

# THE VOICE OF ETHICS

A Publication of the Ohio Ethics Commission

2018 Quarter 1

A Great Year



2018

For Training!

**One of the primary responsibilities of the Ohio Ethics Commission is to provide educational opportunities regarding the Ohio Ethics Law. Each year, we strive to make these training sessions convenient, informative, and even a little fun! Our training schedule for 2018 includes both on-site and electronic training opportunities:**



## On-Site Training

The Ohio Ethics Commission often receives very positive feedback for our interactive and interesting “live” ethics education sessions. These courses are conducted around the state and are especially helpful by those who prefer direct interaction and an opportunity to ask questions. These presentations are provided for state and local governments and vary from 30 minute keynote addresses to half-day sessions.

These trainings are provided free of charge and as a result, the Ethics Commission reserves travel for speeches with larger groups. If your office/agency is outside the Columbus area, we request a minimum of 75 attendees to conduct a live presentation. To schedule a speaker or to discuss other appropriate options, please contact Susan Willeke at (614) 466- 7090 or [susan.willeke@ethics.ohio.gov](mailto:susan.willeke@ethics.ohio.gov).

## 2018 E-Course: “The Ohio Ethics Law: Upholding Trust in Government”



Tens of thousands of state and local government officials and employees have discovered the cost-effective and interactive e-learning opportunities provided by the Ohio Ethics Commission! The 2018 e-course, “The Ohio Ethics Law: Upholding Trust in Government” is our newest electronic creation to provide an overview of the Ethics Law while offering current and relevant examples. The course is available on our website and takes approximately 70 minutes to complete. Proof of course completion is provided when the learner prints or saves the certificate at the end of the course.

Note for state employees and officials: this e-course meets the annual training requirement as outlined in the Governor’s Ethics Executive Order 2011 - 03K. We are also pleased to announce to attorneys that this year’s e-course was once again approved for one general hour of self-study CLE!

**2018 E-Course**

# Webinars



In 2017, the Commission conducted eleven live webinars with more than 1,800 attendees from all across Ohio. The webinars provide an overview of the Ohio Ethics Law and also meet the annual training requirement for state officials and employees. The webinars have been approved for 1 hour of general CLE credit for attorneys.

The 2018 webinars will occur on the following dates:

Tuesday, February 20 - 1 pm

Wednesday, March 14 - 10 am

Thursday, April 19 - 11 am

Tuesday, May 15 - 2 pm

Monday, June 18 - 10 am

Wednesday, July 18 - 11 am

Thursday, August 16 - 10 am

Friday, September 14 - 10 am

Tuesday, October 16 - 1 pm

Thursday, November 15 - 11 am

Wednesday, December 19 - 10 am

[Webinar Registration](#)



# Regional Sessions

For those agencies that may not be able to host a training session but have staff or board members who prefer a “live” classroom setting, we provide “Regional Trainings” around the state. These classes are open to all public officials and employees who would like to know more about the Ohio Ethics Law. All state, county, city, township, and village officials and employees are welcome to attend!

For state officials and employees, these classes fulfill your Ethics Law training requirement under the Governor’s Executive Order. As an added bonus for public practice attorneys, we have requested from the Ohio Supreme Court 1.5 general CLE hours.

Please join us for these free and interactive discussions on the Ohio Ethics Law!

Perrysburg

April 27 - 10 am

Columbus

May 10 - 10 am

Cleveland

June 22 - 10 am

Cincinnati

September 21 - 10 am

Columbus

October 23 - 10 am

Columbus

December 18 - 10 am

[Regional Session Information](#)

# A Review of 2017 at the Ohio Ethics Commission!

## Advisory Opinions

One of the statutory roles of the Ohio Ethics Commission is to provide guidance and advice about potential conflicts of interest under the law. The Commission understands that a firm grasp of the law leads to fewer violations which protects both the person seeking guidance as well as all Ohio taxpayers.



