

Public Ethics Commission Application

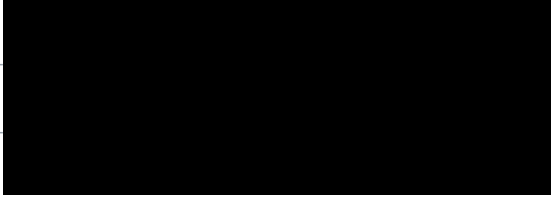
Contact Information

Name Christopher Johnson

Address



Phone



Evening Phone

Email

Please answer the following questions

Are you an Oakland resident? Yes

Years of residency in Oakland 28

Your City Council District District 1

List any City of Oakland Boards or Commissions (including this Commission) on which you currently or have previously served: Civil Service Board (currently vice-chair)

Have you attended a Public Ethics Commission meeting? Yes

Are you currently employed by the City of Oakland or do you have any direct and substantial financial interest in any work, business, or official action by the City? No

Are you currently or are you planning to run for elective office in Oakland? No

Are you currently or are you planning to endorse, support or oppose an Oakland candidate or ballot measure? No

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Are you currently or are you planning to work on behalf of an Oakland candidate or ballot measure? No

Are you a registered Oakland lobbyist? No

Are you required to register as a lobbyist? No

Do you receive compensation from an Oakland lobbyist? No

Do you receive gifts from an Oakland lobbyist? No

List any languages other than English that you speak fluently. None

How did you hear about this vacancy? Recruiting email from PEC

Supplemental Questions

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1. Why do you want to serve on the Public Ethics Commission?

As a recently retired employee of the U.S. Department of the Treasury / Internal Revenue Service, I have a deep appreciation for the importance of ethics in government and the damage that can be done to public trust when public officials act in a manner inconsistent with those values. Because of its mission as a public trust organization, the IRS is the gold standard for communicating and reinforcing ethics and ethical values with its workforce. Among other things, the IRS requires all employees and leaders to complete annual ethics trainings and formally certify their understanding of the agency's ethics rules.

During my 28 years living here in Oakland, I have followed the evolution of Oakland's government, both during periods of optimism and growth and during periods of crisis, contraction and scandal. I've witnessed over the years numerous allegations against City officials of corruption, mismanagement, cronyism, self-dealing and cover-ups. Those episodes have been damaging to the City's reputation and, in some cases, resulted in enormous fines and civil liabilities.

We all know Oakland is a gem of a city with great opportunities to grow economically and socially and provide a safe, equitable, high quality standard of living for all its inhabitants. But it all starts with having a well-functioning government and public officials who act reliably with integrity and honesty.

In July 2014 I was a strong, vocal supporter of Councilmember Kalb's proposal to place on the November ballot a measure that would amend the City's Charter to strengthen Oakland's Public Ethics Commission. I was delighted when the measure passed, and I have held an interest ever since in participating on the PEC. Now that I have retired from professional life, I have the time and energy to invest in this important work.

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2. What skills and experience will you bring to the Commission? (Include any governmental experience, activities with civic and business organizations, neighborhood groups, or any other experience that would contribute to your effectiveness as a Commissioner.)

I believe my professional and community experience has prepared me well for service on the PEC. I have almost 20 years of experience leading community and professional organizations. Since 2009, I have served on the board of the North Hills Community Association (NHCA), a public service / advocacy association serving residents and property owners in Oakland's North Hills communities. From 2010 to 2014, I served as the NHCA chair. I have served in various other capacities as well. During my tenure, the NHCA has undertaken in partnership with City officials, agencies and representatives numerous improvement efforts focusing on public safety, wildfire prevention, disaster preparedness, community / neighborhood improvement, traffic safety and more.

Prior to serving on the NHCA board, I served as board member and chair of the Vicente Canyon Neighborhood Association, whose efforts focused mostly on topics of public safety and community participation. I have also served in various leadership positions in professional organizations related to my career as a professional communicator.

