

Ethics and Elections Commission: An introduction

Executive Director: Wayne Barnett



History

- Fair Campaign Political Practices Commission established in September 1971
- Board of Ethics established in November 1971
- Twenty years later, in November 1991, the two are combined and christened the Ethics and Elections Commission

What We Do: The Big Picture

Exist to foster public confidence in government

“The City finds that the proper operation of democratic representative government requires that public officers and employees be independent, impartial, and responsible to the people; that government decisions and policy be made in the proper channels of the governmental structure; that public office not be used for personal gain; and that the public have confidence in the integrity of its government.” SMC 4.16.020.A

Who Is the Commission?

- Seven members
- Three appointed by Mayor, three appointed by Council, one by the Commission
- All confirmed by the Council
- None can be active politically in the City while serving on the Commission

What We Do: The Details

- Administer and enforce the Ethics Code
- Administer and enforce the Elections Code
- Administer the Whistleblower Protection Code
- Administer and enforce the Lobbying Code (adopted in 2008)
- Together with Seattle Channel and King County Elections, produce the Video Voters' Guide
- Administer the City's Democracy Voucher Program
 - Public financing program established by voters in 2015
 - Four election cycles to date

How We Do It

- 1 employee dedicated to Elections Code
- 1 employee (80% time) dedicated to Ethics Code
- 1 employee devoted to Lobbying Code
- 1 employee providing administrative support
- 2 employees (1.6 FTEs) providing dedicated IT support, focused on making campaign contribution and spending data easily available to the public
- 3 employees dedicated to the Democracy Voucher Program
- Overseen by Executive Director
- Annual general fund budget approximately \$1.3 million
- Annual Democracy Voucher Program budget \$3 million