

2017 President's Budget
Office of Ethics

Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Purpose Statement.....	15-35
Available Funds and Staff Years	15-36
Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Year Summary	15-37
Salaries and Expenses	
Appropriations Language	15-37
Lead-off Tabular Statement.....	15-37
Summary of Increases and Decreases.....	15-37
Project Statement.....	15-38
Justifications of Increases and Decreases.....	15-39
Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years.....	15-40
Classification by Objects.....	15-41
Status of Programs	15-42
Summary of Budget and Performance	
Statement of Goals and Objectives.....	15-45
Key Performance Outcomes and Measures	15-46
Full Cost by Departmental Strategic Goal	15-47

OFFICE OF ETHICS

Purpose Statement

The Ethics in Government Act, 5 U.S.C. App 4 (the Act), established the ethics compliance requirements and infrastructure applicable throughout the Executive Branch. Under regulations implementing the Act, the head of each Executive Branch department or agency must exercise personal leadership in establishing, maintaining, and carrying out the agency's ethics program and make available sufficient resources to ensure the agency's ethics program can be implemented effectively (5 C.F.R. 2638.202). The Office of Ethics (OE) is the centralized and consolidated office implementing USDA's ethics program throughout the Department. As such, OE provides ethics services to the Secretary of Agriculture and employees at all levels of USDA concerning advice, training, and guidance about compliance with conflict of interest and impartiality rules. This includes complying with the requirements of the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act, Pub. L. No. 112-105 (2012) (The STOCK Act), and Office of Government Ethics regulatory requirements (5 C.F.R. Parts 2634 through 2641).

OE consists of a Headquarters office and four Branch offices. The four branches are grouped to separately service different agencies within USDA and consist of: the Farm, Natural Resources and Rural Development Ethics Branch; the Marketing, Nutrition, and Regulatory Programs Ethics Branch; the Forestry Ethics Branch, and the Science Ethics Branch. In late 2015, OE proposed a realignment of the four branches into one unified Mission Areas Ethics Programs Support Branch. The reorganization will provide a more effective and flexible structure for the Office of Ethics to utilize existing resources to successfully address the growing needs of the Department's mission areas for ethics training, advice, and the review of over 14,000 financial disclosure reports. The realignment of the four branches into one combined branch eliminates structural barriers and enhances the communication of information and the delivery of ethics services while also providing greater avenues for professional development and for the cross-utilization of employees. This effort aligns with the Department's goal to improve business processes and modernize business operations.

As of September 30, 2015, there were 19 permanent full-time employees, including 18 in the headquarters office and one in the field.

OE did not have any Office of Inspector General or Government Accountability Office evaluation reports during the past year.

OFFICE OF ETHICS

Available Funds and Staff Years (SYs)

(Dollars in thousands)

Item	2014 Actual		2015 Actual		2016 Enacted		2017 Estimate	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations	\$3,440	19	\$3,654	18	\$3,654	21	\$4,617	25
Sequestration.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rescission.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer Out.....	-225	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	3,215	19	3,654	18	3,654	21	4,617	25
Lapsing Balances.....	-20	-	-693	-	-	-	-	-
Obligations.....	3,195	19	2,961	18	3,654	21	4,617	25
<u>Obligations under other USDA appropriations:</u>								
OCIO Reimbursement.....	119	1	119	1	119	1	119	1
OCFO Reimbursement.....	119	1	119	1	119	1	119	1
Total, Agriculture Appropriations..	238	2	238	2	238	2	238	2
Total, OE.....	3,433	21	3,199	20	3,892	23	4,855	27

OFFICE OF ETHICS

Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Year Summary

Item	2014 Actual			2015 Actual			2016 Enacted			2017 Estimate		
	Wash.		Total	Wash.		Total	Wash.		Total	Wash.		Total
	D.C.	Field		D.C.	Field		D.C.	Field		D.C.	Field	
SES.....	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-15.....	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	2	-	2
GS-14.....	3	1	4	7	1	8	7	1	8	8	1	9
GS-13.....	7	-	7	1	-	1	5	-	5	7	-	7
GS-12.....	5	-	5	6	-	6	6	-	6	6	-	6
GS-11.....	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GS-9.....	2	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	2
Total, Perm. Full-Time Employment, EOY.....	20	1	21	18	1	19	22	1	23	26	1	27
Staff Year Est.....	20	1	21	18	1	19	22	1	23	26	1	27

OFFICE OF ETHICS

The estimates include appropriation language for this item as follows (new Language underscored; deleted matter enclosed in brackets):

Salaries and Expenses:

For necessary expenses of the Office of Ethics, [~~\$3,654,000~~] \$4,617,000.

