

PRESS RELEASE

Connecticut Office of State Ethics (OSE) Reaches \$6,350 Settlement for Ethics Violations

March 31, 2008

The Enforcement Division of the Office of State Ethics (OSE) executed a stipulation and consent order on March 20, 2008 with Tracey Weeks (the "Respondent"), a State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) employee. Ms. Weeks paid civil penalties totaling \$6,350 for failure to file accurate Statements of Financial Interests (SFI's) for the years 2004 and 2005 as well as failure to recuse herself and file a disclosure statement pertaining to a potential conflict of interest regarding the financial interests of her spouse.

Specifically, DPH directly regulates registered sanitarians. Ms. Weeks was married to a registered sanitarian, who was also the owner of a business regulated by DPH. By failing to disclose that her husband and his business were engaged in activities directly regulated by her agency, the Respondent filed inaccurate forms in violation of the Code of Ethics. Connecticut General Statutes § 1-83(a)(1) requires public officials and state employees in certain supervisory positions to file a Statement of Financial Interests (SFI) with the OSE. This statement should contain all businesses with which the state employee or his/her spouse is associated. Additionally, Connecticut General Statutes § 1-83(b)(1) requires disclosure if any person affiliated with a noted business is engaged in activities directly regulated by the filer's agency.

Further, as part of her official duties, the Respondent drafted a letter for her supervisor's signature that was used at a District Health Committee meeting regarding an issue that had the likely impact of affecting her spouse's position and therefore his financial interests in violation of Section 1-86(a). Connecticut General Statutes § 1-86(a) requires any state employee who, in the discharge of her official duties, would be required to take action that would affect her, or her spouse's financial interest, must either recuse herself from taking the official action or prepare and file a written statement with the OSE explaining why she is able to act impartially on the matter.

"Statements of Financial Interests serve as reminders to public officials to be aware of potential conflicts of interest," said OSE Executive Director, Carol Carson. "These forms also foster public confidence in government by providing necessary disclosure. It is vital that public officials and state employees file complete and accurate statements for their benefit as well as the public interest."

###

Contact: Meredith Trimble, OSE Director of Education,
860-566-4472 x425; Meredith.trimble@ct.gov.