

**THE ACCOUNTABILITY CONDUCT AND ETHICS  
COMMISSION**

119 COURTHOUSE • 436 GRANT STREET  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15219  
PHONE (412) 350-5300 • FAX (412) 350-3581

**TONYA B. JOHNSON, ESQ.**  
CHAIRPERSON

**DR. VALIRE COPELAND**  
**JESSE TORISKY, ESQ.**  
**WILLIAM F. WARD, ESQ.**

Honorable John DeFazio, President  
Allegheny County Council  
119 Allegheny County Courthouse  
436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

**ANNUAL REPORT – 2019**

Dear President DeFazio:

Pursuant to Section 105.10 of The Accountability, Conduct and Ethics Code of Allegheny County (“Ethics Code”), this letter provides an Annual Report to County Council.

**Meetings, Procedures and Website**

The calendar year 2019 was the 17th full year of operation for The Accountability, Conduct and Ethics Commission of Allegheny County (“ACE Commission” or “Commission”). During the year, the Commission held four public meetings, with portions of those meetings being conducted in executive session.

The Ethics Code, information about the ACE Commission and its Members, and a Complaint Form remain available on the County’s website at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/commissions/accountability/index.aspx>. To further publicize and educate the public regarding the Commission’s existence and purpose, minutes of the Commission’s meetings and the Commission’s Annual Reports are posted to the County’s website.

Tonya B. Johnson, Esquire, continues to serve as the Commission’s Chairperson.

Theodore Trbovich, Esquire, continues to serve as the Legal Advisor to the ACE Commission.

On December 3, 2019, the term of Dr. Valire Copeland expired. The Commission is grateful for her years of talented and dedicated service.

## **Public Disclosure of Interest Statements**

The Public Disclosure of Interest Statement (“the Statement”) must be filed annually by all elected and appointed “county officers, county officials and public employees,” as defined in Section 101.03 of the Ethics Code. We rely on Department heads and employees themselves to determine if their positions in County government require that they file the Statement.

## **Complaints Received**

The ACE Commission has received a total of 48 Complaints since its inception. Nine complaints were received during 2019.

Complaint #40 was filed in January 2019. A preliminary inquiry was held and the case was dismissed.

Complaint #41 was filed in February 2019. A preliminary inquiry was held and the case was dismissed.

Complaint #42 was filed in February 2019. A preliminary inquiry was held and the case was dismissed.

Complaint #43 was filed in February 2019. The case was dismissed without a preliminary inquiry as there were no violations under the Code.

Complaint #44 was filed in February 2019. A preliminary inquiry was held and the case was dismissed.

Complaint #45 was filed in March 2019. A preliminary inquiry was held and the case was dismissed.

Complaint #46 was filed in March 2019. The case was dismissed without a preliminary inquiry as the allegations did not fall within the jurisdiction of the ACE Commission.

Complaint #47 was filed in March 2019. A preliminary inquiry was held and the case was dismissed.

Complaint #48 was filed in April 2019. The case was dismissed without a preliminary inquiry and the Complainant was referred to a board that could better address the allegations.

## **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality continues to remain important to the work of the ACE Commission, thus limiting the amount of information that can be revealed to the County Executive, County Council or to the public. In order to gain the trust and confidence of Complainants and Respondents, confidentiality is necessary, as required by the Ethics Code. The Commission remains committed to the Confidentiality provisions enacted by County Council.

### **Commission Activities**

The Members of the Commission continue to serve on a volunteer basis. The ACE Commission continues to abide by its responsibilities as laid out in the Ethics Code.

The Commission continues to have the valued assistance of the Department of Human Resources and the appointed Legal Advisor.

We continue to appreciate the opportunity to serve.

Respectfully yours,

*Tonya B. Johnson, Esq./ JS*

Tonya B. Johnson, Esq.  
Chair, ACE Commission

Dr. Valire Copeland  
Jesse Torisky, Esq.  
William F. Ward, Esq.

CC: Allegheny County Council Members  
Rich Fitzgerald, County Executive  
Kenneth Varhola, County Council Chief of Staff