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Mark A. Vander Laan, *Vice Chairman*
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**ETHICS COMMISSION REVIEWS YEAR-END STATISTICS
AND ELECTS LEADERSHIP**

At its first meeting last week, the Ohio Ethics Commission discussed staff data on its 2024 work, noting the statewide application of the Ethics Law and the remedying of the misuse of public authority by individuals.

The Commission's advisory team reported on its response to incoming phone and email inquiries, providing direct, statutory guidance, in addition to writing 147 individual opinions providing timely advice to help avoid violations of the law. Those opinions went to both state and local government offices, with 70 percent being issued to local officials and employees in 53 counties and 75 municipalities throughout Ohio.

The Commission's investigative unit addressed more than 900 allegations related to reported misdemeanor or felony violations of the Ethics Law. Many of these allegations resulted in follow-up investigations, 85 percent of which involved local governmental officials and employees. The Commission also adopted an additional process to help resolve some particular allegations by issuing early notices of potential violations.

Executive Director Paul M. Nick stated, “Commission staff provided timely guidance to prevent violations while also investigating individuals who misused their public authority.” Nick added, “The Commission’s newest case settlement process has already helped to more quickly resolve some of the 96 investigations we closed in 2024.”

To help broaden awareness of the Ethics Law, the Commission presented 204 education sessions, including 55 webinars and a new, one-hour e-course. The Commission also updated and simplified its online information sheets and produced customized e-training modules for different segments in the public sector.

The bipartisan Commission re-elected Merom Brachman (R-Bexley) as its Chairman and Mark Vander Laan (D-Cincinnati) as its Vice Chairman. Mr. Brachman noted the wide oversight for many specific situations in working with the Courts and the 88 county prosecutors and local law directors in Ohio on improper actions covered by the Law, including the more recent addition to the Law by the General Assembly to strengthen penalties against vendors.

The Commission’s 2024 Annual Report can be viewed here: [2024 Annual Report](#)

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