I have spent the past nineteen years of my career in positions of leadership in corporate and government communication and business leadership functions, with notable experience at Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, McKesson Corporation and the Internal Revenue Service. I am skilled at collecting and assimilating information from a variety of sources, understanding and dissecting complex topics, and collaborating with a broad mix of leaders and stakeholders in developing strategies and solutions to address difficult/sensitive issues.

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3. What issues, projects, or goals would you like to pursue while serving on the Commission?

I have long been interested in the preservation and maintenance of Oakland's beautiful network of public parks, gardens and recreation facilities. Over the years, my family has donated heavily to the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation (OPRF). In 2019, my husband and I hosted a very successful OPRF fundraiser at our home.

I mentioned earlier my volunteer work with the North Hills Community Association (NHCA). The NHCA works closely with the City of Oakland and CalTrans in the care and maintenance of Oakland's Firestorm Memorial Garden and the Gateway Emergency Preparedness Exhibit Center & Garden. Since 2015, we have taken on a lead role in being responsible for these beautiful Oakland assets.

The City of Oakland faces challenges balancing the need to care for and maintain Oakland's parks and recreation facilities for the enjoyment of all Oakland residents, and the City's stated goal of helping to provide safe shelter for persons experiencing homelessness. To the extent the PEC involves itself in such matters, I would be interested in being involved.

I have also been actively involved in public safety concerns in the City of Oakland, particularly with respect to wildfire prevention and disaster response. This is a huge issue, rife with complexities around social equity, availability of resources, public education and enforcement. These issues interest me greatly.

4. What do you think are the City's most pressing ethics, campaign finance, or transparency challenges?

Oakland currently faces a massive budget shortfall. In December, the City announced \$29 million in immediate spending cuts. City leaders have been planning other cost-savings measures to close a projected year-end \$62 million deficit in the General Purpose Fund. These cost-saving measures and budget cuts are certain to impact virtually every aspect of City services. It will be incumbent on Oakland leaders to be fully transparent in informing the community about how spending cut decisions are made, and steps the City is taking to care for already marginalized and disadvantaged communities.

As mentioned earlier, in past years we have observed Oakland's reputation sullied by the dishonest or unethical activities of various members of the City Council and / or City administration. Given the current spending crisis, we need leaders and administrators to be fully transparent and accountable for their decisions.

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5. What else would you like the subcommittee to know as your application is considered?

I love the City of Oakland and have been so happy to call it my home for the past 28 years. I am committed to public service and consider an appointment to the Public Ethics Commission as an excellent way to support my community.

I bring a strong business acumen and understanding of a range of compliance and regulatory environments. I have had senior management responsibility for highly complex, highly visible and politically sensitive internal audit and internal controls programs in a key branch of a major federal government agency.

In addition, I bring substantial leadership experience in communications and public affairs, having led communications functions for several large Bay Area employers.

I possess a Master of Arts degree in communications from San Francisco State University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in biological sciences from the University of California, Berkeley.

Please provide two references

Reference 1

Name

Ian Appleyard

Address

[REDACTED]

Phone

[REDACTED]

Email

Reference 2

Name

Brooke Levin

Address

[REDACTED]

Phone

Email

Submit your resume

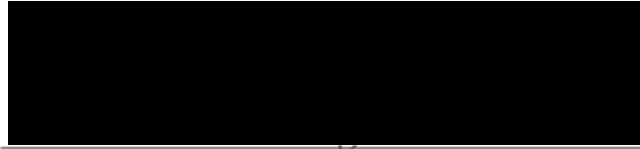
Upload your resume

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Sign and submit application

Signature



Date/Time

Jan 27, 2021

CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON

Professional Experience

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Large Business & International (LB&I) Division:

Sept 2016 - Dec 2020: Senior Manager, Program Planning, Coordination & Analysis (PPCA)

Provided oversight and direction for three PPCA teams delivering essential “back-office” services to the LB&I division. Key programs include internal audit, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) reporting; internal controls management and reporting; knowledge management, division business reporting; information security; employee engagement; customer satisfaction; legislative affairs, and more.

