

New Supervisors Notice of Ethical Obligations

Congratulations on your new supervisory position! As you assume this important role, we want to remind you of the Department's commitment to a strong ethical culture. The federal ethics regulations provide the following description of your new responsibilities:

Every supervisor in the executive branch has a heightened personal responsibility for advancing government ethics. It is imperative that supervisors serve as models of ethical behavior for subordinates. Supervisors have a responsibility to help ensure that subordinates are aware of their ethical obligations under the Standards of Conduct and that subordinates know how to contact agency ethics officials. Supervisors are also responsible for working with agency ethics officials to help resolve conflicts of interest and enforce government ethics laws and regulations, including those requiring certain employees to file financial disclosure reports and to complete required ethics training in a timely manner. In addition, supervisors are responsible, when requested, for assisting agency ethics officials in evaluating potential conflicts of interest and identifying positions subject to financial disclosure requirements.

5 C.F.R. § 2638.103.

As a supervisor, you become an integral part of the ethical culture. Awareness of and adherence to ethics principles and the Department's policies, in addition to ensuring the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and professionalism of our staff, is a vital part of your role. Your example will ensure transparency for your staff, boost confidence and morale, and contribute to a harmonious and effective workforce. Therefore, all Department supervisors are expected to ensure they and their subordinates meet the following minimum obligations of ethical conduct: comply with the ethics laws, standards, and guidelines; attend required ethics training; and provide accurate and timely financial disclosures, if applicable.

To refresh your understanding of the ethical values underlying Federal service, you should review the summary of the Principles of Ethical Conduct, Federal conflict of interest statutes, the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, and other ethics laws on the Ethics Office's web page: <https://ogc.commerce.gov/page/ethics-rules>.

You should retain this handout for use as a reference. If you need additional information, you may also visit the Ethics Office's web page at www.commerce.gov/ethics. If you have any general questions on applicable ethics requirements, please contact the ethics office at 202-482-5384 or ethicsdivision@doc.gov.