



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Washington, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
GENERAL COUNSEL

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Recusal Statement

FROM: Dimple Chaudhary
Deputy General Counsel for Nationwide Resource Protection Programs

TO: Melissa Hoffer
Acting General Counsel

I have previously consulted with the Office of General Counsel/Ethics (OGC/Ethics) and been advised about my ethics obligations. This memorandum formally notifies you of my continuing obligation to recuse myself from participating personally and substantially in certain matters in which I have a financial interest, or a personal or business relationship. I also understand that I have obligations pursuant to Executive Order 13989 and the Biden Ethics Pledge that I signed, as well as my own attorney bar obligations.

OBLIGATIONS UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER 13989

Pursuant to Section 1, Paragraph 2 of Executive Order 13989, I understand that I am prohibited from participating in any particular matter involving specific parties in which my former employer, **National Resources Defense Council**, is a party or represents a party. Under the terms of the Ethics Pledge, this recusal lasts for two years from the date that I joined federal service, or until January 20, 2023.

I have been advised by OGC/Ethics that, for the purposes of this pledge obligation, the term “particular matters involving specific parties” is broadened to include any meetings or other communication relating to the performance of my official duties, unless the communication applies to a particular matter of general applicability and participation in the meeting or other event is open to all interested parties. I am further advised that the term “open to all interested parties” means that the meeting should include a multiplicity of parties. If, for example, there is “a meeting with five or more stakeholders regarding a given policy or piece of legislation, [then I] could attend such a meeting even if one of the stakeholders is a former employer or former client.”¹ Such a meeting must also include a diversity of interests. Should a question arise as to whether a specific forum qualifies as “open to all interested parties,” then I will consult with OGC/Ethics.

¹ See Office of Government Ethics (OGE) Advisory DO-09-011 (3/26/09), which applies to Exec. Order 13989 pursuant to OGE Legal Advisories LA-21-03 (1/22/21) and LA-21-05 (2/23/21).

ATTORNEY BAR OBLIGATIONS

In addition to the pledge restrictions involving my former client, NRDC, I understand that I am bound by my bar rules and am obliged to protect the confidences of my former clients. I understand that I am restricted from switching sides in litigation in which I participated in or provided counsel or that is the same as or substantially related to the same specific party matter in which I previously participated personally and substantially, unless my bar provides for and I first obtain informed consent and coordinate with OGC/Ethics. Set forth below are the cases pending at EPA in which I participated and from which I am recused for the entirety of my tenure at EPA:

CASE NAME and/or SUBJECT MATTER	CITATION and/or DESCRIPTION:
Consent Decree Implementation of Agency’s failure to issue a worst-case spill regulation for non-transportation-related-substantial-harm facilities	<i>Environmental Justice Health Alliance for Chemical Policy Reform, NRDC, et al. v. EPA</i> , Case No. 19-cv-2516, SDNY
Challenge to Methylene chloride rule	<i>Labor Council for Latin America, NRDC, et al. v. EPA</i> , Case No. 19-1042, 2d Cir.
Challenge to use of tetrachlorvinphos on pets	<i>NRDC v. Wheeler</i> , Case No. 20-72794, 9th Cir.
Provided individual counseling to plaintiffs in Flint water crisis	<i>Walters v. Flint, EPA, et al.</i> , Case No. 17-10164, E.D. Mich.

FINANCIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

As required by 18 U.S.C. § 208(a), I will not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter in which I know that I have a financial interest directly and predictably affected by the matter, or in which I know that a person whose interests are imputed to me has a financial interest directly and predictably affected by the matter, unless I first obtain a written waiver, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(1), or qualify for a regulatory exemption, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 208(b)(2). I understand that the interests of the following persons are imputed to me: any spouse or minor child of mine; any general partner of a partnership in which I am a limited or general partner; any organization in which I serve as officer, director, trustee, general partner or employee; and any person or organization with which I am negotiating or have an arrangement concerning prospective employment.

I have consulted with OGC/Ethics and been advised that I do not currently have any financial conflicts of interest. I will remain vigilant and notify OGC/Ethics immediately should my financial situation change.

OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE IMPARTIALITY PROVISIONS

Pursuant to the federal ethics rules, I understand that I have a covered relationship with my spouse and my spouse's employer, Jenner & Block. *See* 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502(b)(1)(ii) and (iii). I will recuse from specific party matters where my spouse or his employer is a party or represents a party, unless I am otherwise authorized by OGC/Ethics to participate, pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502(d).

SCREENING ARRANGEMENT

In order to ensure that I do not participate in particular matters from which I am recused, I have asked the Deputy General Counsel for Environmental Media and Regional Law Offices, Jim Payne, to assist in screening EPA matters directed to my attention. All inquiries and comments involving my recusals should be directed to him without my knowledge or involvement. If Jim determines I am recused, then he will take action or refer it for action or assignment to another, without my knowledge or involvement.

UPDATE AS NECESSARY

In consultation with OGC/Ethics, I will revise and update my recusal statement whenever warranted by changed circumstances, including changes in my financial interests, changes in my personal or business relationships, or any changes to my EPA duties. In the event of any changes to my screening arrangement, I will provide a copy of the revised recusal statement to you and OGC/Ethics.

cc: Marianne Engelman-Lado, Deputy General Counsel for Environmental Initiatives
Jim Payne, Deputy General Counsel for Environmental Media and Regional Law Offices
Elise Packard, Deputy General Counsel for Operations
Daniel Conrad, Acting Associate Deputy General Counsel
OGC Associate General Counsels
Regional Counsels
Justina Fugh, Director, Ethics Office