

2012 Program Report Card: Legal Compliance, Advice (Connecticut Office of State Ethics)

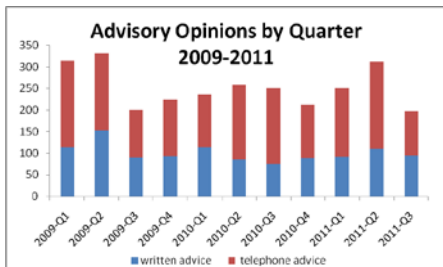
Quality of Life Result: Connecticut residents will have ethical government at the state level.

Contribution to the Result: The OSE’s Legal Division provides registered lobbyists, public officials, state employees, legislators and other regulated parties compliance assistance. This assistance provides them with the correct course of action, leading to more ethical government. (The following measures do not include ethical violations, as such a measure is neither easily nor directly comparable. For example, the nature of the enforcement process – statutorily separate from the Legal Division – leaves many would-be violations settled without admission of guilt. Additionally, studies show that increased knowledge results in increased enforcement activity, not less, so a positive correlation between advice sought and violations reduced would most likely be absent.)

Program Expenditures	State Funding	Federal Funding	Other Funding	Total Funding
Actual FY 11	\$461,750	0	0	\$461,750
Estimated FY 12	\$497,990	0	0	\$497,990

Partners: State agency ethics liaisons/compliance officers, regulated individuals (public officials, state employees, legislators, lobbyists, contractors), the Attorney General

How Much Did We Do?



Story behind the baseline:

The OSE provides advice to an average of 250 requestors per quarter. While the number varies by quarter with the 2nd quarter having the highest number. This coincides with the SFI filing date and the latter part of the legislative session, which are typically the busiest time of the year. The number of completed requests for advice has been consistent for each of the past three years ± 14 requests, a 5% variance rate. Between 3% and 5% of (8-16) matters are ongoing at the end of each quarter. Note that even the slowest quarters have 200 or more completed requests.

Trend: ◀▶

How Well Did We Do It?



Story behind the baseline:

Since 2009, the average number of days from receipt of a request for advice to completion of the response has steadily decreased. The division is in the process of examining its processes to determine ways to work smarter. For example, templates are being created to allow attorneys to fill in the pertinent facts thus, to the extent possible given that requests have different fact patterns, decreasing time spent per request. However, we may face increased backlogs because of the reductions in staff, particularly since the OSE staff transferred to OGA physically left the OSE office in December 2011.

Trend: ▲

Is Anyone Better Off?

Story behind the baseline:

In 2008, the OSE budget of \$2,276,133 supported 21 positions. After the consolidation of the OSE into the Office of Governmental Accountability the OSE appropriation is \$1,436,305 with a staff of 13, a 39% reduction and net loss of 8 positions.

In 2011, requestors who sought advice from the OSE were better off because they received complete and accurate advice in a timelier manner than in the past. Decreasing the average number of business days to close requests from over 12 days in 2009 to 5 days in 2011 by providing accurate advice to requestors who rely on the advice to comply with the Code of Ethics increases compliance. However, with the same number of attorneys but fewer support staff, the decrease in resources will impact the baseline and customer response time in 2012 and beyond.

Trend: ▼

Proposed Actions to Turn the Curve:

Increased education and training will be conducted to meet the statutory mandate to provide yearly training of *all* state personnel in the Code of Ethics. As education is conducted with increased volume and efficiency, the Legal Division will likely receive more requests for advice. It will be difficult to retain the current high-level of customer service given the recent reductions. A low cost solution will include the development of an internal and external evaluation of OSE quality measures to inform program, policy, resource allocation and program effectiveness.

Data Development Agenda:

In January 2012, the OSE will begin performing customer satisfaction surveys of a relatively random sample of requestors.