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Chairman
Linda T. Sánchez, California
Ranking Member



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COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

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MEMORANDUM FOR ALL MEMBERS, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES

FROM: Committee on Ethics
 Charles W. Dent, Chairman
 Linda T. Sánchez, Ranking Member

SUBJECT: Reminder about Annual Ethics Training Requirements for 2015

This memorandum is a reminder to all offices to encourage staff to complete their 2015 training requirement. The Committee on Ethics is required to provide annual ethics training to each Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, and employee of the House.¹ Existing House officers and employees are required to take one hour of general ethics training each calendar year. For “new” employees, they must complete this training session *within 60 days of commencing House employment*.² In addition, the Committee requires all senior staff³ – whether new or existing employees – to take an additional hour of specialized training at least once per Congress.⁴

By January 31 of each year, all House employees must certify to the Ethics Committee that they have completed ethics training during the preceding calendar year.⁵ Employees who pre-register for and sign the attendance sheet at a live training *or* fully complete one of the online training options available through HouseConnect will have made their necessary certification to the Committee. The following are the ethics training requirements for 2015, as well as the details of how to complete the registration and/or certification process for both live and online ethics training programs.

¹ House Rule 11, clause 3(a)(6)(A). The Committee defines an “officer or employee” as an individual appointed to position of employment in the U.S. House of Representatives by an authorized employing authority who is receiving a salary disbursed by the Chief Administrative Officer or is in a leave without pay or furlough status.

² House Rule 11, clause 3(a)(6)(B)(i).

³ “Senior staff” for training purposes are employees who are paid at the “senior staff rate” for at least 60 days in either (or both) calendar years of a Congress. Please note that the senior staff annual salary rate is subject to change in 2016. For 2015, the senior staff rate was \$121,956, or a monthly pay rate at or above \$10,163.

⁴ The 114th Congress began on January 3, 2015, and ends on January 3, 2017.

⁵ House Rule 11, clause 3(a)(6)(B)(ii).

If you have any questions regarding this guidance, please feel free to contact the Committee's Office of Advice and Education at (202) 225-7103.

2015 ETHICS TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

"New" House Employees

All new employees must complete ethics training within 60 days of beginning House employment. A "new" House employee for purposes of the 2015 training requirement is an individual who first begins employment with the House on or after January 3, 2015. Any former House employee who returns to House employment after a gap of more than 60 consecutive calendar days is considered to be a "new" employee. Interns paid by the House for more than 60 days also must comply with this requirement.⁶ New employees, depending on their work location, may satisfy their training requirement in the following manner:

- New employees who work in Capitol Hill offices are required to attend a *live* training session. The schedule of upcoming new employee live ethics training sessions is available on the Committee Web site, <http://ethics.house.gov>.
- New employees who do not work in Capitol Hill offices may either attend a live training session *or* watch the "2015 New District Staff" training video online through the HouseConnect Web site. No other video satisfies the training requirement for new employees.⁷

New employees will *not* receive credit for attending or watching any training sessions other than those specifically designated "New Employee" or "New District Staff." New employees in Capitol Hill offices will not receive credit for completing online, rather than live, training. Note that new employees who are senior staff have an additional hour of training to complete, as explained more fully below under "Senior Staff Training."

Existing House Employees

"Existing" (*i.e.*, not new) House employees must complete one hour of training before the end of the calendar year. For 2015, this means all existing House employees must complete one hour of training by **December 31, 2015**. **There are no extensions to this deadline, for any reason.** In addition, employees who are senior staff may have an additional hour of training to complete, as explained more fully in the next section. Employees are responsible for knowing whether they are considered senior staff.

As a general matter, existing employees will fulfill their general ethics training requirement by completing an online session designated for general ethics training through the

⁶ Detailees, fellows, unpaid interns, and any individuals who are employed by the House and paid for less than 60 days are not required to attend ethics training in 2015. The Ethics Committee nonetheless encourages these individuals to complete ethics training so they become familiar with the House ethics rules while working in a House office or for a House committee.

