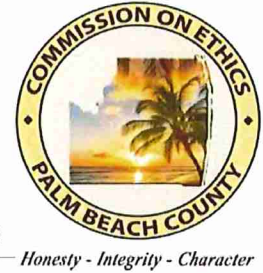


# POLICY REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE MEMORANDUM



To: Christie Kelley, Executive Director  
From: Abigail Irizarry, Investigator  
Re: A22-001 – City of Atlantis-Ethics Policy Review and Training Compliance

- **Background**

The Code of Ethics (Code) states in part, under Section 2-446(a), that Palm Beach County and each municipality within Commission on Ethics (COE) jurisdiction is required to maintain, by policy, a mandatory training schedule for all employees and elected/appointed officials. Additionally, each municipality also has the responsibility of overseeing participation of their own employees and elected/appointed official's Ethics Training Acknowledgment Form and ethics refresher training.

The COE is required to develop and deliver training programs. Furthermore, the COE coordinates and cooperates with the municipalities to ensure training of employees and elected/appointed officials.

The COE last audited the City of Atlantis (City) on April 4, 2019.

- **Objectives and Scope**

Objectives include:

- Ensuring the agency has an ethics training policy.
- Ensuring the ethics training policy appropriately conveys information to officials and employees so clear parameters are determined, including initial training (with a defined deadline and grace period) and retraining cycle timeline (with a defined deadline and grace period).
- Ensuring the agency is requiring its officials and employees to comply with the training policy.

The scope for this memorandum included a review of all City employees and elected/appointed officials required to submit an Ethics Training Acknowledgement Form. Internal tracking and delivery method of ethics training compliance were not part of the scope.

- **Approach and Methodology**

On Thursday, January 20, 2022, on behalf of the COE, I initiated a compliance review of the City for ethics training compliance. In order to complete this task, I called City Clerk Kristen Puhalainen to request the ethics training files. Puhalainen advised the City maintains all ethics training records in the City Clerk's Office. I emailed Puhalainen a written follow-up request for the records.

On Monday, February 7, 2022, I received the Ethics Training Acknowledgement Forms and ethics training records for the City employees and elected/appointed officials.

Based on their Administrative Policy and Procedure all public elected officials, employees, volunteers, service board members and contracted employees must take the initial Code of Ethics training within sixty (60) days of City employment or appointment. Additionally, mandatory follow-up training is required of all employees and elected/appointed officials every two (2) years thereafter.

- Findings

At the time of this report, the City had thirty (30) active full-time employees and twenty-eight (28) elected/appointed officials. Upon review of the records, all employees have been trained. Additionally, twenty-six (26) out of twenty-eight (28) elected/appointed officials completed ethics training; however, two (2) elected/appointed officials did not complete Ethics Training.

- Recommendations

After reviewing the City's policy, the following recommendation should be implemented to provide clarification regarding the training cycle and deadlines.

1. The follow-up training for employees and elected/appointed officials should have a specific timeframe to complete ethics refresher training. For example, the suggested follow-up language for employees and elected/appointed officials could be changed to read as follows: **"After initial training, periodic mandatory follow-up ethics refresher training is required for all employees and elected/appointed officials every two (2) years during the training cycle. The two-year ethics refresher training cycle is effective January 1, 2023, and all employees who take ethics refresher training and read the Code of Ethics between January 1 – March 1, 2023 will be considered trained and in compliance with this policy."**

- Conclusion

The City of Atlantis is in full compliance with the ethics training requirement for its employees; however, is not in full compliance with the ethics training requirement for all of its elected/appointed officials. Additionally, the review identified one area of the policy that may be updated for practicality, so the requirements are clear.

Submitted by:



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Abigail Irizarry, Investigator  
PB County Commission on Ethics

March 9, 2022  
Date

Reviewed by:

CK  
(Initials)

3-9-22