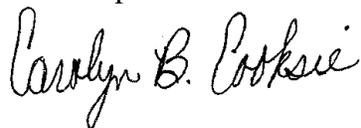


**For:** State Offices, SED’s, STC’s, and Administrative/Ethics Officers

**2012 Filing of STC Member OGE Form 450, Confidential Financial Disclosure  
“New Entrants” Report and Ethics Training**

**Approved by:** Associate Administrator for Operations and Management



**1 Overview**

**A Background**

According to 3-PM, subparagraph 128 E, STC members **must** submit OGE Form 450 within 30 calendar days of their entrance on duty or reappointment. OGE Form 450 reports from appointed STC members **must** be submitted to the Office of Ethics; Farm, Conservation and Rural Programs Branch (OE-Farm), within 30 calendar days of their appointment.

**B Purpose**

This notice advises:

- all reappointed and newly appointed STC members of their obligation to file their OGE Form 450 within 30 calendar days of their appointment
- that the reporting period will cover the preceding 12 months

**Note:** STC members are considered Special Government Employees (SGE’s); therefore, on OGE Form 450, “Reporting Status”, CHECK (✓) **“New Entrant”**.

- that STC members **must** complete their required ethics training orientation.

**C Performing Official Duties**

STC's are **prohibited** from conducting or performing any official FSA business or duties:

- before submitting their completed OGE Form 450 report to the State Office
- until their required Ethics Orientation Training has been completed.

<b>Disposal Date</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
December 1, 2012	State Offices, State Offices relay to STC members

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### 1 Overview (Continued)

#### D Contact

Direct questions about OGE Form 450's and required ethics orientation training to Tonya S. Willis, FSA National Ethics Program Manager, by either of the following:

- e-mail to [tonya.willis@dm.usda.gov](mailto:tonya.willis@dm.usda.gov)
- telephone at 202-720-0055.

### 2 OGE Form 450's and Online Ethics Training

#### A Accessing and Using OGE Form 450's (December 2011)

OGE Form 450 (December 2011):

- is available at:
  - [www.usoge.gov](http://www.usoge.gov); CLICK “Forms Library”, CLICK “OGE Form 450”, scroll down, and CLICK “Download” (PDF Version)
  - [www.usda-ethics.net](http://www.usda-ethics.net), CLICK “Forms”, scroll down, and CLICK applicable version

**Note:** SED, or their designee, will provide STC members with OGE Form 450, if STC members do **not** have computer access.

- may be completed electronically, using Adobe Reader, and then printed

**Note:** Although OGE Form 450 (December 2011) is capable of accepting digital signatures, USDA Office of Ethics does **not** accept digital signatures at this time. Therefore, each filer **must** print OGE Form 450 (December 2011), place an actual signature on OGE Form 450 (December 2011), and submit the original, signed, OGE Form 450 paper copy.

- should be used in place of **all** previous versions.

**Note:** STC members are SGE's; therefore, STC members **cannot** use OGE Form 450-A.

#### B Completing OGE Form 450's

It is **critical** that STC members complete the following steps in order.

Step	Action
1	<b>Read</b> through the entire OGE Form 450.
2	<b>Gather</b> financial records that contain the information requested.
3	<b>Complete, sign, and submit</b> OGE Form 450.

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**2 OGE Form 450's and Online Ethics Training (Continued)**

**C Required Ethics Orientation Training for STC Members**

SED, or their designee, shall ensure that all STC members:

- receive their required ethics orientation training
- complete Exhibit 1.

Training consists of completing an interactive web-based training module. The course, **“Ethics Training for Special Government Employees”**, contains a summary of ethics laws and rules that apply to SGE's and is designed to be completed in about 1 hour.

To access the training module go to **www.usoge.gov**, CLICK **“Education”**, CLICK **“Education Resources for Federal Employees”**, scroll down and under the **“Search Education Resources for Federal Employees”** box, CLICK **“2”**, and scroll down and CLICK **“Ethics Training for Special Government Employees WBT”** module.

**D Proof of Training**

When training has been completed, CLICK **“Click here to confirm your Ethics course completion (to bypass popup blocker hold down Ctrl key)”**. Review the learning history to ensure that the ethics course has been recorded. STC members should print and:

- maintain a copy of the computer-generated certificate for their records
- forward a copy to the State AgLearn Administrator to be updated in AgLearn.

**3 SED, State AgLearn Administrator, and Administrative/Ethics Officer Responsibilities**

**A SED Responsibilities**

SED, or their designee, shall provide STC members with OGE Form 450, if they do **not** have computer access. After STC members have completed OGE Form 450, an intermediate review on each STC member's OGE Form 450 **must** be performed, paying close attention to any activity that may pose a conflict of interest, according to the following table.

<b>Step</b>	<b>OGE Form 450 Reviewing and Processing Instructions</b>
1	Enter date in “Date Received by Agency” box at the top of OGE Form 450.
2	Review <b>entire</b> OGE Form 450 for completeness and accuracy, including the basic contact information.
3	Check to determine if any financial institution-related activities, such as bank ownership, bank stock ownership, and any other involvement with a commercial lender or board of directors, in Part I or Part III conducts business with FSA. If so, the reviewer <b>must</b> notate the back of OGE Form 450.
4	Initial and date all notations.
5	Sign and date “Signature and Title of Supervisor/Other Intermediate Reviewer” box.

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3 SED, State AgLearn Administrator, and Administrative/Ethics Officer Responsibilities (Continued)

B State AgLearn Administrator Responsibility

State AgLearn administrators will update the AgLearn database to document STC ethics training using **FSA-HQ-STC-Ethics**. This will satisfy the 2012 STC member ethics training requirement.

C Administrative/Ethics Officer Responsibilities

Administrative/ethics officers, or ethics contacts, shall forward intermediate reviewed OGE Form 450's to the Office of Ethics using the following instructions.

Step	OGE Form 450 Forwarding and Shipping Instructions
1	<p>Complete and send an electronic copy of the Excel spreadsheet listing, in alphabetical order, the names and requested information of all current STC OGE Form 450 filers to <b>tonya.willis@dm.usda.gov</b>.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> OE-Farm will provide an electronic Excel spreadsheet through e-mail to each State administrative/or ethics contact.</p>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bundle OGE Form 450's, in alphabetical order, as listed on the electronic Excel spreadsheet provided according to step 1.</li><li>• Enclose a printed copy of the electronic Excel spreadsheet as a manifest.</li></ul>
3	Include signed copies of the training certifications.
4	<p><b>Send by express mail</b>, using boxes provided by a secure provider with a tracking system; for example FedEx, USPS, or UPS, to:</p> <p>USDA-Farm, Conservation, and Rural Programs Branch Office of Ethics <b>Attn:</b> Tonya S. Willis 1400 Independence Avenue SW Room 6840-South Building Washington DC 20250-2120.</p>

**2012 STC Members Training Certification**

Use the following to certify CY 2012 STC member training.

<p><b>CY 2012 STC Member Training Certification</b></p> <p>I completed my training requirements on _____. (Date)</p> <p>I certify that I completed the assigned module:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>“Ethics Training for Special Government Employees WBT”</b></p> <p>and I understand the rules and regulations therein.</p> <p>I agree to follow the rules and principles explained in the training module. I further comprehend that failure to comply with these rules and regulations may lead to disciplinary action or removal from the Federal Service.</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p>(Signature)</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>(Date)</p>
<p>(Please Print)</p>	
<p>Name:</p>	<p>Daytime Phone:</p>
<p>Title/Grade:</p>	<p>Organization/Office:</p>
<p>E-mail Address:</p>	