



**Three-Year Strategic Plan
October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2027**

Updated October 15, 2024

Tallahassee Independent Ethics Board



Our Mission

To promote the actual and perceived integrity of our City government and to prevent unethical conduct before it occurs.

Our Core Values

Integrity – Adhere to strong moral and ethical principles and values.

Honesty – Be transparent and truthful when communicating with others.

Commitment – Be dependable, fair, thorough, and objective.

Excellence – Hold oneself accountable.

Respect – Be courteous to others and treat each person with equal value.

Executive Summary

The Ethics Code was established through a referendum in 2014, creating the Tallahassee Independent Ethics Board, a seven-member body appointed by the City Commission, Florida A&M University, Florida State University, State Prosecutor's Office, Public Defender's Office, and two selected at large by the Board members. The Ethics Office's staff includes a director/ethics officer and an administrative specialist. The Board contracts with a legal advisor.

The Board oversees ethics training for City officials, appointees, employees, and advisory board members. The Board has subpoena power and investigates alleged violations of the Ethics Code. The Board relies on citizens, vendors, City employees, and City officials to report violations of the Ethics Code.

The Board reviews its strategic plan at the end of the fiscal year and updates its priorities and strategies. To preserve continuity, the Board maintains a three-year plan. Accordingly, the Board has established the following priorities beginning October 1, 2024.

Priorities

1. Investigate alleged violations of the Ethics Code and administer a formal process for resolving complaints.
2. Encourage Tallahassee residents, City officials, City employees, advisory board members, and those conducting business with the City to maintain the highest ethical standards and report any perceived violations.
3. Make recommendations to the City Commission that strengthen local ordinances governing the conduct of elected and appointed City officials, City employees, vendors, contractors, and lessees.
4. Promote citizen participation in the electoral process through the Campaign Contribution Refund Program.

Strategic Priority 1

Investigate alleged violations of the Ethics Code and administer a formal process for resolving complaints.

Key Indicators

- The Board's bylaws and administrative procedures provide a transparent and efficient process for handling complaints.
- Investigations are conducted objectively, thoroughly, and efficiently.

Major Initiatives

- Identify gaps and weaknesses in the Board's bylaws and administrative procedures and identify opportunities to strengthen them.
- Conduct thorough and objective investigations.
- Acquire assistance as needed.
- Network with other ethics officers.
- The ethics office staff attends courses to enhance their job skills.

Strategic Priority 2

Encourage Tallahassee residents, City officials, City employees, advisory board members, and those conducting business with the City to maintain the highest ethical standards and report any perceived violations.

Key Indicators

- New City employees, City officials, and Board members have access to the Tallahassee Ethics Guide.
- Citizens and City employees demonstrate an interest in ethics through social media.
- Every City official and employee receives ethics training relevant to our mission.

Major Initiatives

- Beginning in 2024/2025, distribute the Tallahassee Ethics Guide to all City officials, employees, and City Commission advisory groups and committees every three years.
- Ensure the Tallahassee Independent Ethics Board web page is up-to-date and relevant.
- Promote ethics through social media.
- Coordinate ethics training for elected City officials and their aides.
- By September 30, 2025, develop online training for public records laws, public meeting laws, Article II of the Florida Constitution, statutory requirements for voting conflicts, campaign contribution limits, and restrictions on campaigning within government buildings.
- Maintain an online course for newly elected officials to meet the requirement for completing ethics training within 60 days of taking office.
- Administer an online ethics training course for City employees.
- Conduct ethics training for new employees in collaboration with the Human Resource and Workforce Development Department.
- Create a means of evaluating the effectiveness of the training.
- Provide advisory opinions.

Strategic Priority 3

Make recommendations concerning proposed ordinances, resolutions, or charter amendments to the City Commission in all areas of ethics and corruption, including but not limited to conflicts of interests, financial disclosure, voting conflicts, hotline policies, ethics education, ethics in procurement, campaign ethics and financing, and lobbying.

Key Indicators

The City Commission adopts the Board's recommendations.

Major Initiatives

- Present action items to the City Commission recommending revisions to the City Ordinance to serve the public's interest.

Strategic Priority 4

Promote citizen participation in the electoral process through the Campaign Contribution Refund Program.

Key Indicators

- The Campaign Contribution Refund Program performs more actively in the local campaign financing.
- Tallahassee residents demonstrate an awareness of the City of Tallahassee Campaign Contribution Refund Program.

Major Initiatives

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Summer 2024 media campaign and design strategies to increase public interest.