

# THE PUBLIC SERVICE PUZZLER

AUGUST 2025

Editor: Rob Casimir


## HIGH SECURITY

Some things in life are simple: the [Conflicts of Interest Law's "no tips" rule](#), the [Conflicts of Interest Law's restriction on financial relationships between superiors and subordinates](#), or even the [Conflicts of Interest Law's requirement that public servants get a waiver](#) for any outside employment with firms that do — or are seeking to do — business with the city. These are just a few commonsense examples we all agree are true. Would that *all of life* were as simple and straightforward as the ethics rules found in Chapter 68 of our City Charter!

But some things in life are difficult. Like “two-factor authentication.” What does that term even mean? Sounds fascist. And yet, the world’s top tech experts will tell you it’s no more than “an identity and access management security method that requires two forms of identification and gives businesses the ability to monitor and help safeguard their most vulnerable networks.”

All that sounds well and good, but when I logged in today to schedule a City agency’s [award-winning](#) (and also [mandatory](#)) ethics training, I was met with what -- to me -- seemed like an *extraordinary* set of technical difficulties. And as a modern office worker, I am not going to attempt to get to the bottom of this; instead, I’ll be taking screenshots and posting them to someone who might actually know what is going on. Behold:

X




**Suppose you're on a game show, and you're given the choice of three doors. Behind one door is an awesome prize: a DVD containing all of the COIB's Educational Videos. Behind the other doors are expired avocados.**

**You pick a door, say No. 1, and the host, who knows what's behind the doors, opens another door, say No. 3, which has an expired avocado. He then says to you, "Do you want to pick door No. 2?" Is it to your advantage to switch your choice? Why or why not?**

OK

X



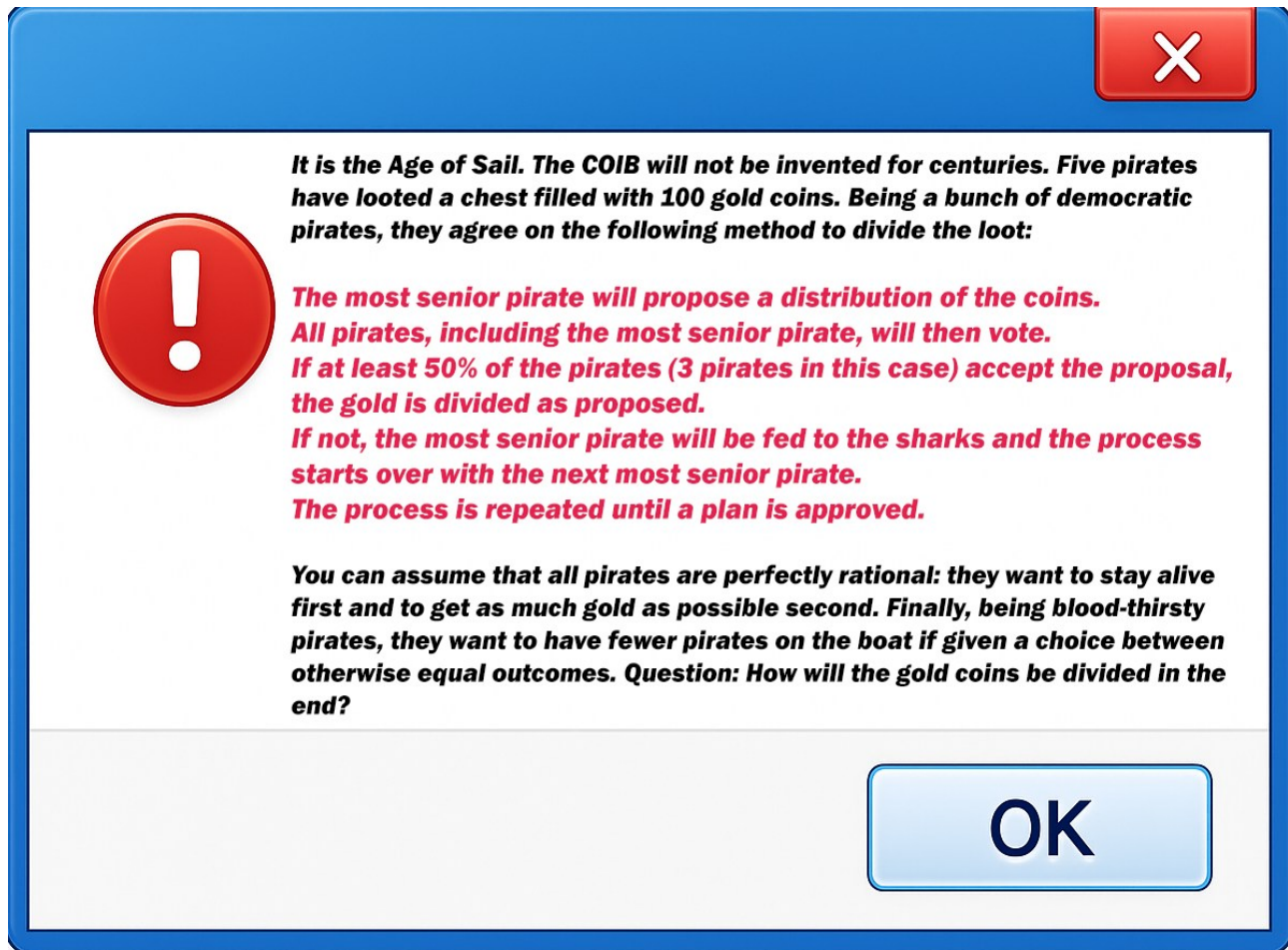
**You are about to start your COIB Training when you realize the clock on the wall is not working.**