Nov 2013 - Sept 2016: Executive Assistant, Planning, Analysis, Inventory and Research (PAIR)

Directed business operations and provided executive coordination for the PAIR branch of the Large Business & International (LB&I) division. Advised LB&I senior leadership on policy matters and directed administrative managers and staff in completion of various back-office operations.

Aug 2008 - Oct 2013: Senior Policy Analyst, LB&I Communications & Liaison - Oakland, CA

Led communication programs and initiatives, and managed intranet and Internet strategy and content for the Large Business & International (LB&I) division of the IRS. Directed a number of major communication initiatives, working closely with the LB&I commissioner and other senior executives.

Aug 2004 - Aug 2006: Director, LB&I Communications & Liaison, Washington, DC

Directed internal communications, media relations, and legislative and stakeholder outreach programs for the IRS’ Large and Mid-Size Business (LMSB) division (7,000 employees, 300+ locations). Managed a team of eleven communicators. Provided communications counsel and support to the LMBS commissioner and other senior executives. Organized formal liaison meetings involving senior IRS officials and leaders of national stakeholder groups. Arranged media interviews and prepared senior executive briefings.

IRS Headquarters Communications & Liaison:

Sept 2002 - Aug 2004: Senior Public Affairs Specialist, Washington, DC

Prepared communication plans and developed messages focusing on various service-wide safety and security, mission assurance, information technology and human capital issues. Provided communications counsel, writing and product support to business owners and executives. Conducted focus groups, interviews and pulse measures to evaluate communication impact.

Kaiser Foundation Health Plan (KFHP)

Feb - Aug 2008: Director of Human Resources Communications (Oakland, CA)

Directed HR communications for KFPH, parent of a multi-divisional company with 120,000+ employees and multiple lines of business. Led a team of five communication manager. Provided strategy and content and served as chief communications advisor for KPFH’s senior vice president, Human Resources. Conducted town hall meetings, developed executive presentations and coordinated HR publications.

McKesson Corporation

Sept 2006 - June 2007: Director, Internal Communications (San Francisco, CA)

Directed employee communications for a Fortune 15 company with 30,000+ employees and nine lines of business. Led a team of six communication managers. Provided strategy and content guidance for McKesson’s executive communications programs, including CEO town hall meetings and all-employee conference calls. Developed strategic communication plans; crafted messages for the CEO and other executives, prepared talking points, video scripts, and presentations. Edited online publications.

Pacific Gas & Electric Company

Aug 1984 - Jan 2001: Various assignments in technical, operations, staff and leadership roles.

CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON

Education

Master of Arts, Speech and Communication Studies, San Francisco State University

Bachelor of Arts, Biological Sciences, University of California, Berkeley

Affiliations and Awards

North Hills Community Association, Oakland / Berkeley, CA

- ◆ *President (Mar 2011 - Mar 2015)*
- ◆ *Board Member (Mar 2016 - Present)*

Vicente Canyon Neighborhood Association

- ◆ *President (1995 - 1999)*

Council of Communication Management

- ◆ *Board member (Apr 2012 - Apr 2015)*

International Association of Business Communicators

- ◆ *President-elect, president, past-president, San Francisco Chapter (2008 - 2011)*
- ◆ *Vice president, San Francisco chapter (2006 - 2008)*
- ◆ *Silver Inkwell Award of Excellence, Washington DC chapter (2005)*
- ◆ *Award of Excellence, US District Chapter 3 (2005)*
- ◆ *Vice president, administration, Washington, DC chapter (2004 - 2005)*
- ◆ *Director, Silver Inkwell communication awards program (2003 - 2004)*

Horizons Foundation, San Francisco, CA

- ◆ *Board member (1996 - 1998)*