



C. If you know the specific City, state or federal law, regulation, ordinance, or Ethics Code provision that you believe was violated, please list it or provide a summary. This will not limit the Board's review.

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D. List the names and contact information of persons, other than yourself, who also have knowledge of the alleged violation or who may have been witnesses to it.

| NAME  | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-------|---------------------|
| _____ | _____               |
| _____ | _____               |

E. Attach or scan copies of any documents you possess that you believe are evidence of the alleged violation. You do not need to attach public records (for example, minutes of public meetings) that the Board can get on its own. Generally, a newspaper article, by itself, is not considered evidence of a violation.

F. Person making this complaint:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (include City, State and Zip Code):

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

G. How do you prefer to be contacted?

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ I don't wish to be contacted

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*For Ethics Office use only:*

Tracking number: \_\_\_\_\_

## **COMPLAINT PROCESS EXPLANATION**

**Jurisdiction of the Independent Ethics Board (Board):** The Board has the authority to review, investigate and adjudicate complaints and levy fines concerning possible breaches of the public trust by City elected or appointed officials, officers, or employees, and similar persons involved within City government in Tallahassee.

**Procedures followed by the Board:** The Board follows a three-stage process when it considers complaints.

The first stage is a determination of whether the allegations of the complaint are legally sufficient, that is, whether the complaint indicates a possible violation of any local corruption, fraud, waste, mismanagement or campaign finance law or Ethics Code over which the Board has jurisdiction. If the complaint is found not to be legally sufficient, the Board will order that the complaint be dismissed without investigation and all records relating to the complaint will become public at that time.

If the complaint is found to be legally sufficient, the investigative staff of the Board will begin an investigation. The second stage of the Board's proceedings involves this investigation of the complaint and a decision by the Board of whether there is probable cause to believe that there has been a violation of any local corruption, fraud, waste, mismanagement or campaign finance law or Ethics Code over which the Board has jurisdiction. If the Board finds that there is no probable cause to believe that there has been such a violation, the complaint will be dismissed and will become public at that time.

If the Board finds that there is probable cause to believe there has been a violation of local corruption, fraud, waste, mismanagement, campaign finance law or Ethics Code, the complaint becomes public and enters the third stage of proceedings. The third stage requires that the Board decide whether the law or Ethics Code actually was violated and, if so, what penalty should be levied. This stage requires a public hearing (trial) at which the parties will be heard and evidence would be presented.

**Confidentiality:** A complaint, as well as all of the Board's proceedings and records relating to the complaint, is confidential and exempt from the public records law either until the person against whom the complaint is made waives confidentiality, or until the complaint reaches a stage in the Board's proceedings where it becomes public. The Board's procedures on confidentiality do not govern the actions of the complainant or the person against whom the complaint is made. Persons wishing to remain anonymous may leave a message on the Ethics and Fraud Hotline voicemail system at (850) 891-8813.

**Possible Referral: Complaints may be transferred to another city, county, state, federal or other governmental agency for possible criminal, regulatory, fraud or waste investigation and prosecution.**

**Legal Counsel:** Both the complainant and subject of the complaint can be represented by legal counsel during the Board's proceedings.

**Other Information:** More information about the Board and its responsibilities is available at the Board's website, [www.talgov.com](http://www.talgov.com).