

Ethics and Governance Committee Presentation

Vice Mayor Pro Tem Amy Peck
Chair Joaquin Martinez
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Agenda

- Policy Impact
- Proposal
- Key Changes
- Administrative Sanctions
- Campaign Violations
- Due Process and Transparency

Policy Impact

- Ethical violations shall result in meaningful, proportionate, and enforceable consequences.
- The Ethics Commission shall have sufficient administrative authority to impose creative and corrective remedies designed to deter misconduct, promote transparency, and restore public trust.
- Remedies shall prioritize public accountability, restitution where applicable, and corrective education.
- Due process protections shall be preserved, including notice, hearing, and appeal rights.

Proposal

- Purpose: Expand the City of Houston Ethics Commission's administrative enforcement authority.
- Goal: Increase accountability, transparency, restitution, and public confidence.
- Focus: Meaningful, proportionate consequences while preserving due process.
- Impact:
 - Strengthens public trust through meaningful consequences.
 - Expands corrective, not just punitive, tools.
 - Encourages restitution and education.
 - Provides transparency while protecting due process.
 - Creates consistent accountability standards across City government.

Key Changes

- Current sanctions are primarily fines and letters of reprimand. This creates additional administrative remedies tailored to the severity of misconduct.
- This proposal addresses misuse of City time, facilities, resources, and campaign-related violations.

Administrative Sanctions

- Temporary suspension of City parking privileges (up to 180 days).
- Temporary suspension of direct deposit.
- Temporary loss of access to non-essential City facilities and vehicles.
- Mandatory public disclosure for certain violations involving campaigning on City time or in City facilities.
- Restitution for misuse of City resources.
- Mandatory ethics training.
- Ethics probation for up to one year, during which and additional violation shall carry enhanced penalties.
- Referral for employment discipline where appropriate.

Campaign Violations

- Individual reimburses the City for compensated time.
- Summary of violation and corrective actions posted publicly for 12 months.

Due Process and Transparency

- Notice and opportunity for hearing before sanctions.
- Written findings required.
- 30-day appeal.
- Annual Ethics Scorecard reporting complaints, violation types, resolution times, and penalties.