



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**STRONGER ETHICS ORDINANCE APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL**

*Amendments Incorporate Task Force's Initial Recommendations*

CHICAGO - The Chicago City Council today approved measures recommended by Mayor Rahm Emanuel that strengthen the City of Chicago's ethics ordinance by adopting the first set of recommendations from the Ethics Reform Task Force. Five months ago, Mayor Emanuel asked the members of the Ethics Reform Task Force to review the current ordinance, study best practices nationally, engage local experts and recommend reforms to ensure that City officials and employees are held to the highest ethical standards.

"The amendments adopted today were recommended by the Ethics Reform Task Force and demonstrate the City Council's cooperation and commitment to helping create a culture of ethics and accountability throughout City government," said Mayor Emanuel. "Since my first hour in office, we have been enhancing the City's ethics rules to ensure that every government employee is acting in the best interest of taxpayers, not for their own personal gain."

The approved amendments strengthen the gift ban and rules for financial disclosures, eliminate honoraria, add a "reverse revolving door" restriction, add a whistleblower protection for reporting misconduct, penalize Political Action Committees (PACs) for knowingly accepting improper campaign contributions and increase penalties for violations of the ethics ordinance.

For the first time, the ordinance will include a code of conduct aimed at creating a culture of ethical behavior by outlining the conduct expected of all City employees and officials. The code of conduct emphasizes that all City employees must serve the taxpayers of the City as their first priority.



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“The amended ethics ordinance reflects research on best practices in ethics administration, enforcement and education from across the nation while emphasizing both positive ethical values and clear compliance-based rules,” said Cynthia Canary, Chair, Ethics Reform Task Force. “This ordinance sends a strong message to the people of Chicago that their elected officials are deeply committed to the ethical stewardship of City government.”

“We reviewed the City’s ethics ordinance and recommended actions that strengthen the ordinance and increase transparency throughout City government, “ said Alderman Will Burns, a member of the Ethics Reform Task Force and sponsor of the ordinance. “The measures approved today amend the ethics ordinance to create clear bright lines for ethical behavior for city employees and officials.”

The Ethics Reform Task Force was formed by Mayor Emanuel in December 2011 to review the City’s ethics ordinance and recommend actions to strengthen the ordinance and increase accountability, oversight and transparency throughout City government. The Task Force is chaired by Cynthia Canary and includes Sergio Acosta, Alderman Will Burns and Dawn Clark Netsch.

The Task Force submitted Part I recommendations on April 30. The Task Force’s Part II recommendations will center on the relationship between, and the key responsibilities of, Chicago’s ethics institutions in an effort to clarify and streamline the ethics process. Part II will include a comprehensive look at the organization, process and powers of these institutions, as well as recommendations regarding lobbying.

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