Ethically Speaking

Milwaukee County Ethics Board

Promoting Integrity in County Government

October 2026

Secondary Employment

In today's economy it is not uncommon for employees to have a second job. Some might even be considering starting a business. If you're thinking of doing either then here's what you, as a County official or employee, might want to know…

- **Hours of Work:** County officials and employees are expected to dedicate County time exclusively to their public duties, ensuring that any work for a secondary employer is performed outside of County hours.

a. **Separation of Resources:** County officials and employees are expected to use County resources, such as computers, phones and e-mail, solely for their county duties. Ensuring that any work for a secondary employer is conducted using non-County resources.

b. **Privileged Information:** County officials and employees are entrusted to protect privileged information gained in their County role and are expected to avoid using it for personal or financial benefit for themselves or others. What is considered privileged information? The Ethics Code defines it as "information obtained under government authority which has not become a part of the body of public information".

The "Test"

When it comes to secondary employer, ask yourself:

- **Are they a Milwaukee County vendor?**
- **Could they become a Milwaukee County vendor in the future?**
- **Am I or could I be involved in the contracting process on behalf of either?**
- **Could it appear that I was offered this secondary employment because of my current role with Milwaukee County?**

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you should contact the Ethics Board office for guidance.

Why is this important?

We as County employees and elected or appointed County officials hold our positions as a public trust. Using County time, resources or information gained through your County employment for your own private benefit or that of a secondary employer is a violation of that trust.

Who do I reach out to for help?

Do you have questions on the topic?
Think you may be facing an ethics issue?
To request a confidential advisory opinion, contact us:

E: ethics@milwaukeecountywi.gov
P: 414-278-5332