



CITY OF CHICAGO



BOARD OF ETHICS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:**

The Board of Ethics

312-744-9660

[steve.berlin@cityofchicago.org](mailto:steve.berlin@cityofchicago.org)

**STATEMENT FROM THE CITY OF CHICAGO'S BOARD OF ETHICS**

The Board of Ethics is aware of certain recent comments about the due process implications of our enforcement procedures. The Board is confident that our procedures satisfy all the requirements of due process, and provide all persons with full notice and an opportunity to be heard before the Board takes any substantive action in their matter.

When the Board first makes a preliminary finding of probable cause that a person may have violated the City's Governmental Ethics Ordinance, the Board does so based on the information available to it at the time. The Board makes this finding on a factual record that remains completely confidential. This confidentiality safeguards the identity of the person(s) subject to the finding with the purpose of preventing any possible harm to their reputation.

After all preliminary findings of probable cause, the Board issues confidential, detailed, written notices to the person(s) involved, informing them of the basis of the preliminary findings and inviting them to respond in person and/or in writing, confidentially, with or without the assistance of counsel or other representative. In every instance, the Board has accommodated persons who have requested more time to respond to probable cause findings and has welcomed the insights they have provided.

Only after the Board has ensured that a person has received reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard does the Board make a final determination. The Board may by majority vote dismiss the matter. Alternatively, the Board may by majority vote determine that one or more violations of the Ethics Ordinance have occurred and impose penalties as provided by law.

The results of these steps reflect this careful, deliberative process: in thirty percent of recent cases where the Board has made preliminary findings of probable cause, these findings were ultimately dismissed. The Board is confident that these procedures respect the rights of all persons subject to its jurisdiction, are consistent with applicable law, and safeguard the confidentiality of all participants.

The Board's procedures are explained in this guide, which has been on the Board's website since 2017: <https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/ethics/general/Publications/EnforceProcedures.pdf>

A summary of all Board enforcement proceedings is posted here:

<https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/ethics/general/EnforcementMatters/Invest-Index.pdf>



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Respectfully,

William F. Conlon, Esq., Chair

Zaid Abdul-Aleem

Ryan Z. Cortazar, Esq.

Stephanie Cox-Batson, M.D.

David L. Daskal, Esq.

Norma Manjarrez, Esq.

The Hon. Barbara A. McDonald, Esq.

Steven I. Berlin, Esq., Executive Director