Program Report Card: Ethics Education (Connecticut Office of State Ethics)

Quality of Life Result: Connecticut residents will have ethical government at the state level.

Contribution to Result: Educate public officials, state employees, lobbyists and other groups about the Code of Ethics to increase awareness of the ethics laws and increase compliance with those laws.

Actual SFY 10 Total Program Expenditures: $85,000*   *State Funding: $85,000*   *Federal Funding: $0*   *Other Funding: $0*
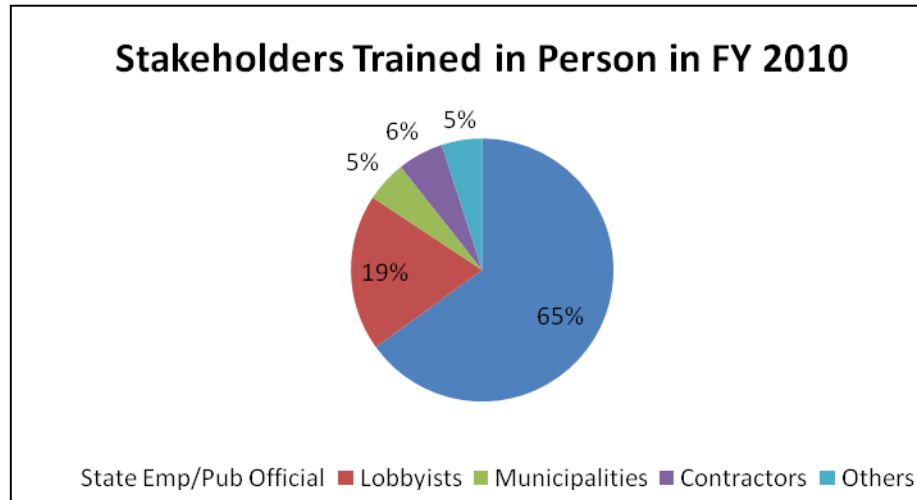*Estimated SFY 11 Total Program Expenditures: $85,000*   *State Funding: $85,000*   *Federal Funding: $0*   *Other Funding: $0*

Partners: State agency ethics liaisons/compliance officers, Office of Legislative Management, Connecticut Humanities Council, Department of Transportation, media contacts.
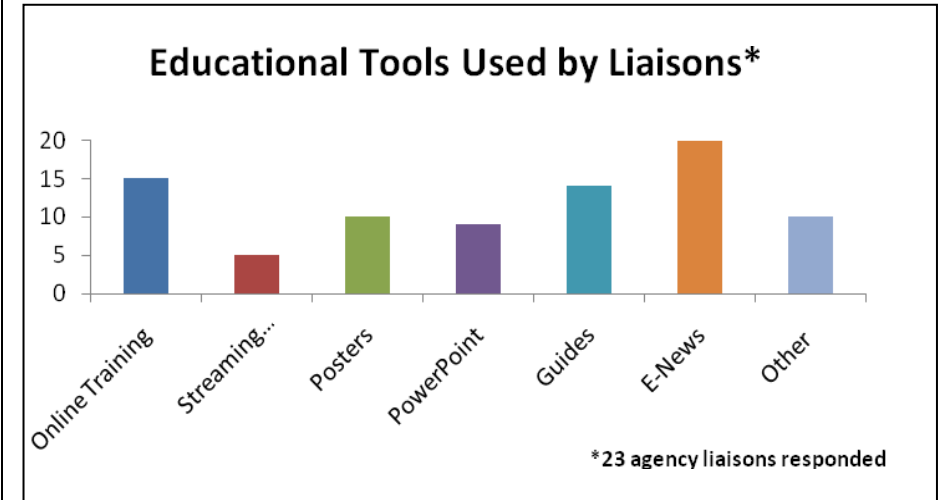
Customers: Elected and appointed public officials, state employees, lobbyists, marshals, media, citizens.

Performance Measure 1: Percentage of regulated persons reached through in-person training.	**Performance Measure 2**: Frequency of use of supplemental educational tools by state employees.

Stakeholders Trained in Person in FY 2010

State Emp/Pub Official 65%, Lobbyists 19%, Municipalities 5%, Contractors 6%, Others 5%

Educational Tools Used by Liaisons*

*23 agency liaisons responded

Story behind the baseline: The graph indicates the percentage of in-person training devoted to various members of the regulated community and other groups. Connecticut General Statutes § 1-81 (5) states that the Office of State Ethics shall provide yearly training to all state employees regarding the Code of Ethics. The OSE employs one staff member for education, the Ethics Program Manager; this employee has numerous other duties including maintaining content on the OSE website, issuing press releases and responding to media requests. There are approximately 55,000 state employees at any given time, which makes it impossible for each state employee to be reached in person annually, especially considering that legislators, lobbyists and contractors also fall under the OSE's purview. While the OSE is mandated to train, there is no reciprocity on the part of the agencies – they have no mandate to ensure such training. Approximately 900