Lead-Off Tabular Statement

Budget Estimate, 2016.....	\$4,617,000
2016 Enacted.....	<u>3,654,000</u>
Change in Appropriation.....	<u>+ 963,000</u>

Summary of Increases and Decreases

(Dollars in thousands)

	2014 Actual	2015 Change	2016 Change	2017 Change	2017 Estimate
Discretionary Appropriations:					
Office of Ethics.....	\$3,440	+\$214	-	+\$963	\$4,617

OFFICE OF ETHICS

Project Statement

Adjusted Appropriations Detail and Staff Years (SYs)
(Dollars in thousands)

Program	2014 Actual		2015 Actual		2016 Enacted		Inc. or Dec.		2017 Estimate	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Discretionary Appropriations:										
Ethics Services.....	\$3,440	19	\$3,654	19	\$3,654	21	+\$963	+4	\$4,617	25
Total Appropriation.....	3,440	19	3,654	19	3,654	21	+963	+4	4,617	25
Rescission.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sequestration.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	3,440	19	3,654	19	3,654	21	+963	+4	4,617	25
Transfer Out: WCF.....	-225		-		-		-		-	
Lapsing Balances.....	-20		-693		-		-		-	
Total Obligations.....	3,195	19	2,961	19	3,654	21	+963	+4	4,617	25

Project Statement

Obligation Detail and Staff Years (SYs)
(Dollars in thousands)

Program	2014 Actual		2015 Actual		2016 Enacted		Inc. or Dec.		2017 Estimate	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Discretionary Obligations:										
Ethics Services.....	\$3,190	19	\$2,961	19	\$3,654	21	+\$963	+4	\$4,617	25
Total Obligations.....	3,190	19	2,961	19	3,654	21	+963	+4	4,617	25
Lapsing Balances.....	25	-	693	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer Out.....	225	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	3,440	19	3,654	19	3,654	21	+963	+4	4,617	25
Rescission.....	-		-		-		-		-	
Sequestration.....	-		-		-		-		-	
Total Appropriation.....	3,440	19	3,654	19	3,654	21	+963	+4	4,617	25

OFFICE OF ETHICS

Justification of Increases and Decreases

Base funds will allow the Office of Ethics (OE), to continue to provide ethics program oversight, execution, policy development, and information to the Secretary and other senior policy officials to support the Department's compliance with ethics laws and regulations. Additionally, base funds are necessary to allow the Office of Ethics to serve the key functions of conducting financial disclosure reviews, ethics training, Hatch Act training, and providing guidance to all employees of the Department. OE's services raise employee awareness of, and compliance with, mandatory ethics laws and the Hatch Act. This maintains the public's confidence in the integrity of USDA's workforce, programs, and initiatives.

The funding change is requested for the following items:

(1) An increase of \$963,000 for the Office of Ethics (\$3,654,000 and 21 staff years available in 2016).

a. An increase of \$61,000 for pay costs (\$11,000 for annualization of the 2016 pay increase and \$50,000 for the 2017 pay raise).

The proposed funding level is needed to cover pay and benefit cost increases for existing staff. This will ensure adequate resources are available to continue to allow OE to carry out its full range of responsibilities and support program delivery.

b. An increase of \$902,000 and 4 staff years to strengthen USDA's ethics program and support the increased demand for ethics services related to the upcoming Administration transition, 2016 Presidential Election, upkeep of the Ethics webpage and implementation of a new financial disclosure reporting system.

This increase will fund four key full time staff positions. The additional staff will strengthen USDA's small, centralized Ethics Program (the Office of Ethics), which sets and implements Department-wide ethics policy, providing advice, counseling, training, and conflict of interest analyses for all USDA employees. The proposed funding level is necessary to allow OE to address heightened ongoing demands and without undermining the effectiveness of OE's ethics services to the entire Department.

