



**Palm Beach County
Commission on Ethics**
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News Release

For Immediate Release

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Summary of Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics Meeting Held on May 1, 2014

The Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics (COE) took the following actions at its monthly public meeting held on May 1, 2014.

Three (3) advisory opinions were approved. The full opinions are published and available at:

<http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/opinions.htm>

RQO 14-007: The town administrator asked whether the Town of Haverhill could hire the daughter of the provider of the town's website maintenance.

The COE opined as follows: The hiring of the daughter of the provider of the town's website maintenance is not prohibited by the Code of Ethics as long as the daughter does not use her official position to benefit her parent's business, which would be a misuse of public office or employment. Under the code, the applicant, if hired, will need to take great care to avoid acting, failing to act, or influencing others to act in a manner that would appear to favor her parent's company. She will have an ongoing responsibility to refrain from using her official position with the town to gain a financial benefit for her parent. This would include any improper action or inaction involving the awarding of town business to her parent's business.

RQO 14-008: A forensic technician for the Palm Beach County Medical Examiner's Office asked if she could accept part-time outside employment at a funeral home removal service company.

The COE opined as follows: The county employee's part-time employment with a funeral home removal service company would not violate the prohibited contracts section of the Code of Ethics, as long as she complies with all requirements as set forth in §2-443(e)(5), including merit rule approval by her supervisor. She must also refrain from using her official position as a county employee to obtain a financial benefit for herself or her outside employer. The employee's responsibility to comply with the code regarding her part-time employment will be ongoing

RQO 14-009: A Palm Beach County Fire Rescue employee, who also works as a sales representative for Schaeffer's Specialized Lubricants, asked if he could try to sell the Schaeffer's product to the fleet maintenance department of his county employer.

The COE opined as follows: The employee may not use his official position as a county employee to promote the Schaeffer's products. However, he is not prohibited from trying to sell the Schaeffer's products to the county in his personal capacity and on his own time. Best practices would include refraining from using his official position, title, county email, or wearing his county uniform to pitch the Schaeffer's products to the county. At all times, he must follow the channels or procedures that are available to any representative who wishes to sell products to the county. Additionally, he must comply with the part-time employment section of the code and should obtain a conflict of interest waiver for his part-time outside employment prior to the county potentially entering into a contract with Schaeffer's to purchase their product.

A detailed explanation of all agenda items is available at

<http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/meetings.htm>.

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