



The Prince George's County Government Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA)

Executive Summary OEA's Quality Assurance Review July 1, 2019 Through June 30, 2023

June 30, 2024

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**The Prince George’s County Government
Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA)
Quality Assurance Review Report
Period of July 1, 2019 Through June 30, 2023**

Executive Summary

Dickey & Associates, LLC (D&A) was contracted to perform a quality review of the Prince George’s County Office of Ethics and Accountability’s operation to determine whether the OEA’s quality assurance procedures are suitably designed, and the office is complying with its quality system to provide OEA with reasonable assurance of conforming to its standard operating procedures and applicable professional standards. The OEA is required to have in place a system of quality policies and procedures designed to provide reasonable assurance of compliance with professional standards, rules, and regulatory requirements. The OEA is required to establish, implement, and maintain a quality system for its cases and investigation activities and operations.

To accomplish the review objectives, D&A obtained an understanding of the quality assurance procedures in place at OEA; reviewed the OEA’s standard operating procedures and the U.S. Government Accountability Office *Government Auditing Standards* for quality controls. We reviewed applicable quality standards, laws, and regulations; and designed our review procedures to identify any gaps in OEA’s quality application and practices on a representative sample of case and investigation files to determine if any deficiencies exist. We also held discussions and conferences with the Executive Director (ED) and staff at the office. During the meetings, we advised the ED of our review commencement date, timelines for fieldwork, and deliverables during the fieldwork, and after the exit conference. We also held status meetings and follow-up discussions with the ED on the schedule of accomplishments as deemed appropriate. The total case population and samples selected are represented in the table and pie chart below.

Fiscal Year	Total Cases (Population)	% Change Over Prior Yr.	Sample Cases (95% Confidence Level)
2019	392		59
2020	468	19%	70
2021	439	-6%	65
2022	501	14%	75
2023	356	-29%	53
Total	2,156		322

Figure 1 – Total Case Population and Samples for Case Workload during FY2019-FY2023

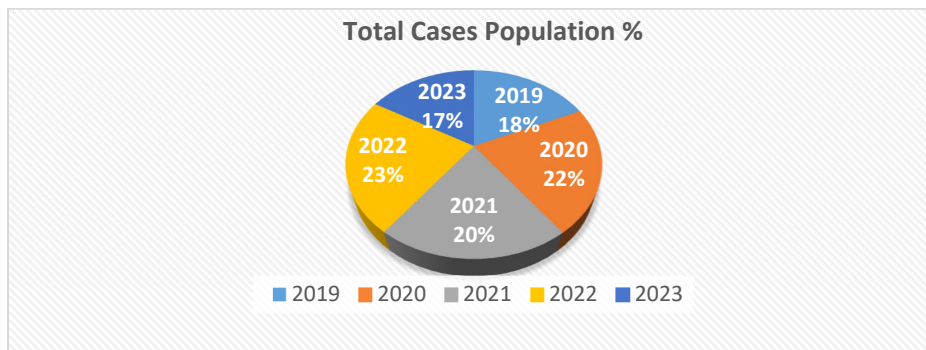


Figure 1a - Total Case Population Percentages

The composition of the case and investigation files is a mix of the types of cases received and processed by the office. The types of cases are noted in the charts with their respective “Total Cases Population” in [Figure 1](#) above; and “Types of Case Percentages (%)” in [Figure 2](#) below.

