

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Board of Ethics and Government Accountability



Open Government Report 2014

On July 21, 2014, Mayor Gray issued the Transparency, [Open Government and Open Data Directive \(Mayor's Order 2014-170\)](#). The directive is intended to promote greater government accountability among District Government agencies. The directive requires each agency to expand its cadre of proactively disclosed records as well as publishing the data in machine-readable formats such as HTML, XML, CSV, JSON, RDF or XHTML.

Since its inception in 2012, the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability (BEGA) has implemented an “open-by-default” policy in its oversight of the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) and the Office of Open Government (OOG). Both the OGE and the OOG are joined under the umbrella of BEGA, operating on the premise that an ethical government is a transparent government.

Through its annual [BEGA Best Practices Report, the OOG](#) will continue to provide policy recommendations to the Executive Office of the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia that will promote sustainable government transparency policies, agency responsiveness through the use of easily accessed and maintained technological tools and advocate for greater civic collaboration and participation in communities.

- The Office of Government Ethics and the Office of Open Government make all statutes, rulemakings, trainings, advisory opinions, dispositions and testimony issued by the respective offices available on BEGA's website at www.bega-dc.gov.
 - Advisory opinions issued by OGE are presumptively protected from disclosure as attorney/client privilege under D.C. Official Code §2-534(a)(4). However, OGE seeks the approval from the requestor to publish the opinion on the website with the appropriate redactions to protect requesters' identity.
 - [Advisory opinions](#) issued by the Office of Open Government are published on the website with the permission of the requestor.
 - All [trainings](#) conducted by OOG and OGE are published on the website in searchable pdf format.
 - All [OGE Complaint Reports](#) are published on the website in XLSX format.
- Under D.C. Official Code §§2-571-578, all meetings of public bodies must be properly noticed, and recorded, and detailed minutes and/or recordings are to be provided to the public. The Office of Open Government provides the District's only central calendar of public body meeting dates/agendas, meeting minutes, etc. on its website at <http://www.bega-dc.gov/board-commission/meetings>. Also, the site allows boards and commissions to easily upload meeting audio recordings and administrative materials.
- BEGA makes available video/audio recordings of meetings available on its website; the recordings and detailed meeting minutes are easily accessed in corresponding [list](#) or [calendar](#) views, and are saved in searchable .pdf or .wav formats. Streaming of BEGA meetings real-time

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is currently inhibited by OCTO. OCTO must provide the necessary equipment to allow BEGA to stream its meetings. The OOG recommends the use of Google Hangout and other similar online conferencing tools that may be easily used by public bodies and accessed by the public on all PC's and mobile devices.

- The public may submit RSVPs to attend BEGA meetings and all other public body meetings listed on the BEGA site. The public may also submit comments to the board and members of BEGA staff via the BEGA website.
- [Financial Disclosure](#) Statements and [Lobbyist](#) filings may be electronically filed and viewed via the BEGA website.
- The public may submit [ethics complaints](#) via the BEGA website in addition to traditional forms of communication such as telephone and email.
- All information that must be proactively disclosed under D.C. Official Code §2-531 and FOIA requests received and processed by OGE and OOG are listed on the BEGA website under a corresponding [FOIA tab](#). As the Director of the OOG also serves as the District's FOIA Officer, all agency [FOIA Officer](#) contact information as well as the general [FOIA process](#) is located on the BEGA website.
- BEGA, under the guidance of the OOG, is the first District Government Agency to “open up” District laws by making regulations concerning public bodies available on an open source platform via DC [Decoded](#). On the DC Decoded website, viewers have access to those regulations and are able to hover over text found in the regulations to view in-line definitions. Viewers also have the ability to forward or otherwise share the text with others without copyright restriction.
- BEGA makes its Annual Best Practices Report available on [Madison](#), a government policy co-creation platform which allows users to interact with lawmakers. Users are able to provide feedback and comments in real-time as legislation and policy are being introduced and considered.
- To solicit feedback from the coding community on its open government policies and practices, the OOG makes its Annual Best Practices Report available on GitHub. BEGA's IT staff will also work to place all complaints received by BEGA in a GitHub repository.