At current levels, OE has a staffing ratio of one OE staff member per 5,000 serviced USDA employees. Based on data provided by the Office of Government Ethics, HHS has 395 employees serviced per one ethics advisor. The Department of Energy has 746 employees serviced per one ethics advisor, and the Department of Transportation has 1,137 employees serviced per one ethics advisor. Notably, the average of all Executive Branch agencies is 491 employees serviced per one ethics specialist. Additional staff at the proposed funding level are necessary to provide greatly needed resources to strengthen the day-to-day operation of USDA's Ethics Program for the long term, while simultaneously allowing OE to address the near term needs presented by the upcoming Administration transition, the 2016 Presidential election and the implementation of a new financial disclosure reporting system.

OE is the only office in USDA which conducts ethics vetting for incoming Administration appointees, provides daily ethics advice to USDA employees Department-wide, delivers training and advice on the Hatch Act's political activity restrictions and provides individual post-employment counseling for departing USDA officials. Due to the expanded usage of new social media and new guidance issued by the Office of Government Ethics (April 9, 2015) and the Office of Special Counsel (November 12, 2015) governing Federal employees' usage of social media in the workplace. Due to the evolving changes in the rules required by social media, OE has faced an increased and sustained demand for expanded Ethics and Hatch Act training to ensure that all employees are

aware and adhere to these new requirements. There is also a growing need for ethics services for the nearly 2,100 members of USDA’s FACA Advisory Committees, and to advise USDA Scientists of their ethical obligations while supporting enhance scientific collaboration with outside Universities and national and international scholarly organizations.

Similarly, USDA is responsible, pursuant to 5 C.F.R. §2638.202(b)(4), to provide ethics counseling to "departing and former agency officials on post-employment conflict of interest standards." This workload is expected to more than double due to career retirements and appointee departures. A recent GAO report stated: “With respect to retirement eligibility, of the 1.96 million permanent career employees on board as of September 2012, nearly 270,000 (14 percent) were eligible to retire. By September 2017, nearly 600,000 (around 31 percent) will be eligible to retire, government-wide.” GAO Report “Recent Trends in Federal Civilian Employment and Compensation” (GAO-14-215, issued January 29, 2014). To effectively service departing employees, OE must provide training and advice on specific prohibited post-government employment activities, individual counseling on Ethics Pledge restrictions and the negotiation and recusal requirements under the STOCK Act. Moreover, OE staff must obtain and review the departing officials’ final public financial disclosure reports, and review and certify these reports within 60 days of receipt.

Moreover, beginning in January 2016, all agencies must use INTEGRITY.GOV, the new mandatory electronic filing system developed by the U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) for financial disclosure reports. Simultaneously, OGE will mandate a new and completely revamped OGE-278 format providing a more robust and comprehensive level of detail in filer financial disclosures. For example, Schedule "A" (financial assets) will be subdivided into three distinct sub-parts. Due to complexities in the new report format and the new electronic filing system, OE will need the additional staff to adequately respond to the increased demands for assistance from USDA's financial disclosure report filers.

At current funding levels, OE is not adequately staffed to meet these new challenges. In its 2013 follow up audit of USDA’s Ethics Program, the Office of Government Ethics noted OE’s diminished staffing, stating that OE’s staffing level had “a reduction of 12 employees over the last several years” and stated that OGE “will continue to monitor the ethics program at USDA.” (OGE’s Follow Up Review Letter, publicly available at <http://www.oge.gov>). All of these ongoing demands will overly tax OE’s limited resources and put at risk USDA’s ability to meet its Congressionally-mandated requirements under the Ethics in Government Act to successfully operate new and existing electronic financial disclosure systems, provide advice and training on the Hatch Act and post-employment rules, and conduct timely processing of prospective Presidential nominees and appointees during the upcoming Presidential Transition. OE needs funding for additional ethics employees in FY 2017 to successfully recover from several years of attrition and reductions in funding.

