

Board of Supervisors Appoints Michael K. Woo to Los Angeles County's First Ethics Commission

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors today appointed Michael K. Woo, the Governance Reform Task Force's nominee, to the County's first independent Ethics Commission. Woo joins Wilma A. Franco, Ed.D., and Amanda Susskind, whom the Board appointed on September 15. With three of its seven members seated, the initial Commissioners can now nominate the four remaining members.

"This commission could represent a new era of accountable, transparent, and honest government in Los Angeles County, and set a high standard for other California counties," said Woo.

Woo served on the Los Angeles City Council from 1985 to 1993, representing the 13th District, including Hollywood, Silver Lake and Los Feliz, and was the first Asian American elected to the Council. As chair of the Council's Ad Hoc Committee on Governmental Ethics, he steered the 1990 ethics reform ordinance approved by city voters, which established the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission.

He later served on the Los Angeles City Planning Commission from 2005 to 2012 and as dean of the College of Environmental Design at Cal Poly Pomona from 2009 to 2019, where he is now dean emeritus.

"When the new Ethics Commission begins its work, earning the public's trust will come down to the people who serve on it," said Nancy Yap, chair of the Governance Reform Task Force. "Michael Woo's experience across public service, higher education, and civic leadership has given him the thoughtful judgment to help the Commission earn the public's trust from its very first meeting."

The Task Force selected Woo on September 16 after a public recruitment that opened July 6 and drew more than 370 eligible applicants from across the County. Its Ethics Ad Hoc Subcommittee reviewed the applications and interviewed approximately 20 semifinalists before advancing six finalists to public interviews, and Task Force members deliberated for six hours before making their selection.

Franco, executive director of the Southeast Los Angeles Collaborative, was nominated by Board Chair Hilda L. Solis. Susskind, a retired public lawyer and civic leader, was nominated by Assessor Jeffrey Prang.

The Board of Supervisors today also approved initial job classifications for the Office of Ethics Compliance, including the Ethics Compliance Officer who will lead the Office, and a classification for Ethics Commission members.

"The Ethics Ad Hoc Subcommittee spent more than a year studying how ethics commissions succeed and where they fall short, and every lesson pointed the same way. Independence is what makes them work," said Sara Sadhwani, Task Force chair pro tem and chair of its Ethics Ad Hoc Subcommittee. "The Board has now seated three commissioners who can put that principle into practice."

The seven-member Commission will oversee and enforce County laws governing campaign finance, lobbying, conflicts of interest and governmental ethics. It will adopt rules and penalty guidelines, issue formal opinions and decide enforcement cases, including whether a violation occurred and what penalty applies.

The Office of Ethics Compliance will carry out the Commission's day-to-day work, including education and training, advice, disclosure administration, investigations, audits and public reporting. County voters approved Measure G in November 2024, requiring an independent Ethics Commission and Office of Ethics Compliance, creating a new elected County Executive position in 2028 and expanding the Board of Supervisors from five to nine members beginning in 2032.

The Task Force's Ethics Ad Hoc Subcommittee developed the Commission's framework by consulting ethics experts, benchmarking commissions in other communities and refining its recommendations through public meetings and a community forum. The Task Force approved its final recommendations on March 25, 2026, and the Board voted unanimously on May 19 to establish the Commission and the Office of Ethics Compliance.

About the Governance Reform Task Force

The Los Angeles County Governance Reform Task Force is a 13-member body established under Measure G to guide implementation of the County's voter-approved charter reforms. It advises the Board of Supervisors and conducts public and stakeholder engagement throughout the governance transition. Learn more at measureg.lacounty.gov.

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