

# NYC CONFLICTS OF INTEREST BOARD

# THE PUBLIC SERVICE PUZZLER

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## ALL MIXED UP!

Here in the Education and Engagement Unit of the Conflicts of Interest Board, we talk a lot about City employees developing a “field awareness” of municipal ethics issues; the idea is, simply, that it’s harder to address your potential conflicts of interest — making the appropriate disclosures and recusals, calling for advice, that sort of thing — if you can’t spot a conflict when it arises.

That’s why the Unit is so prolific in providing live trainings, video assets, social media content, newsletters, contests (like this one!), and just about anything that can bring ethics more frequently to front of mind: it’s difficult to be attentive to something you haven’t thought about in a while.

We think this has been successful, but it does beg the question: what if all the important ethics issues *were all jumbled up and mixed into a classic word scramble?!* Would City employees still be able to identify the important Chapter 68 topics? Let’s find out! And, as always, [email us](#) your correct answers to be featured as next month’s Public service Puzzler winner!

### WELCOME TO THE JUMBLE



1. RUISAGETTI — \_\_\_\_\_ (Giving you a tip on this one...)
2. NEDCALTIIN — \_\_\_\_\_ (AUP says Limited, Personal, and...)
3. ONHGIGNTLOMI — \_\_\_\_\_ (Taking a second job, in COIB parlance)
4. EPINNEMACDUTA — \_\_\_\_\_ (Your \_\_\_ child can’t own any part of a firm doing business with the City)
5. LOITCAFDENIN — \_\_\_\_\_ (An important kind of City information)
6. TWESSIN— \_\_\_\_\_ (Can’t be a paid expert \_\_\_ in a lawsuit by or against the City)
7. EWVIRA— \_\_\_\_\_ (Need permission for an otherwise prohibited position?)
8. POIERSUR— \_\_\_\_\_ (Can’t engage in financial relationships with subordinates)
9. RCEIRPMUALTTAAR— \_\_\_\_\_ (Post employment ban on handling this...)
10. 0041224124— \_\_\_\_\_ (A legal advice line, you say? Available to all City employees?)

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**LAST MONTH'S BIG WINNER:**  
**ALEXANDER YELLEN!**



**No, no, no. I've only had \$49 of champagne and hors d'oeuvres!**



Congratulations to last month's Puzzler winner, Alexander Yellen, who provided a very ethical caption to our New Year's cartoon! Of course, we would never encourage anyone to skirt right up to the line of the \$50 Valuable Gift Rule, but it sure was funny to think about! Let's get to know our winning public servant!

**What is your City/office title?**

Deputy Director & Senior Counsel, Labor & Employee Relations, NYCHA

**Cool! What does a Deputy Director & Senior Counsel do?**

Amongst other tasks, I represent NYCHA on contractual grievances, administer NYCHA's legal internship program, and am NYCHA's COIB ethics liaison.

**Despite you being an ethics liaison, we're going to go ahead and say this victory *isn't* a conflict of interest. How long have you been working for the City?**

I have been with NYCHA since April 2021. Previously, I was with Health + Hospitals for approximately 3.5 years.

**Obviously working for the City is the best job imaginable. But, hypothetically, if you could work at any other job, what would it be?**

I would be a journalist, since I love to let people tell me their stories, put all the pieces together of what I've heard, and create a broader narrative. All of which are essential in my life as a lawyer.

**OK, last question: what's a fun fact someone wouldn't know about you just from looking?**

Before I became a lawyer, I was a musician. I hold a degree in Jazz Composition from The New School; I play piano, tenor saxophone, and clarinet – though none of those outside of my own home since 2010.

**Free the clarinet, Alexander! And thanks once again for playing — and winning! — the Public Service Puzzler!**