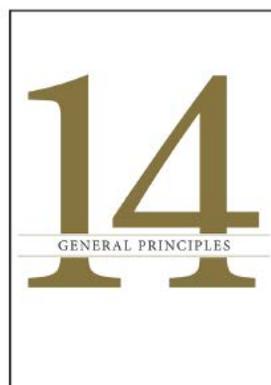
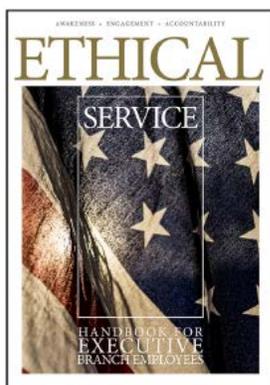
FROM: Walter M. Shaub, Jr.
Director

SUBJECT: Release of New Education Products

Ethics training is a critical function of the executive branch ethics program. The training that agency ethics officials provide gives employees the tools they need to perform the government's work with integrity. In support of this function, the U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) is releasing several new education products. Agency ethics officials can use these products to satisfy the regulatory training requirements and can tailor the content to meet their agencies' needs.

1. New Employees

For new employees, OGE has developed four booklets: *Ethical Service*, *Fourteen General Principles*, *Standards of Ethical Conduct*, and *Conflict of Interest Laws*.¹



OGE is releasing the first booklet, *Ethical Service*, as a PDF with data fields for editing the content, so that agency ethics officials can tailor it to meet the needs of their agencies' mission and employees. This booklet provides new employees with an introduction to the

¹ OGE has posted these booklets on its website at the following address:
<https://www.oge.gov/web/oge.nsf/Resources/Ethics+Training+Tools+and+Templates>.

fundamental ethical obligations of public service. The content is organized around three “expectations” of ethical service: awareness, engagement, and accountability. The booklet includes space for agency-specific content, and OGE encourages agencies to edit the booklet in order to highlight key ethics issues relevant to the work that their employees perform.²

As their titles indicate, the other three booklets address substantive government ethics. One booklet contains the 14 General Principles articulated in Executive Order 12674 of April 12, 1989 (as modified by E.O. 12731), and later codified at 5 C.F.R. § 2635.101. Another contains a summary of the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch (Standards of Conduct) at 5 C.F.R. part 2635. The remaining booklet contains a summary of the criminal conflict of interest laws at 18 U.S.C. §§ 202-209. When used in conjunction with *Ethical Service*, these booklets provide new employees with the resources they need to carry out their fundamental government ethics responsibilities. Agency ethics officials can use these materials in the training they provide to new employees.

2. Other Employees

OGE has created a kit that agency ethics officials can use for annual ethics training. The kit includes: a training booklet, a library of annual ethics training scenarios, and a “how to” series of videos designed to prepare agency ethics officials to present the training scenarios.³

The training booklet is designed to be used with the training scenarios, but it can be used in connection with other types of ethics training that agency ethics officials present. The booklet provides plain English summaries of the Standards of Conduct and the conflict of interest statutes. Agency ethics officials can distribute this booklet when conducting training, and they can post a PDF copy of the booklet on their agencies’ intranet or ethics office website.



The training scenarios are designed to help employees build the skills they will need to identify ethics issues and seek help from agency ethics officials. The issues arise in these training scenarios in much the same way they tend to arise in the real world: subtly and often without clear delineation. With the help of agency ethics officials, employees learn to identify hidden

² OGE has posted instructions for editing these booklets on its website at the following address: [https://www.oge.gov/Web/OGE.nsf/0/A3B8DE41CAC400FB8525804B0056B290/\\$FILE/Guide%20for%20Customizing%20ALL%20Booklets%20Electronic.pdf](https://www.oge.gov/Web/OGE.nsf/0/A3B8DE41CAC400FB8525804B0056B290/$FILE/Guide%20for%20Customizing%20ALL%20Booklets%20Electronic.pdf).

³ OGE has posted these materials on its website at the following address: <https://www.oge.gov/web/oge.nsf/Resources/Ethics+Training+Tools+and+Templates>.

ethics issues packed densely into the various circumstances that the seemingly simple scenarios describe. In addition, OGE's videos can help ethics officials understand how to facilitate group discussions of these scenarios, as an effective technique for preparing employees to address similar issues on their own. Feedback from ethics officials and employees who have used these scenarios indicates that they have found them to be both realistic and engaging.

The scenarios are most effective when they mirror the types of situations that arise in executive branch agencies. Agency ethics officials are encouraged to tailor the scenarios as much as possible to the types of circumstances that their agencies' employees are likely to confront. OGE's Desk Officers and training team are available to help agency ethics officials in tailoring these scenarios or in developing new scenarios. In addition, OGE is committed to expanding the library of training scenarios available to ethics officials and to broadening the variety of circumstances they address. Ethics officials are encouraged to contribute to this library by sending any scenarios they create to Patrick Shepherd at pshephe@oge.gov.