

# Item 5b - Johnson Application

Form Name: 2021 PEC Commissioner Application  
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Location: [REDACTED]

## Public Ethics Commission Application

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### Contact Information

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Name Christopher Johnson

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Address [REDACTED] 94705

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Phone [REDACTED]

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Evening Phone [REDACTED]

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Email [REDACTED]

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### Please answer the following questions

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Are you an Oakland resident? Yes

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Years of residency in Oakland 28

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Your City Council District District 1

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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)

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Do you attest that you already have or will attend a PEC meeting before your final interview with the Commission? Yes

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If you said yes to the previous question, please let us know what date you attended. I will attend the May 2021 meeting

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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

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

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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

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Are you a registered Oakland lobbyist? No

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Are you required to register as a lobbyist? No

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Do you receive compensation from an Oakland lobbyist? No

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Do you receive gifts from an Oakland lobbyist? No

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

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How did you hear about this vacancy? Solicitation from Public Ethics Commission staff

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### Supplemental Questions

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

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As a recently retired, 17-year 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 perhaps the gold standard for communicating and requiring honesty, ethics and integrity among 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. In addition to my significant and substantial professional experience working in the sphere of public and professional integrity, I have almost 20 years of experience leading community and professional organizations. Since 2012, I have served on the board of the North Hills Community Association (NHCA), a community service /neighborhood advocacy association serving residents and property owners in Oakland's North Hills communities.

During my tenure and under my leadership, the NHCA has undertaken in partnership with City officials, agencies and representatives, various improvement efforts focused on addressing public safety concerns, wildfire prevention, disaster preparedness, traffic safety and more. In addition, the NHCA has hosted, in concert with the Oakland League of Women Voters, a variety of candidate and issue forums aimed at helping area residents become familiar with the views of persons running for public office in Oakland.

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 directed communication functions across a range of private and public organizations, 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 relating to complex topics, and collaborating with a broad mix of leaders and stakeholders in developing strategies and solutions to address difficult/sensitive issues.

As a result of my broad experience, I bring an awareness of, sensitivity to, and relevant experience dealing with issues of public integrity, honesty and adherence to ethical standards and expectations.

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

I approach this Commission assignment with an open mind and a desire to leverage my experience to the greatest benefit of the City of Oakland with regard to the business that comes before the Commission.

We've seen in recent months various state and local governments across the nation passing legislation to make voting harder and more burdensome for less-advantaged segments of the electorate. These aggressive efforts to change voting laws and legislative boundaries for the benefit of a single political party are not just unethical, they are un-American and quite possibly unconstitutional. We in Oakland must stand up for free and fair elections, where ALL citizens have equal opportunities to exercise their franchise.

I read the Public Ethics Commission's "Race for Power" report and its 2020 Annual Report, and gained appreciation for the ways the Commission works to promote transparency and fairness in elections. If I am selected, I will work with my Commission colleagues to continue to foster transparency, honesty and equity in the administration of our city and the management of its elections.

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**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.

The Public Ethics Commission plays a vital role in helping communicate and reinforce the city's rules and ordinances for honest, ethical conduct among staff, elected officials and those seeking to serve.

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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 would consider an appointment to the Public Ethics Commission an excellent way to continue supporting my community.

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**Please provide two references**

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# Item 5b - Johnson Application

## Reference 1

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Name    | Ian Appleyard   |
| Address | Director, City of Oakland Human Resources Department<br>[REDACTED]<br>Oakland, CA 94612 |
| Phone   | [REDACTED]  |
| Email   | [REDACTED]  |

## Reference 2

|         |                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| Name    | Brooke Levin                    |
| Address | [REDACTED]<br>Oakland, CA 94618 |
| Phone   | [REDACTED]                      |
| Email   | [REDACTED]                      |

## Submit your resume

|                    |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Upload your resume | [REDACTED]<br>[REDACTED] |
|--------------------|--------------------------|

## Sign and submit application

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Signature | [REDACTED]  |
| Date/Time | Apr 14, 2021  |

**CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON**

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**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.**

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## 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)*