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
(Dollars in thousands and Staff Years (SYs))

State/Territory	2014 Actual		2015 Actual		2016 Enacted		2017 Estimate	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
District of Columbia.....	3,195	18	2,847	17	3,532	20	4,493	24
Oregon.....	112	1	114	1	122	1	124	1
Obligations.....	3,307	19	2,961	18	3,654	21	4,617	25
Lapsing Balance.....	25		693		-		-	
Total, Available.....	3,332	19	3,654	18	3,654	21	4,617	25

OFFICE OF ETHICS
Classification by Objects
(Dollars in thousands)

	2014 <u>Actual</u>	2015 <u>Actual</u>	2016 <u>Enacted</u>	2017 <u>Estimate</u>
Personnel Compensation:				
Washington D.C.....	\$1,965	\$1,780	\$2,388	\$3,070
Field.....	112	114	122	124
11 Total personnel compensation.....	2,077	1,894	2,510	3,194
12 Personnel benefits.....	608	625	806	1,047
13.0 Benefits for former personnel.....	14	10	14	14
Total, personnel comp. and benefits.....	2,699	2,529	3,330	4,255
Other Objects:				
21 Travel and transportation of persons.....	-	2	3	4
23.3 Communications, utilities, and misc. charges.....	41	30	16	18
24 Printing and reproduction.....	42	44	29	34
25.2 Other services.....	387	226	207	229
25.3 Other purchases of goods and services from Federal sources.....	4	17	17	17
26.0 Supplies and materials.....	9	98	21	24
31.0 Equipment.....	13	15	31	36
Total, Other Objects.....	496	432	324	362
99.9 Total, new obligations.....	3,195	2,961	3,654	4,617
DHS Building Security Payments (included in 25.3).....	\$4	\$17	\$17	\$17
Position Data:				
Average Salary (dollars), ES Position.....	\$176,443	\$183,300	\$185,100	\$186,951
Average Salary (dollars), GS Position.....	\$90,107	\$90,036	\$110,934	\$125,293
Average Grade, GS Position.....	13.1	13.1	13.7	14.5

OFFICE OF ETHICS

Status of Program

Current Activities

The Office of Ethics (OE) implements USDA's Ethics Program. All of OE's core functions such as the Financial Disclosure Program, Ethics and Hatch Act Training Programs, Ethics Policy Development, and the Ethics and Hatch Act Advice and Counseling Programs are mandated by the Ethics in Government Act, U.S. Office of Government Ethics regulations, and Office of Special Counsel Hatch Act regulations.

For the third consecutive year, more than 99% of all USDA employees who were required to take annual ethics training timely completed that requirement. In fact this year's figure, 99.9%, represents an exceptional and all-time high level of ethics compliance at USDA. Additionally, OE completed another successful year of electronic filing for USDA's approximately 700 public financial disclosure statements (OGE-278) and more than 14,000 confidential financial disclosure reports (OGE-450). OE has taken steps to successfully implement INTEGRITY.GOV, a new electronic financial disclosure report filing system mandated by the U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE).

In an effort to further enhance employee awareness and compliance with Federal ethics laws, OE took steps to elicit more feedback from its clients and has redoubled its efforts to provide ethics training that meets the needs of USDA employees. OE uses surveys and evaluations to continually assess the quality and timeliness of ethics services and training provided throughout the Department. In 2015, OE completely revamped its customer service surveys and took steps to make them more noticeable for its clients to increase the amount and quality of client feedback. This change has led to more than a 200% increase in the number of surveys received in 2015 as compared to the same point in 2014 (293 vs. 91). The feedback received in those surveys has been overwhelmingly positive.

The survey responses received by OE have consistently shown USDA employees' preference for training that is timely, tailored to their day-to-day responsibilities and easily accessible. OE has increased its level of outreach to clients and addressed the need for timely, tailored and accessible training, as outlined below.

As noted above, the Office of Ethics serves the entire Department and all component agencies. OE is currently organized into an Office of the Director and four branches: the Farm, Conservation, and Rural Programs Branch; the Science Ethics Branch; the Marketing, Regulatory, and Nutrition Branch; and the Forestry Ethics Branch.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress:

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

The Office of the Director coordinates ethics services throughout the USDA and manages the ethics programs for the Office of the Secretary, Staff Offices, Departmental Management, Foreign Agricultural Service, and Risk Management Agency. To raise employee awareness of the rules, the Office of the Director put an emphasis on providing lively, tailored training both inside and outside of the DC area in 2015.

