



# Washington State Executive Ethics Board

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## Executive Ethics Board News

**Matthew Williams III, Chair**  
**Lisa Marsh, Vice Chair**  
**Michael Bahn, Member**  
**Anna Dudek Ross, Member**  
**Samantha Simmons, Member**

November 13, 2012

The Executive Ethics Board (Board) met on Friday, November 9, 2012. All members were present. The Governor appointed Samantha Simmons from DSHS to fill the position vacated by Linnaea Jablonski. Others in attendance included: Melanie de Leon, Executive Director, David Killeen, Investigator, Ruthann Bryant, Board Secretary and AAG Bruce Turcott, Board Counsel. Members of the public also attended.

### Enforcement

In lieu of an enforcement hearing, the Board accepted stipulations from:

- **Douglas Nord**, faculty member at Western Washington University (WWU) for using his position to pursue activities for a private, non-profit organization, participate in activities for other non-state organizations and spending time away from his agency without requesting or taking annual leave. He also used state resources for personal gain. Evidence indicated that his non-leave absences equated to 38 percent of his available work time in 2008; 28 percent in 2009 and 16 percent between January and September, 2010. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$5,000 and ordered him to pay \$20,000 in restitution to WWU.
- **Ruben Ruelas**, a former employee for the Employment Security Department for using state resources for personal gain. Records indicated that 47 percent of Mr. Ruelas' use of the Internet was for personal business, including streaming media, perusing auto trading sites and using his personal e-mail account. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$1,200.
- **Benjamin Corral**, an Interviewer for the Employment Security Department for using state resources for personal gain. Evidence indicated that Mr. Corral used the Internet for personal business 46.6 percent of the time. His use included on-line shopping, downloading MP3 files and reading the news. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$2,500, suspending \$1,000.
- **Phillip Venditti**, a Speech/Communications Instructor for the Clover Park Technical College for using state resources for personal gain. Records revealed that Mr. Venditti used his agency's resources to promote his outside business activities. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$250.
- **Chon Clayton**, a Park Ranger for Washington State Parks and Recreation for using state resources for personal gain. Evidence indicated that Mr. Clayton took Parks' equipment to use in his personal residence and used state time inappropriately during travel. The Board fined Mr. Clayton \$450.
- **Abigail Haddock**, a former employee of the Military Department, for using state resources for an outside business with a telecommunications company and buying and selling gold and gold coins. The Board fined Ms. Haddock \$2,500.

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Meeting agendas can be found at [www.ethics.wa.gov](http://www.ethics.wa.gov) under "Meetings."

*The next meeting of the Executive Ethics Board is scheduled for January 11, 2013.*

- The Board found Reasonable Cause in eight cases: 2012-040 (Pezeshki), 2012-042 (Bigelow), 2012-043 (Holmes), 2012-044 (Long), 2012-045 (Hutchinson), 2012-046 (Cleman), 2012-047 (Johnson), and 2012-050 (Welch).
- The Board found No Reasonable Cause that a violation had occurred in EEB Case 2012-064 (Young).

**Board Action:**

- A. The Board reviewed and accepted the proposed 2012-2015 Strategic Plan.
- B. The Board discussed and accepted the use of a more streamlined form to use when making decisions regarding dismissing a case or making a reasonable cause determination.

**Other:**

- A. The Board elected officers for 2013: Lisa Marsh will become the Chair and Anna Dudek-Ross, the Vice-Chair.
- B. The Board will begin reviewing desired changes to the Ethics Act that can be sponsored via proposed legislation.
- C. The annual ethics survey to all state employees closed on October 31<sup>st</sup>. We received over 19,000 responses that will be used for the 2012 Legislative Report.

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