

The Metropolitan Water District Act

Part 4. Powers and Purposes

CHAPTER 1

POWERS GENERALLY

Sec. 126.7 [Establishment of Office of Ethics; Adoption of rules and penalties for Violations]

(a) The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California shall establish and operate an Office of Ethics and adopt rules relating to internal disclosure, lobbying, conflicts of interest, contracts, campaign contributions, and ethics for application to its board members, officers, and employees consistent with the intent and spirit of the laws and regulations of the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission, the Fair Political Practices Commission, and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

(b) The rules described in subdivision (a) shall address, and seek to avoid potential ethical abuses relating to, all of the following matters:

(1) The direct and indirect business relationships between board members, contractors, and vendors, and between board members and officers or employees of member public agencies.

(2) The solicitation of campaign contributions by board members, officers, or employees and the receipt of contributions from bidders, contractors, or subcontractors.

(3) Public notice and approval procedures for contracts of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) or more.

(c) (1) The office shall operate as an independent entity that is not subject to political influence and shall be staffed with professional, qualified persons.

(2) The office shall adopt the rules described in subdivision (a) for approval by the board, educate the board, staff, contractors, and subcontractors concerning those rules, and shall investigate complaints concerning the violation of those rules.

(3) The office shall adopt procedures for protecting the confidentiality of sources, the job security of “whistle blowers,” and due process rights of the accused.

(d) Subject to paragraph (3) of subdivision (c), the office shall make available to the public the results of the investigation that it undertakes.

(e) The office shall propose, and the board shall adopt, a schedule of penalties for violations of the rules described in subdivision (a) by board members, officers, staff, or contractors.

(f) For any association of individuals or entities that includes board members, officers, or employees of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California or of a member public agency of that district that is known by a name other than the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California or the name of a member public agency of the district, the rules of ethics shall prohibit any association structure or identification that is likely to mislead the public as to the association's true identity, its source of funding, or its purpose.

(g) Nothing in this section prohibits the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, a member public agency of that district, or a board member, officer, or employee of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California or of a member public agency of the district, from participating in, or, providing funding in a clearly identifiable way for, an association formed for the purpose of undertaking legitimate activities, including, but not limited to, advocating on behalf of that association before a local agency, the Legislature, or the United States Congress.

Added by Stats. 1999, ch. 415