The Commission's two staff Advisory Attorneys had another very busy year as they responded to:

198 written requests for opinions

More than 2,600 e-mails from people seeking guidance

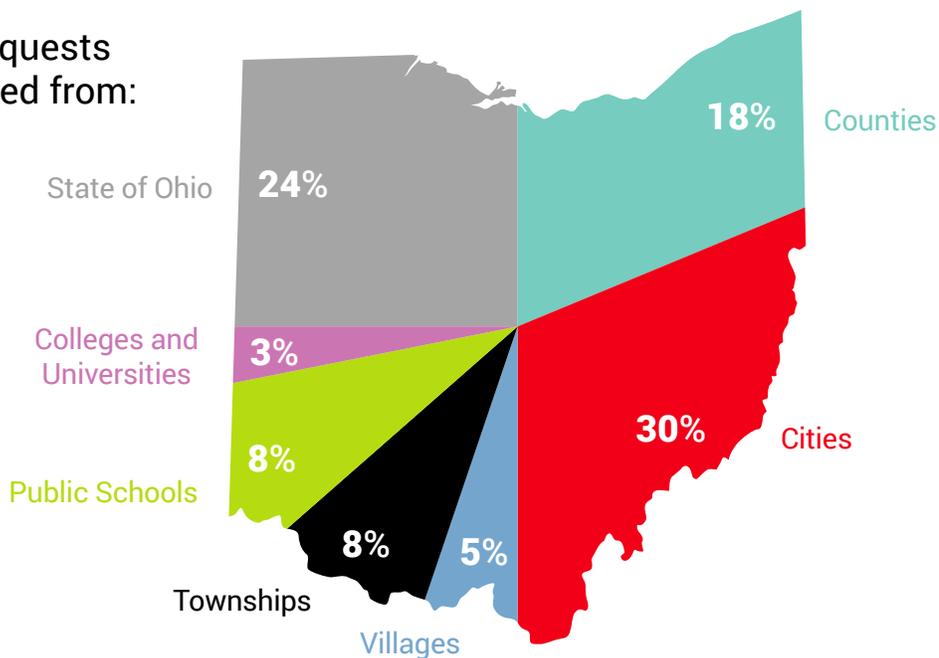
More than 2,000 telephone inquiries seeking guidance

Common requests for information included questions about:

Financial Disclosure  
Outside Employment  
Nepotism

Gifts  
Prizes  
Revolving Door

Advisory requests were received from:



You are welcome to seek similar guidance should you ever have questions under the Ohio Ethics Law. [Click here](#) for more information.

# Ethics Education

The Education and Training staff at the Ohio Ethics Commission also had a busy 2017 conducting educational outreach designed to help public officials and employees understand and comply with the law.

Eleven live webinars throughout the year attracted more than 1,800 on-line learners. For those desiring a classroom training, the Commission presented 207 “live” training across the state attended by almost 16,000 people! If your office would be interested in having a speaker present a course regarding the Ethics Law in your office, please visit [this page](#) of our website for more information.

Finally, tens of thousands of public officials and employees again found the Commission’s online learning opportunities informative, convenient, and cost-effective. The 2017 e-course: “The Ohio Ethics Law: It’s Everybody’s Business!” provided an overview of the Ohio Ethics Law and was available on-demand at no cost to the user.

**11 webinars**  
with more than  
**1,800 learners**

**207 live sessions**  
with almost  
**16,000 attendees**

**2017 e-course**  
taken by more than  
**20,000 users**

**Interested in training opportunities in 2018?  
See the related article in this newsletter!**

# Financial Disclosure



Ohio’s law requires many public officials and employees to file personal financial disclosure statements each year. The Commission administers the financial disclosure requirement for those officials and employees which included receiving more than 10,500 statements in 2017 with 86 percent of these filers using the Commission’s on-line filing system.

