

Office of Public Stewardship

Annual Report 2012-2013

<http://www.maricopa.edu/publicstewardship>



Office Overview

The MCCCDC Office of Public Stewardship (OPS) was established in order to consolidate resources and formalize administrative responsibility for services that are related to stakeholder accountability. The Office of Public Stewardship is responsible for:

- **Maricopa Concernline (24/7 anonymous reporting service)**
- **Citizens' and Employee Ombuds Services**
- **Public Records Management**
- **Maricopa Governance**

In addition, the Office is responsible for establishing procedures for the administration of the **MCCCDC Tuition Waiver Program** and monitoring the use of waivers by employees, dependents of employees, and non-employees authorized by state statute to receive waived tuition when attending a Maricopa college.

The OPS is part of the Office of General Counsel, but as established by the International Ombudsman Association, maintains independence and autonomy in the review of ombuds-related issues. The Office is also committed to demonstrating key policy values such as honesty, integrity, responsibility, and stewardship when assisting both internal and external constituents in identifying and utilizing the proper mechanisms to obtain information and resolve concerns.

In addition to facilitating the policy and administrative regulation amendment processes and electronically maintaining the policies and regulations of the District, the Office also maintains "Conflict of Interest" and "Residency for Tuition Purposes" web sites.

Finally, for compliance with MCCCDC email messaging standards, the OPS also assigns access to the email designees to post messages to the district-wide email distribution lists **dl-maricopa-business** and **dl-maricopa-announcements**.

Training is mandatory before access will be granted to the lists. Messages are monitored to ensure that the standards are adhered to by the designees.

The Office of Public Stewardship is staffed by two personnel, Teresa Toney, Manager, Office of Public Stewardship and Danay Bell, Administrative Assistant. Danay joined the Office in January 2013, and as part of the onboarding process, received direct training from her predecessor and has attended professional development workshops offered by the International Ombudsman Association and local chapter meetings of Arizona ombudsmen.

Maricopa Governance

MCCCD Board Policies and Administrative Regulations

In FY2012-2013, no specific Board policies were amended by Board action, however, the Board began a series of discussions that focused on examining their policies at length in order to understand the Carver Policy Governance Model.

In essence, the model is meant to outline the policy making role of our elected officials and the administrative role of the Chief Executive Officer.

As new members have been elected to serve since the model was first adopted, the Board has identified policy review as one of its priorities and changes are anticipated in the method of presenting monitoring reports that demonstrate policy compliance.

Administrative regulations reflect day to day operations of the District. Items that were amended through the formal approval process included the Catalog Common Pages, which are regulations that are specific to students, where language on Academic Accommodations was added to the Students with Disabilities regulation. Academic Calendars for 2013-2014 and 2015-2016 were also approved. After a lengthy review process that actually began the previous fiscal year, the Travel Administrative Regulation was revised and approved. The changes were considered technical in nature and were made to clarify the existing terms and conditions for business travel.

Tuition Waivers

For the FY2012-2013 reporting cycle, primary developments included establishing a credit hour limit on the number of credits that could be taken in a single semester by employees and their dependents. While the Office conducts routine monitoring to examine non-participation, a spring 2013 review of waiver activity established that a number of full-time employees and their dependents enrolled in more than 12 credit hours each semester. This was viewed as inequitable in comparison to the number of hours allotted for part-time employees during a semester (6 credits for employees/none for dependents of part-time employees).

A recommendation was made by the Office to the Chancellor and approved by the Governing Board to set the semester credit hour limit for full-time employees to 12 credits per semester and 16 for their spouses and dependent children.

SB 1208 was signed by the Governor on June 20, 2013 and established a five-year pilot program that expands tuition waiver eligibility for those in foster care who meet certain conditions and attend any Arizona public university or community college. The MCCCD via the Office of Public Stewardship is presently establishing a process to accommodate requests for this waiver. This fiscal impact is unknown but anticipated to be minimal as the waiver would cover costs after the application of other federal grants.

Records and Information Management (RIM)

Public Records Requests

The OPS processed a number of public records requests during FY2012-2013:

Quarter	Records Requests Processed		
	Count	Fee	Number
1Q	17	\$225.80	2,000
2Q	28	\$630.00	4,000
3Q	37	\$678.00	9,000
4Q	48	\$800.00	8,900

The most notable records request that was processed during this reporting period came during the 3rd quarter where the District released over 9,000 pages; the vast majority of records were related to a bid protest submitted by a software vendor. A new records reproduction fee was also approved by the Governing Board, wherein the Office of Public Stewardship is now able to assess a fee of \$15.00 to reproduce documents onto a thumb drive or other form of media.

In April, the manager attended a Public Records Law Litigation Seminar in Scottsdale hosted by Law Seminars International. The seminar focused on issues from the standpoint of attorneys who have dealt with the unique procedural issues of bringing and defending public records law suits.

Records Retention

The OPS works directly with the Arizona State

Library, Archives and Public Records (ASLAPR) Records Management Division to provide information and access to approved records retention schedules. The agency offered a series of webinars for state agencies and political subdivisions. The OPS staff participated in the webinars as a refresher for records retention and in preparation to implement requirements for creating lists of essential records (records needed to continue operation in the event of a disaster or emergency). In addition, the manager attended a national conference on Managing Electronic Records due to the increase in demand and discovery requests for records produced in electronic format.

Ombuds Services

Trend Data FY2012-2013

The Office of Public Stewardship prepares quarterly reports on the types of concerns submitted to the Concernline or reported directly to the Ombudsman. Once reported, concerns are evaluated and assigned for review. All concerns receive a reply upon conclusion of the review.

Trend data reflect reports in areas such as discrimination, unfair employment practices, harassment or unfair treatment, environment/health and safety, conflict of interest and ethics/values, and use of public resources. Also tracked are concerns about employee relations, requests by employee job groups, requests for general assistance, and incidents of college-specific issues that do not fall into any other category.

During this reporting period, the Office alerted the institution to a pattern of activity that related to external parties obtaining maricopa.edu email addresses for the expressed intent to commit fraudulent activity. The activity involved parties posing as potential students expressing an interest in enrolling at a college and once an email address was issued, would use that address to make on-line purchases. The Office became aware of this activity after being contacted either by vendors where purchases were made or businesses whose own credit cards were stolen and used to make purchases. This led to a process change where email accounts are now issued after completion of a student information form and admission to a college.

None of the reported incidents involved actual Maricopa students.

For FY 2012-2013 (July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013), other concerns were reported as follows:

There were 254 direct contacts to the Office of Public Stewardship and 48 submissions via the Maricopa Concernline.

The primary concerns tracked were categorized as:

- 5 Discrimination
- 7 Unfair Employment Practices
- 19 Harassment/Unfair treatment
- 11 Conflict of Interest
- 26 Ethics, Values, Stewardship
- 9 Employee Relations
- 35 General Assistance
- 178 Student Specific College Inquiries
- 2 Miscellaneous

All concerns are treated as allegations made and are examined in order to establish whether the claim is substantiated or not. The information provided here is for the purpose of trend reporting. The reporting reflects the number and type of concerns submitted during the reporting period but does not reflect whether the incidents were substantiated or unsubstantiated.

Stewardship Contact Information

Additional information on the services provided by the Office of Public Stewardship are available online at www.maricopa.edu/publicstewardship or calls are taken directly at 480-731-8880.