HouseConnect Web site. The Ethics Committee will also offer some live training sessions that fulfill the general ethics training requirement. Note that attending a live training session for *new* employees does not satisfy the annual ethics requirement for *existing* House employees.

Senior Staff Training

All employees who are “senior staff”⁸ are required to take an additional hour of training at least once per Congress on issues primarily of concern to senior staff or supervisors. For the 114th Congress, this means all senior staff must complete one hour of training by **January 3, 2017**. This “senior staff” hour is required *in addition to* the one hour of general ethics training all officers and staff are required to complete annually. Senior staff employees may fulfill the requirement for an additional hour of senior staff training in one of two ways:

- 1) Completing an online senior staff training session through the HouseConnect Web site; or
- 2) Attending a live senior staff training session.

Briefings that satisfy the senior staff training requirement includes general sessions on issues of concern to senior staff, sessions on completing financial disclosure (FD) statements or Periodic Transaction Reports (PTRs), or sessions on the post-employment restrictions. However, employees may *not* complete more than one hour of senior staff training in lieu of completing their general ethics training requirement.

ONLINE REGISTRATION & CERTIFICATION PROCESS

For live ethics training

Employees who plan to attend any live training session ***must*** preregister at <https://registerme.house.gov> ***and*** sign in on the attendance form prior to the start of the training. Even if employees preregister, they must sign in and attend the full hour to fulfill their ethics training requirement. Attendees must arrive within five minutes of the start of the training to be able to sign the attendance sheet. **Any late arrivals who miss the sign-in period will not receive credit.** After their attendance, employees who have signed the attendance sheet and attended the full hour of training will receive email certificates, which they should preserve for their own records. The email certificates are confirmation for employees that they have satisfied the annual training and certification requirement. Any employee who has received this email confirmation statement has made the necessary certification to the Committee that they have completed their ethics training requirement.

The list of upcoming live training sessions for the remainder of 2015 is listed below and also available on the Ethics Committee Web site: <http://ethics.house.gov>. All scheduled training sessions – whether for new, existing, or senior staff – will be listed on the Committee calendar on an ongoing basis.

⁷ See footnote 3 for the definition of “senior staff.”

General Ethics Training	RHOB 2168	December 4, 2015, 2pm-3pm
New Employee Ethics Training	LHOB 1310	December 11, 2015, 2pm-3pm
Senior Staff Ethics Training	RHOB 2168	December 14, 2015, 2pm-3pm
General Ethics Training	RHOB 2168	December 18, 2015, 2pm-3pm

For online ethics training

Employees who want to complete ethics training online can access the training through the HouseConnect Web site: <https://houseconnect.house.gov>. Employees must complete the entire online training program to receive credit. You must use a House computer to access the HouseConnect Web site. Employees who do not have access to a House computer or do not have a House email account should contact the Ethics Committee to make alternate arrangements for completing their training.

After completing an online training program, the system will automatically log the employee as “complete.” This information is automatically transmitted to the Ethics Committee. Thus, once the system labels an employee as “complete,” the employee has satisfied the annual training and certification requirement. Employees will be able to check HouseConnect at any time to verify completion of their own annual ethics training requirement. The Ethics Committee does not have access to this information prior to the end of the calendar year and therefore cannot check your completion status for you with regard to online training.

To access your own record in HouseConnect, you should log in to your own account page in the HouseConnect Web site: <https://houseconnect.house.gov>. On your account page, the entry in the “Complete” column next to the particular training session read “True” if the session has been completed. (If the session has not been completed, the column will read “False.”) Anyone needing to check whether they have completed an online training session can view and print their own screen for verification. Their name appears in the upper right corner of the screen.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Failure to satisfy the annual training requirement is a violation of House rules⁹ and may result in any of the specified disciplinary sanctions for House employees, informing employees’ supervisors of their noncompliance, publication of noncompliant employees’ names and employing offices, additional ethics training, or other actions the Committee deems appropriate.

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⁸ See House Rule 11, clause 3(a)(6)(B)(ii).