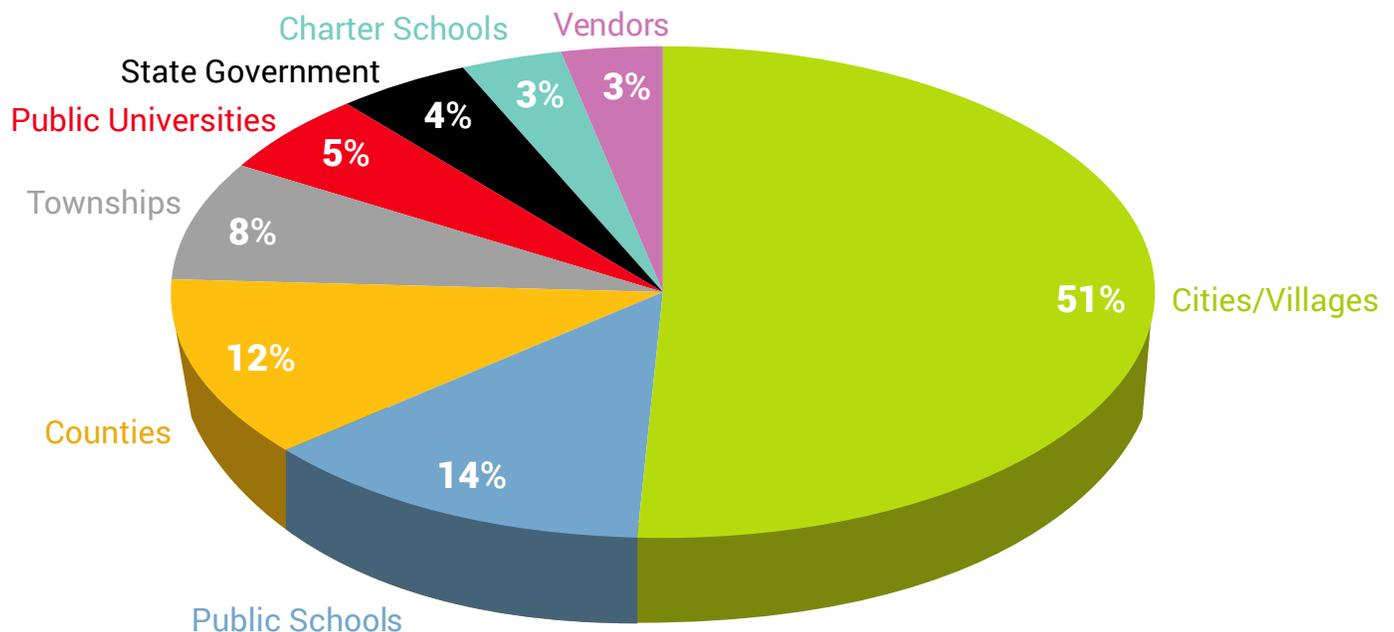
If you are a new financial disclosure filer, [click here](#) to visit our web site for information on requirements and how to use the on-line filing system.

# Investigations

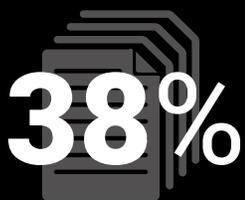
The Ohio Ethics Commission is also statutorily charged with investigating alleged violations of the Ethics Law and refers cases supported by substantial evidence for prosecution or alternative resolution.

In 2017, there was a total of 158 cases investigated with Investigative Staff responding to 911 telephone investigative inquiries and processing 421 information requests or allegations of wrongdoing. The Commission formally opened 56 new investigations in 2017 with 67 being closed, including settlement and censure cases. (Some of the case closures were carried over from 2016.)

## Individuals from these types of entities were investigated:



## Most common investigations involved:



Public Contracts  
(Including Nepotism)



Gifts/Prizes/  
Donations



Sales of Goods  
and Services



Outside Businesses/  
Employment

# CLE Announced!



Attention public practice attorneys: the Ohio Ethics Commission will once again join forces with the Ohio Board of Professional Conduct to offer free Continuing Legal Education (CLE) courses! Three classes for 2018 (two in Columbus and one in Cincinnati) are approved for 2.5 professional conduct hours.

We have already posted the details on our website and sent an announcement to all attorneys on our electronic notification list. If you would like your e-mail to be included in that list, please visit the following link and enter your contact information.

[Click here](#) to register for a CLE class and subscribe to The Ohio Ethics Commission's CLE e-mail notification list.



# MAKE THE VOICE OF ETHICS LOUDER!

If you are a regular subscriber to “The Voice of Ethics” and find it helpful, please forward this issue to others in public service! Because the Ohio Ethics Commission prefers conducting education instead of investigations, we provide this quarterly newsletter and other educational outreach and advice to reduce violations of the law. Please join us in this effort by spreading the word through this newsletter.

If this newsletter was forwarded to you, you can sign up to receive it electronically each quarter by submitting your e-mail address [here](#).

Ideas for future articles? Feedback on our newsletters? We’d love to hear it!  
Email Susan Willeke at [susan.willeke@ethics.ohio.gov](mailto:susan.willeke@ethics.ohio.gov).



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