

2013 Program Report Card: Legal Compliance, Advice (Connecticut Office of State Ethics)

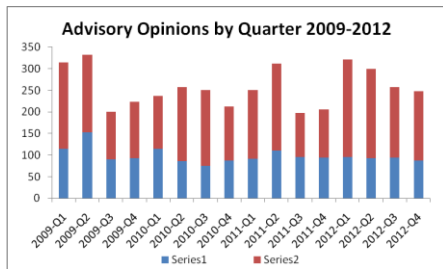
Quality of Life Result: Connecticut residents will have ethical government at the state level.

Contribution to the Result: The OSE’s Legal Division provides assistance and legal advice to registered lobbyists, all state public officials (except judges), state employees, legislators, state contractors and others. This assistance provides them with the correct course of action, leading to more ethical government. (Measures below do not include violations, as such measures are neither easily nor directly comparable. For example, the nature of the enforcement process – by law separate from the Legal Division – leaves many would-be violations settled without admission of wrongdoing. Also, studies show that increased education results in increased enforcement activity, not less, so a positive correlation between advice sought and violations reduced would likely be absent.)

Program Expenditures	State Funding	Federal Funding	Other Funding	Total Funding
Actual FY 12	\$445,572	0	0	\$445,572
Estimated FY 13	\$445,572	0	0	\$445,572

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

How Much Did We Do?



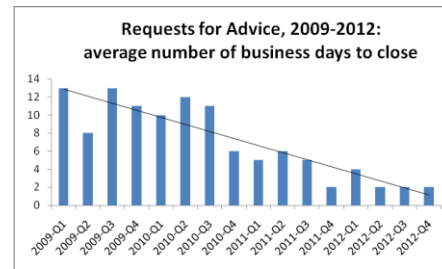
Story behind the baseline:

The OSE provides compliance advice to an average of 255 requestors per quarter and saw a 14% increase in requests from 2011 to 2012. This increase can be attributed in part to increased outreach. (See *2013 Ethics Education Report Card*.)

The number of requests 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 times of the year. Note that even the slowest quarters have 200 completed requests. The number of requests open at the end of the year decreased by 87% since December 31, 2008.

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 continues examining its processes to determine ways to work smarter and has established a long-term strategic plan. For example, in an ongoing project, templates are being created for attorney use. To the extent possible given that requests have different fact patterns, this will decrease time spent per request. However, we may face increased backlogs because of the reductions in staff, particularly as the number of in-person trainings increases.

Trend: ▼

Is Anyone Better Off?

Story behind the baseline: In 2011, the OSE was consolidated into the Office of Governmental Accountability. The budget of the OSE for FY 2013 is \$1,282,580, with a staff of 13, which equals a 39% reduction in budget and a loss of 8 positions since 2008. Through streamlining efforts, more individuals seeking advice have received advice more quickly. In 2012, 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 11 days in 2009 to less than 3 days in 2012 increases compliance. Timely advice to requestors who rely on the advice to comply with the Code enhances compliance and encourages requestors to seek advice in the future. However, with the same number of attorneys but fewer support staff, the decrease in resources will impact timeliness.

Trend: ▲

Proposed Actions to Turn the Curve:

The OSE will continue its outreach efforts. Education and training will be systematically offered to all state agencies to meet the statutory mandate to provide yearly training of *all* state personnel. The ongoing initiative to update the website and educational materials to more user-friendly formats as well as increased communication with ethics liaisons supplements our outreach efforts. As education is conducted with increased volume and efficiency, the Legal Division will likely receive more requests for advice. Such increases will make it difficult to retain the current high-level of customer service given the limited resources.

Data Development Agenda:

The OSE will explore implementing a new case management system to better track data and streamline maintaining and collecting such data. The cost of such a system may make purchasing and implementing such a system unachievable in the next biennium.