

Ethics Code update narrative:

A key aim now is to encourage more informal inquiries to the Board and to clarify certain sections based on our practical experience.

This should be followed by a new Plain English Guide. Our [original guide](#) focused on the transition.

Substantive Recommendations:

- § 8-5 Disclosure of Interest. Board members would disclose financial conflicts of interest in the minutes; employees would disclose to their supervisors. The requirement that the BOE collect disclosure forms has proven unworkable. Recusal would follow disclosure.
- § 8-10 Future Employment. We propose redrafting subsection (B) to have a one-year “cooling-off” period. It would prohibit certain employment rather than certain appearances, and it would eliminate the draconian lifetime ban. We believe this strikes a better balance—providing safeguards without unduly limiting future employment opportunities.
- § 8-18(d) Administration. We recommend creating a new category called “inquiries” to allow informal requests for guidance without requiring the filing of a formal “complaint”. This would encourage outreach by supervisors, employees, or members of the public in a non-adversarial posture. We also propose allowing anonymous complaints.
- § 8-21 Penalties (E) Misdemeanor. Based on Steven’s suggestion, we propose striking or redrafting this section to clarify that the Board refers potential violations to the County Prosecutor rather than taking enforcement action itself.

In addition, we suggest several technical and clarifying edits to sections on gifts, exceptions, interest in contracts, reducing the number of “Definitions,” and correcting a drafting error.

These changes reflect our best collective judgment and aim to make the Code clearer and more practical.