First, the Director, Deputy Director, and other members of OE's senior staff have focused on providing in-person ethics training to employees around the DC region. These sessions range from "Ethics in Brief" presentations that are quick-paced and update USDA's most senior officials on current developments in government ethics to more comprehensive 1-2 hour sessions on ethics topics that are especially relevant to particular agencies in USDA. For example, in just July and August of 2015, OE's Director and Deputy Director provided more than 25 hours of live ethics training sessions to USDA employees.

Secondly, to more effectively reach those USDA employees outside of the DC region, OE partnered with the USDA Office of Communications (OC) and has begun to develop a series of 10 short ethics training videos that are focused on the issues most commonly facing USDA employees in the field, including political activity, gifts, conflicts of

interest and impartiality. OE will use its partnership with OC to create regularly scheduled ethics training that includes general orientation training as well as more narrowly focused on the needs of specific categories of employees, such as contract officers, scientists, senior leadership, and others. Building upon OE's successful use of long-distance training conducted through USDA's AgLearn system, OE will engage in an enhanced outreach effort to USDA employees through long distance learning utilizing USDA's AgLearn system as well as webinars, telephone conference calls, and in-person events to promote OE training offerings to agencies throughout the Department. Additionally, OE has been a leader in providing ethics training to members of the Federal Ethics Community through innovative training that OE's Director presented at OGE's Advanced Ethics Practitioner Series. OE has also assisted the Federal Inter-Agency Ethics Council by hosting meetings at USDA and through the OE's Director's presentations at Inter-Agency Ethics Council meetings. Moreover, at the request of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), OE has provided its innovative Ethics training materials to Anti-Corruption Advisers in Serbia to assist their ethics training for over 2,000 food inspectors in Serbia. Through these actions, OE has encouraged other Federal agencies and the international community to model our resources and methodology to improve their own ethics programs.

Moreover, OE has extended its outreach efforts by providing live, in-person training to USDA employees in the field. In the past few months, members of OE's senior leadership have travelled to USDA training conferences in locations such as Shepherdstown, West Virginia, Fort Collins, Colorado, St. Louis, Missouri and Omaha, Nebraska to provide live ethics training on topics of interest to agencies including Rural Development (RD), the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and the US Forest Service (FS). These in-person outreach efforts, augmented by webinars and teleconferences, have allowed OE to reach USDA employees across the country that do not have regular contact with the office and the efforts have been highly successful at raising employee awareness of the risks posed by ethics issues.

Finally, the Office of the Director has accomplished the following:

- Reviewed approximately 700 new entrant, annual, and termination public financial disclosure reports.
- Reviewed more than 1,025 confidential financial disclosure reports for its assigned Agencies.
- Provided more than 400 training sessions to USDA political appointees and senior officials on ethics, including conflicts of interest, the STOCK Act, post-Government employment, and the political activity rules (the "Hatch Act").
- Distributed more than 100 different one-page "Ethics in Brief" (short synopses of topical ethics rules). OE's Senior Ethics Advisors provided advice and guidance to USDA's senior leadership and agency heads and responded to a daily stream of ethics questions to ensure officials knew and understood their ethics obligations.
- Provided guidance on the ethics rules to investigators within USDA's Office of Inspector General.

The Office of the Director also coordinated and provided timely advice on USDA's charitable programs with Departmental-wide scope, such as the Combined Federal Campaign and the Feds Feed Families Campaign.

FARM, CONSERVATION, AND RURAL PROGRAMS BRANCH

The Farm, Conservation and Rural Program Branch (OE-Farm) provides ethics services to USDA's three field organizations: FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and RD. The branch handles more than one third of USDA's confidential financial disclosure reports. In 2015, the branch reviewed and certified 5,812 of these reports and ensured that 100% of the financial disclosure filers serviced by the Branch completed their annual training in a timely fashion.

SCIENCE ETHICS BRANCH

Science is a key component to the overall mission of USDA. The Science Ethics Branch (SEB) provides ethics guidance to employees of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Economic Research Service (ERS), the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). Science is collaborative in nature, routinely presenting complex ethics issues involving relationships with universities, stakeholders and private industry. These partnerships are designed to augment research programs, expedite research

results to the private sector, exchange knowledge and new technology, and stimulate business and economic development. OE staff provides expert advice to USDA scientists on ethics issues pertaining to cooperative research and development agreements with universities across the country. In addition, SEB reviewed 133 Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs) for ARS to ensure no conflicts of interest were created.

