



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

MARIA TORRES-SPRINGER  
DEPUTY MAYOR FOR  
ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

January 23, 2023

New York City Conflict of Interest Board  
2 Lafayette Street, Suite 1010  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Conflict of Interest Board Members:

In accordance with Conflicts of Interest Board ("COIB") Rule section 1-13(e)(1), I write to inform you that I hereby appoint Vilda Vera Mayuga, Commissioner of the Department of Consumer and Worker protection ("DCWP"), to serve as New York City's ("City") representative to the Cities for Financial Empowerment ("CFE") Coalition and Nichole Davis, Deputy Commissioner of DCWP's Office of Financial Empowerment ("OFE"), as Commissioner Mayuga's designee to the CFE Coalition.

Neither Commissioner Mayuga nor Ms. Davis will be compensated for their roles but will use reasonable and incidental City time and resources. As set forth below, there is a demonstrated nexus between Commissioner Mayuga's role as representative to the CFE Coalition and Ms. Davis' role as Commissioner Mayuga's designee to the CFE Coalition and Co-Chair of the CFE Coalition, their jobs at DCWP, and the mission of DCWP. Moreover, Commissioner Mayuga's role as representative to the CFE Coalition and Ms. Davis' role as Commissioner Mayuga's designee to the CFE Coalition and Co-Chair of the CFE Coalition furthers DCWP's mission and is not undertaken primarily for the benefit or interests of the CFE Fund or the CFE Coalition.

The CFE Coalition is a collection of eighteen municipal financial empowerment offices across the country. In March of 2008, the first CFE Coalition meeting was held in the City and DCWP's OFE is a founding member of the CFE Coalition. The CFE Coalition, "[w]ith support from the CFE Fund...brings together pioneering municipal governments from across the country that have begun to use their power and positions to advance innovative financial empowerment initiatives. Its 18 member cities representing almost 22 million people have made tangible, measurable commitments to supporting financial empowerment programming, and both teach and learn from one another. The CFE Coalition also leverages its members' collective power to advance the financial empowerment agenda on a state and national level, including through advocating for key policy priorities." See, <https://cfefund.org/coalition/>. The CFE Coalition member cities include: The CFE Coalition member cities include: Albuquerque, New Mexico; Boston, Massachusetts; Denver, Colorado; Detroit, Michigan; Hawaii County, Hawaii; Jackson, Tennessee; Lansing, Michigan; Los Angeles, California; Louisville, Kentucky; Miami, Florida; New York, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; San Antonio, Texas; San Francisco, California; Shreveport, Louisiana; St. Louis, Missouri; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The CFE Fund is a nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance and philanthropic funding to municipalities interested in providing financial empowerment and consumer protection services to their constituents. The CFE Fund was established in 2012 as an independent nonprofit with its own Board of Directors (The CFE Coalition does not weigh in on the CFE Fund's choices, fundraising, funding, grantmaking or partnerships). "The CFE Fund's mission is to leverage municipal engagement to improve the financial stability of low and moderate-income households by embedding financial empowerment strategies into local government infrastructure. The Fund works with mayoral administrations and those interested in supporting them to implement innovative programs and policies – and measures its success accordingly." See, <https://cfefund.org/about/>. Accordingly, the CFE Fund has business dealings with the City. The City receives two small grants from the CFE Fund. For the first grant, approved by former DCWP Commissioner Lorelai Salas, DCWP's OFE provides technical assistance and mentoring to four cities interested in starting a Financial Empowerment Center program. Jess Brooks, Assistant Director of Financial Counseling and Coaching Programs in DCWP's OFE, provides mentorship to the four cities. For the second grant, approved by Commissioner Mayuga, DCWP's OFE provides technical assistance and mentoring to the City of Los Angeles in their efforts to establish an Office of Financial Empowerment. Ms. Davis provides mentorship to her counterpart in Los Angeles. DCWP's OFE received these grants due to membership in the CFE Coalition, along with DCWP's demonstrated commitment to and leadership in the field of municipal financial empowerment. Additionally, the CFE Fund provides a large grant through the City's Mayor's Fund and New York City Department of Youth and Community Development for Summer Jobs Connect. DCWP and OFE are not a party to that contract or relationship. The CFE Coalition is not involved in the CFE Fund's business dealings with the City.

Commissioner Mayuga will serve as New York City's representative to the CFE Coalition. Ms. Davis will serve as Commissioner Mayuga's designee to the CFE Coalition. As such, Ms. Davis will represent the City at CFE Coalition Convenings and at meetings, will be a member of the Policy Committee and will serve as a subject matter expert. Additionally, Ms. Davis was selected by the members of the CFE Coalition to serve a two-year term as the co-chair of the CFE Coalition alongside Treasurer Jose Cisneros from San Francisco. As co-chair of the CFE Coalition, Ms. Davis will be responsible for working with the CFE Fund and CFE Coalition member cities to create learning opportunities, sharing best practices and planning the bi-annual CFE Coalition Convenings. Both Commissioner Mayuga and Ms. Davis will be voting members of the CFE Coalition and will also be invited to attend the CFE Coalition Convenings. These roles are complementary of their roles at DCWP and will further expand the mission of DCWP.

Specifically, DCWP strives to be a thoughtful leader in consumer protection, engagement and empowerment, and is known as a partner to residents and businesses to improve the quality of life in New York City. DCWP fosters economic self-sufficiency, enhances family stability, promotes arts and culture, and transforms neighborhoods into safe, vibrant places to live, work, and visit. Particularly, DCWP's Office of Financial Empowerment ("OFE") focuses on initiatives that support New Yorkers and communities with low and moderate incomes in building wealth and improving their financial health. OFE is the first local government initiative in the country with the specific mission to educate, empower, and protect individuals and communities with low incomes so they can build assets and make the most of their financial resources. OFE envisions a city that supports all residents and communities in building long-term financial stability and financial health regardless of their income, and a city where all New Yorkers are empowered to make financial decisions that promote their long-term financial stability and financial health. Using a range of tools, including data and research, community engagement, convenings, and partnerships, OFE develops, offers, and advocates for innovative programs, products, and policies that support the financial health of all New Yorkers.

As members of the CFE Coalition, Commissioner Mayuga and Ms. Davis will participate in discussions and learning sessions with colleagues from other member cities in which they will share insights from recent programmatic successes, including the City's recent investments through the Economic Blueprint to bring NYC Free Tax Prep to self-employed individuals and small business owners, innovation in the NYC Financial Empowerment Center program to expand one-on-one counseling into the City's Workforce 1 Centers, and ensuring all New Yorkers with student loan debt are informed about their rights and responsibilities regarding the upcoming federal repayment date in June 2023 and their cancellation and repayment options. Finally, as members of the CFE Coalition Commissioner Mayuga and Ms. Davis will bring important and timely learnings about new research, programs and efforts in the consumer protection and financial empowerment sectors back to the City.

Based upon the information presented to me, I have determined that there is a demonstrated nexus between Commissioner Mayuga's role as representative to the CFE Coalition and Ms. Davis' role as Commissioner Mayuga's designee to the CFE Coalition and Co-Chair of the CFE Coalition, their jobs at DCWP, and the mission of DCWP. Moreover, Commissioner Mayuga's role as representative to the CFE Coalition and Ms. Davis' role as Commissioner Mayuga's designee to the CFE Coalition and Co-Chair of the CFE Coalition furthers DCWP's mission and is not undertaken primarily for the benefit or interests of the CFE Fund or the CFE Coalition.

Sincerely,



Maria Torres-Springer  
Deputy Mayor for Workforce and Economic Development