

# 2010 Ethics Quiz and Survey *Executive Summary*

King County Board of Ethics — Helping Employees Make Ethical Decisions

## What We Learned

- Employee participation remains consistent and indicates a significant level of interest in county ethics.
- Employees demonstrate a solid, basic understanding of the King County Code of Ethics based on the high percentage of correct responses.
- The Ethics Help Line is a ‘go to’ resource to help employees make ethical decisions and discuss concerns.
- Ethics office customer service—including timeliness and courtesy—rated high for callers.

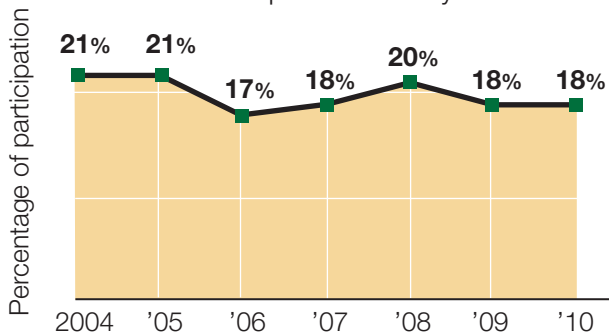
## Opportunities

- Department leaders could increase employee participation by echoing the executive’s message and encouraging or requiring their employees to take the quiz.
- Discover cost-effective ways in which those employees without direct access to computers may take part.

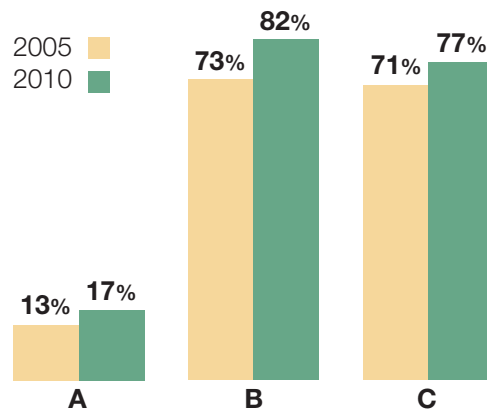


**EDUCATION = PREVENTION = FEWER ETHICS VIOLATIONS = TRUST IN GOVERNMENT**

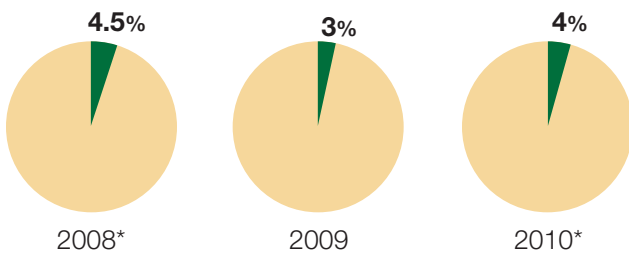
**EDUCATION** = Employees take the quiz and survey



**PREVENTION** = Employees contact the Ethics Office for help (2005 vs 2010)



**FEWER ETHICS VIOLATIONS** = Discipline involving suspensions from work or termination of employment compared to ethics related violations



(\*Based on available data received from HRD – 3 out of 4 yearly quarters reported)

- A Yes, I have contacted the ethics office for information on an ethics matter.
- B The information I received met my needs completely or helped me make a decision.
- C I would describe the quality of my experience, including timeliness and courtesy, as very satisfying or satisfying.

### Quiz/survey objectives

- Raise employee awareness of the Code of Ethics, the Board of Ethics and its office, and the resources they provide.
- Help employees make ethical decisions.
- Help ensure the public's trust in King County government.

### Respondent knowledge of quiz

Overall, employees responded correctly to nine questions; the average overall correct response rate was 97.5%.

### 2010 Ethics quiz and survey—description

The Board of Ethics conducted the seventh annual on-line ethics quiz and survey from October 4 through 22, 2010. The board believes that education is an effective tool for encouraging ethical practices in King County, and understands that knowledge about the ethics code allows employees to follow its road map for fair dealings. The result is public trust and confidence, which are essential to the valuable work performed by all King County employees.

### Distribution method and response rate

Executive Constantine announced the quiz on October 4 via countywide email, voicing his support and inviting participation; a reminder followed on October 15. The quiz and survey remained open for completion for three weeks until October 22. Over 2,000 employees voluntarily participated in the quiz, approximately 18% of employees with direct access to computers. This compares closely with past years.

### Demographics

Generally, the participation rates of respondents per department matched the department's relative employee population within county government. Supervisors numbered 26%; non-supervisory participants numbered 74%.

*"GREAT improvements have been made over the years and I am very grateful for the benefits of understanding the 'why' [of our ethics rules]. THANK YOU!!"*

KING COUNTY EMPLOYEE RESPONSE TO ETHICS QUIZ

*"I'm so glad I called you. This is very easy to understand and will be very helpful. Thanks again!"*

EMPLOYEE RESPONSE TO ADVICE ON ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

*"Prevention is the most important way to drive down costs."*

SCOTT ARMSTRONG, CEO, GROUP HEALTH COOPERATIVE, BE THE DIFFERENCE LEADERSHIP FORUM



**King County**

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