During the 2015 financial disclosure season, the SEB completed the review of more than 1,000 financial disclosure reports and ensured that 100% of the financial disclosure filers in its serviced agencies completed their annual ethics training in a timely fashion. SEB's exceptional service to USDA's scientific community was recognized in 2015 when members of the SEB staff, along with several of their OE colleagues, were awarded the Abraham Lincoln Honor Award (formally the Secretary's Honor Award) from the Secretary of Agriculture for a collaborative effort with ARS scientists and ARS' Associate Area Directors to implement improved ethics-based reviews, procedures, and advisories.

MARKETING, REGULATORY, AND NUTRITION BRANCH

The Marketing, Regulatory, and Nutrition Branch (MRNB) serves almost 20,000 USDA employees. The branch responds to hundreds of written and verbal requests for conflict of interest determinations on various ethics topics such as: gifts from outside sources; gifts between employees; seeking outside employment and/or outside activities; misuse of position; post-employment; Hatch Act; nepotism; letters of recommendation; widely attended gatherings; and foreign gifts, among other ethics subjects. During 2015, the MRNB completed the review of more than 3,000 confidential financial disclosure reports and worked to ensure that all of those employees complied with their annual ethics training requirement in a timely fashion. The branch also provided several training sessions to a range of audiences who protect the health and value of American agriculture around the world, including new supervisors at Food Safety and Inspection Service and APHIS International Services Division employees. The branch also provided ethics training to Federal advisory committee members, both those designated as representatives and special government employees.

FORESTRY ETHICS BRANCH

The Forestry Ethics Branch (FEB) focuses on the provision of ethics services to USDA's largest agency, the U.S. Forest Service, which covers more than 30,000 employees, 155 national forests, and 20 national grasslands. The FS Research and Development scientists are provided ethics services by the OE Science Ethics Branch.

The FEB has spent significant time working with agency regional human resource offices to ensure that the appropriate FS employees file financial disclosure forms and receive ethics training. As a result of these efforts, for the third consecutive year, almost 100% of the Forest Service's 1,750 filers satisfied their annual training and filing requirements.

The FEB ensures that all of the more than 140 FS Advisory Committee charters are reviewed and that they include the necessary ethics language before being approved and published. The FEB also provides special government employees, representatives, and Designated Federal Officials (Federal employees who lead these committees) with relevant ethics training.

OFFICE OF ETHICS

Summary of Budget and Performance
Statement of Agency Goals and Objectives

USDA has a centralized Ethics Program, the Office of Ethics (OE), which fulfills the statutory requirements of the Ethics in Government Act of 1979 as amended by the Stop Trading in Congressional Knowledge Act of 2012 (STOCK Act) and the regulatory requirements of the Office of Government Ethics at 5 CFR § 2634 and following.

The mission of OE is to provide ethics services necessary to support all activities of USDA. That includes setting ethics policy, and providing ethics advice, counseling, training, review of disclosure reports, and conflict of interest analysis for all employees within the Department

USDA Strategic Goal 5: *Create a USDA for the 21st century That Is High-Performing, Efficient, and Adaptable*

USDA Strategic Objective 5.1: *Develop a customer-centric, inclusive, and high-performing workforce by investing in and engaging employees to improve service delivery*

Agency Strategic Goal	Agency Objectives	Programs that Contribute	Key Outcome
<p><u>Goal:</u> To provide effective ethics services in support of all programs and activities of USDA, consistent with the strategic goals of USDA and the priorities of the Secretary of Agriculture.</p>	<p><u>Objective 1:</u> Ensure USDA has a model ethics program that complies with the requirements of the ethics program for the executive branch, as required by OGE regulations.</p> <p><u>Objective 2:</u> Ensure that employees are trained in ethics, receive prompt and accurate advice, and fully disclose financial information and transactions and outside relationship information on required financial disclosure forms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics Services Program 	<p>Provide effective ethics services in a timely and responsive manner to support USDA activities, consistent with the priorities established by the Secretary of Agriculture.</p>

