

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION  
Post Office Box 082  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0082  
(609) 292-1892

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION  
COMMISSION CASE NO. 32-17

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IN THE MATTER OF  
AVA JOHNSON  
Software Development Specialist 2  
New Jersey Office of  
Information Technology

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: Administrative Action  
: CONSENT ORDER  
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WHEREAS, the State Ethics Commission ("Commission") is authorized to initiate, receive, investigate, review and hear complaints regarding violations of the New Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law, *N.J.S.A. 52:13D-12 et seq.* ("Conflicts Law"), applicable rules of the Commission, *N.J.A.C. 19:61-1.1 et seq.*, the Uniform Ethics Code, and any agency code of ethics, by any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee; and

WHEREAS, this matter was brought before the Commission by a complaint filed with the Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Commission conducted an investigation of all matters and issues raised by the complaint; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the investigation, the Commission and Ava Johnson ("Johnson") desire to enter into a final and complete resolution of all the matters and issues raised thereby;

IT IS THEREFORE agreed by the parties as follows:

1. Johnson has been employed by the New Jersey Office of Information Technology ("OIT"), since 1990.
2. As an employee of OIT, Johnson is a State employee bound by the Conflicts Law, the applicable Commission rules and the Uniform Ethics Code.
3. Johnson submitted Outside Activity Questionnaires ("OAQs") dated April 30, 2010, December 20, 2012, September 24, 2015, and May 17, 2017 in which she received approval for her outside activities with the New Jersey Democratic Party.
4. Between August 4, 2016 and July 26, 2017, Johnson used her State email account three hundred thirty-two (332) times either to send or receive emails of a political nature, most involving the Monmouth County Democrats Black American Caucus ("MCDBAC").
5. In addition, Johnson's State computer contained thirty-six (36) documents related to either her outside political activities with MCDBAC or to her involvement with the Monmouth/Ocean Central Labor Council.
6. It is the Commission's position that Johnson violated sections 23(e)(3) and (e)(7) of the Conflicts Law by using State time and resources, including her State email account and computer, to conduct her outside activities.
7. Johnson acknowledges that her use of State resources in connection with her outside activities violated section 23(e)(3) of the Conflicts Law and created the impression that she engaged in conduct violative of the public trust, in violation of section 23(e)(7) of the Conflicts Law.
8. In consideration of the above, Johnson agrees to pay a civil penalty in the amount of \$3,000.00, payable not later than 30 days following the date of approval of this Consent Order by the Commission.

9. The parties agree to enter into this Consent Order in settlement of all matters and issues that are involved herein.

Ava Johnson  
Ava Johnson

Dated: 4/17/2020

Joseph P. LaSala  
State Ethics Commission  
By: Joseph P. LaSala, Chair

Dated: 7/29/2020

Mark T. Holmes  
State Ethics Commission  
By: Mark T. Holmes, Executive Director

Dated: July 29, 2020