**However, you happen to have two ropes, each of which takes 1 hour to burn. But each rope has different densities at different points, so there's no guarantee of consistency in the time it takes different sections within the rope to burn.**

**Question: How do you use these two ropes to measure 45 minutes?**

OK

## NYC CONFLICTS OF INTEREST BOARD



See what I mean?

If anyone can help me solve these challenges and log into my COIB account, I will make them the winner of this month's *Puzzler* and give them a place of honor beside last month's winner, **Peter Faherty of the Department of Correction**, in the **JONATHAN HOFFMAN + PETER KONTOGIANNIS HALL OF ETHICS AND EXCELLENCE**. And if you're thinking: isn't it a misuse of government position to outsource my tech support to a City workforce that almost certainly has more important work to do?

**No.** Because [§2604\(b\)\(3\) of Chapter 68 of the City Charter](#) says you have to misuse your position to obtain a private benefit for yourself or an associated party. And I'm using my position to obtain the *public* benefit of being able to actually log in and send out an especially interesting *Ethical Times* newsletter. I love laws! Anyway, get your [submission in by September 18th](#) for your chance to be selected among the winners! But please be quick, because I really do need to get into my computer.



# NYC CONFLICTS OF INTEREST BOARD

## THE JONATHAN HOFFMAN + PETER KONTOGIANNIS

### HALL OF ETHICS AND EXCELLENCE

LUKE SZABADOS – BUILDINGS

AMY HOM – DFTA

ELISABETH TOPALITZAS – DORIS

CHRISTOPHER LYNCH – LAW DEPT

HUNTER IGOE – LAW DEPT

HEATHER MURAKAMI – HONOLULU ETHICS COMMISSION

MELISSA HESTER – ACS

MARY LANE – FINANCE

KATIE MILLER – TIG

EVA GAMBINO – FINANCE

TOBY SINGER – DEP

ROBERT ROLANDI – FINANCE

JAMES TOBACK – OCME

FLORENCE MALLETTE – FINANCE

SHAWNORA GULLEY – BUILDINGS

MELINDA CALDERON – OCME

IVAN SANTIAGO – DSS

WILLIAM FLETCHER – NYPD

STYLIANI KARPADAKIS – OCME

BERNARD BRAUN – LAW DEPT

NIGEL C.O. MANUEL – BUILDINGS

MICHELE SIMENSKY – LAW DEPT

NANCY SULTAN-IORMIL – BUILDINGS

SHIVAJEET CHAKRABORTY – TIG

CHARLOTTE YIH – COMPTROLLER

JONATHAN HOFFMAN – DEP

MICHAEL GREENE – DSS

JACK SHVARTS – EDUCATION

PETER FAHERTY – DOC

GARFIELD S. SCARDER – SCA

SARAH ROBERSON – PARKS

KIMFA CARRINGTON – DOT

VINCENT RIVELLESE – BRONX DA

YVONNE CHOW – DSNY

SIMONE KING – DOT

ALEXANDER YELLEN – NYCHA

LISA BRANDQUIST – FDNY

KELIAN STANNER – PARKS

PUI CHING – SBS

SANDRA COLLYMORE – FINANCE

JAMES DAVIE JR. – BUILDINGS

ROLANDA OSBOURNE – FINANCE

EUJEAN PARK – SBS

CHRIS K. PAPA – ACS

KATHY TUZNIK – DDC

MONICA DOYLE – FINANCE

DIANA HERRERA – FISA-OPA

MARIE SAMPLES – OCME

LAURA GODFREY – DCA

JOHN RAYALI – FINANCE

TORREY FISHMAN – MOIA

MICHAEL LEVARIO – APPOINTMENTS

PETER KONTOGIANNIS – DEP

EUGENE MASSEY (2X) – DOHMH

CINDY CHEN – DOT

VALERIE WALD – EDUCATION

NOWSHIN FARA – CB17 BROOKLYN