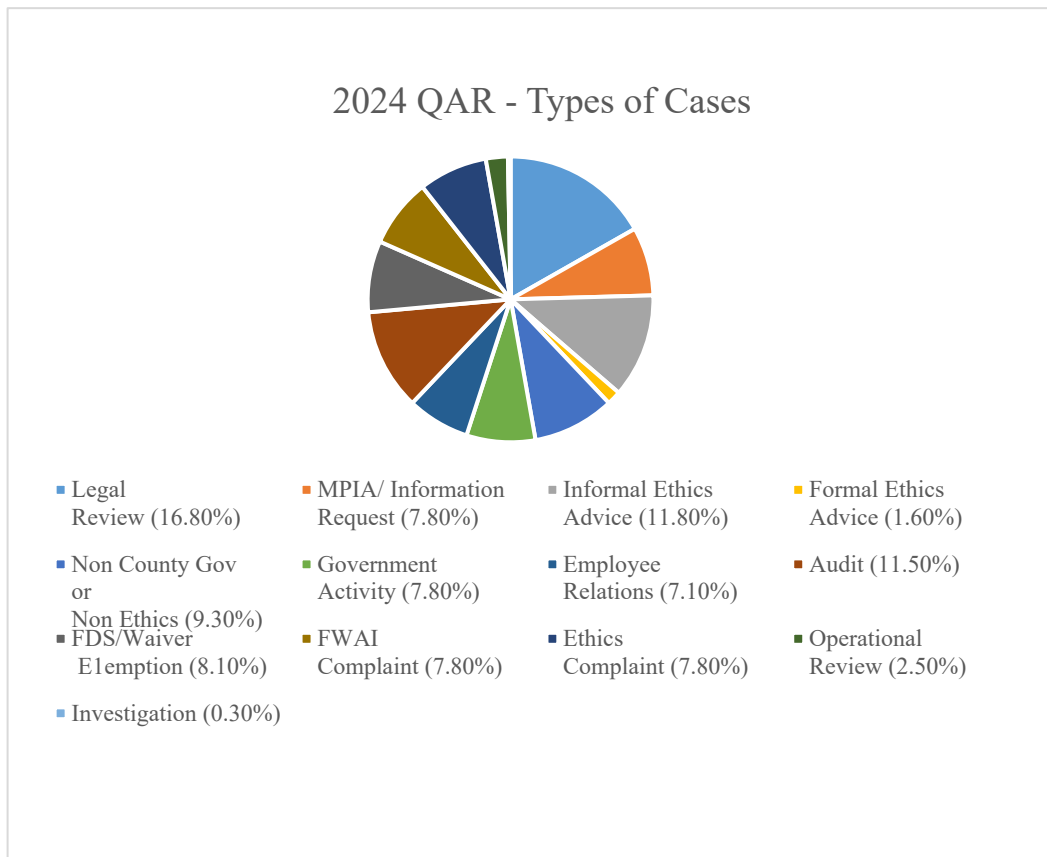


Figure 2 - Types of Cases

The OEA takes new cases and investigations through inquiries and interviews, email, direct phone, fax, web-based, hot-line, in-person, and anonymous contacts. The office currently uses the Salesforce system for documenting planning, Fieldwork, reporting, and storage activities for its cases and investigations.

In carrying out the review methodology, we primarily applied review techniques, such as inquiry and observations, review of policies, and examination of cases and investigation documentation to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our conclusion, related to our review objectives. We obtained and reviewed case workpapers and supporting documents.

The OEA’s workload has significantly increased by 85.70% over the past 5-year period of 2014-2018. With this increase, OEA needs to be staffed with more resources for efficient performance and timely deliverables. However, we noted significant improvement in the OEA’s business process and operation, noted current updates to its manuals and standards operating procedures, noted the implementation of new tools and methodology/ approach to enhance compliance and manage the increase of cases and investigation workloads.

As part of the improvement in the OEA case processes and operations, the observations significantly decreased from the prior period for 2019. We noted seven (7) observations for the current 2024 Report compared to sixteen (16) observations noted in the prior 2019 Report. The following are the 2024 observations and are shown in the bar chart below

- 2019 - Two (2) Observations
- 2020 - Two (2) Observations
- 2021 - One (1) Observation
- 2022 - One (1) Observation
- 2023 - One (1) Observation

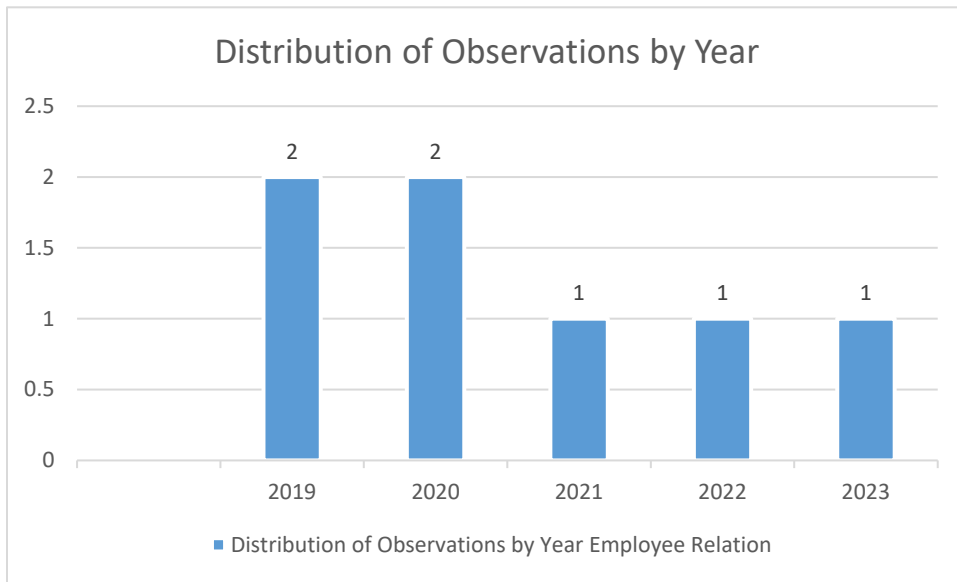


Figure 3 – Distribution of Observations by Fiscal Year

Dickey & Associates, LLC made recommendations to further enhance business processes, operations, and personnel efficiencies. D&A recommends an increase in personnel or contract consultants to provide assistance and support to OEA to catch-up with the changing demands in the office and the increase in the workloads as noted in Figure 1 above “Total Population of Cases and Investigations”.

Conclusion: Based on the results of the review procedures performed, OEA has carried out its accountability and oversight in the operations of the County Government in accordance with Sections 2-298 through 2-309 of the County’s Code of Ethics. The office has been effective in its approach to inquiries related to the public, the investigation, follow-ups, and closure of incidents and cases. The office has developed appropriate procedures and effective methods to support investigations as required by the County Code of Ethics.

The increased number of workloads accomplished over the period 2019-2023 with a low record of observations compared to the prior period 2014-2018 attests to the office's good performance in its investigative operations and its administrative support to the County Board of Ethics. The office

has maintained a current automated operational system for documenting, processing, and reporting the types of cases and investigations. The office has created standard forms, checklists, and questionnaires for collecting and summarizing case data and information.

The OEA's quality assurance policies and procedures are adequate and complied with in all respects for the period July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2023.