Story behind the baseline: This graph, which is baseline data, indicates a variety of free tools offered by the OSE to liaisons for agency use in providing ethics training. Given the limited staff resources of the OSE for in-person training (See Performance Measure 1), providing supplemental training opportunities for state employees is necessary and efficient. In Fiscal Year 09-10, 1,652 individuals or groups viewed the web-streaming video and the online training received 2,401 visitors, 25% of whom accessed the certificate of completion. This is a small subset of overall visits to the OSE website. In 2008, the website received 153,851 visits, an average of 422 per day; in 2009, visits dropped to 148,001, an average of 405 per day.   Data regarding other educational tools, including those provided on the website, needs to be further developed. The OSE continues to introduce new tools. For example, in 2010, the OSE

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* The program expenditures consist of the salary for the Ethics Program Manager, travel expenses and minimal expenses for materials used at trainings.

individuals attended 31 in-person training sessions in FY 09-10. These numbers tell only part of the story. The OSE uses a holistic approach in its educational efforts. In addition to in-person training, the OSE offers many other ways to become familiar with the Code of Ethics: the OSE website, online training, streaming web videos, DVDs, PowerPoint presentations, regular e-news communications to the regulated community, practical guides, posters and more. Much training occurs through agency liaisons (See Performance Measure 2). Smaller "roundtable" trainings, held quarterly, on topics causing frequent inquiry are a new offering and focus on providing in-depth training to liaisons. Educational outreach also occurs when the OSE staffs a table in the LOB concourse during filing periods. By statute, the OSE must present an ethics conference each year. In October 2010 (on its fifth anniversary), the OSE celebrated "Ethics Day" with a keynote speaker and breakout sessions; while every day should be ethics day, the conference is an opportunity to remind the regulated community of their ethical obligations. Finally, press releases on enforcement actions are issued and picked up by the media regularly and the Legal Division of the OSE receives on average 26 phone calls a day seeking advice and guidance about the application of the Code of Ethics. All of these activities are in part educational.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: Expanding in-person trainings will require additional staff, which would dramatically increase the number of sessions the OSE can offer. While the OSE has sought the addition of a Legislative Liaison/Education staff member in the past two years, this request is not included in the current budget request because of the budget crisis. The agency will focus on "cascade training" to provide each agency's ethics liaison and management staff (the "high-level targets") with in-person training and will continue to offer training for other agency personnel. There are approximately 2,200 managers in the state. If the 900 persons reached were all those high-level targets, the OSE would have reached 41% of presumed decision-makers. The OSE will provide monthly in-house trainings in addition to the quarterly roundtables. The OSE will explore the costs and practicality of using web-based conferencing, particularly for managers and liaisons, to reduce the costs of travel. OSE online trainings are now included in the state's Learning Management System (LMS), so the agencies involved in the system can track the completion status of their personnel. Finally, participants are asked to voluntarily complete a post-training survey online and submit it to the OSE; while responses are overwhelmingly positive, participation has been sporadic with less than half of attendees responding. The OSE data development plan includes improving collection of post-training surveys from both face-to-face and online training sessions. Of concern is "survey fatigue" -- every market transaction now solicits responses to surveys, but few people respond. Since the primary cost of this program is the salary of the Program Manager, only the elimination of the position would achieve significant savings. Such a move would result in the inability of the OSE, which has already seen three of its positions (14% of staff) cut, to meet one of its core mandates – to educate the regulated community to ensure compliance with the Code of Ethics.

distributed to liaisons a series of eight posters that addressed the major themes of the Code of Ethics, such as gifts, revolving door issues and employees contracting with state government. These posters increased awareness of restriction imposed by the Code of Ethics and also provided employees with contact information to seek advice from the OSE. The best way to determine how state employees use these tools is through the liaisons. It is not their statutory duty to make use of, or report their use of, such tools, however, so the OSE's ability to gather complete and accurate data is difficult. Further, while a liaison might broadcast the e-newsletter to all agency employees, it is impossible to accurately tally how many individuals (and at what level) read it. Technology can tell us how many unique visitors clicked on the web-streaming video, but there is no way for us to know whether one individual viewed the video, three people gathered around a screen, or it was broadcast for a room of 25.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: The OSE will continue to poll the ethics liaisons about their use of training tools and will attempt to measure, through liaisons, whether the employees, following their use of the tool(s), are more knowledgeable about the Code of Ethics. For example, an increase in the number of ethics questions liaisons report they receive would be a reasonable, though indirect, indicator of increased knowledge of the Code of Ethics. In addition, the agency will explore creating other tools. One long-term project the OSE is exploring is the creation of an "ethics audit" tool which would identify what an ethical agency looks like and what steps an agency could take to become one. We also continuously review our guides, PowerPoints and other materials both to update for statutory changes, and to make sure trainings we provide are useful. The OSE will continue to leverage technology to provide no-cost and low-cost alternatives to in-person training, such as web-based conferencing for liaisons, and will announce the existence of the tools on its website and in communications to the liaisons. On a regular basis, the OSE will work with the Department of Transportation's Communication Team to create a new and improved web-streaming video and DVD through a partnership at no cost to the OSE. The OSE will emphasize to all liaisons the availability of the free tools discussed above, as well as explore use of the state e-mail system to send broadcast e-mails to all state employees. The OSE's data development plan includes determining exact usage of various educational tools, particularly those on its website. Using hits to online pages will be an imprecise measure of state employees' usage, however, since the public in and out of Connecticut may also access these materials. While this data identifies unique visitors, it does not account for usage of the website by OSE staff, for example, or by other jurisdictions throughout the country doing research on the OSE website.