Key Performance Measures

Annual Performance Goals, Indicators, and Trends	Actual				Target	Actual	Result	Estimate/Target	Target
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2016	2017	
Provide timely ethics training to USDA employees required to receive training.	-	95%	99%	99%	100%	99%	Met	100%	100%
Complete financial disclosure reviews within 60 days of filing.	-	75%	95%	95%	100%	98%	Met	100%	100%
Financial disclosure reports filed within regulatory time limits.	-	-	99%	99%	100%	99.9%	Met	100%	100%
<u>Allowable Data Range for Met</u> Target is considered met if actual is within 5% of target.									
<u>Assessment of Performance Data</u>									
<u>Data source</u> – The data was collected by OE employees using USDA’s learning management platform (AgLearn) and USDA’s financial disclosure system (FDOnline).									
<u>Completeness of Data</u> – The data was collected real-time and recorded electronically.									
<u>Reliability of Data</u> – The electronic systems are continuously monitored and updated.									
<u>Quality of Data</u> –The data is generally regarded as being very accurate.									

Analysis of Results

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

- Reviewed and certified more than 700 new entrant, annual, and termination public financial disclosure reports as well as Periodic Transaction Reports as required by the STOCK Act.
- Reviewed and certified more than 14,000 confidential financial disclosure reports for USDA employees.
- Completely revamped its customer service surveys and took steps to make them more noticeable for its clients to increase the amount and quality of client feedback. This led to more than a 200% increase in the number of surveys received in 2015 as compared to the same point in 2014 (293 vs. 91). The feedback received in those surveys has been overwhelmingly positive.
- Provided more than 400 training sessions to USDA political appointees and senior officials on ethics topics, including STOCK Act and post-Government employment) and the political activity rules (the “Hatch Act”). OE also distributed more than 100 different one-page “Ethics in Brief,” which are short synopses of topical ethics rules.
- Increased the number of training options available to USDA employees by using webinar technology to make three hour-long recorded trainings available to USDA employees around the world. These trainings, focusing on Ethics and Leadership, Ethics for Procurement Officials and the Hatch Act Rules Governing Political Activity, respectively, were well received and allowed employees outside of the DC

- region to be exposed to “live” ethics training. These video presentations, which are available 24/7 to USDA employees, generated a noticeable uptick in requests for ethics advice and smaller group training.
- Provided advice and guidance to USDA’s employees on thousands of occasions and responded to a daily stream of ethics questions to ensure officials knew and understood their ethics obligations.

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the 2017 Proposed Resource Level/Challenges for the Future:

- OE will provide effective ethics services in a responsive manner in order to ensure that agencies can implement their programs with integrity.
- Funding at the 2017 proposed resource level would permit OE to provide proactive and preventative ethics training and counseling to the Department’s employees, with particular attention paid to two important areas: Hatch Act and post-employment conflict of interest services.
- Successful implementation of INTEGRITY.GOV, a new electronic financial disclosure report filing system mandated by the U.S. Office of Government Ethics.

Strategic Goal Funding Matrix
(Dollars in Thousands)

<u>Program/ Program Items</u>	<u>2014</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2015</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2016</u> <u>Enacted</u>	<u>Increase or</u> <u>Decrease</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Estimate</u>
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Department Strategic Goal 5: Create a USDA for the 21st century That Is High-Performing, Efficient, and Adaptable.

Department Objective 5.1: Develop a customer-centric, inclusive, and high-performing workforce by investing in and engaging employees to improve service delivery.

Ethics Program Services.....	\$3,440	\$3,654	\$3,654	\$1,316	\$4,970
Staff Years.....	19	18	21	7	28
Total Cost, Strategic Goal	3,440	3,654	3,654	1,316	4,970
Staff Years, Strategic Goal	19	18	21	7	28

Full Cost by Department Strategic Goal
(Dollars in thousands)

Create a USDA for the 21st century That Is High-Performing, Efficient, and Adaptable.

<u>Program/ Program Items</u>	<u>2014</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2015</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2016</u> <u>Enacted</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Estimate</u>
<u>Ethics Program Services</u>				
Administrative costs (direct).....	\$2,699	\$2,529	\$3,330	\$4,566
Indirect costs.....	496	432	324	404
Total Costs.....	3,195	2,961	3,654	4,970
FTEs.....	19	18	21	28