

OHIO ETHICS COMMISSION

Merom Brachman, *Chair*
Sarah M. Brown, *Vice Chair*



8 East Long Street, 10th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Telephone: (614) 466-7090
Fax: (614) 466-8368
Web site: www.ethics.ohio.gov

David E. Freel, *Executive Director*

DAVID E. FREEL

David E. Freel has been the Executive Director of the Ohio Ethics Commission since 1994. He joined the Commission in 1983, as Counsel, and served as Associate Director from 1987 to 1993. As Executive Director, Mr. Freel supervises a staff of twenty and oversees the day-to-day responsibilities of the Commission. These responsibilities include: providing ethics advice to public officials and employees before they act; confidentially investigating the alleged unethical actions of state and local public servants; managing financial disclosure made by 10,500 public office holders; conducting public education and providing information; and supervising the administrative functions of the Commission.

During his tenure with the Ethics Commission, Mr. Freel has supervised and directed the investigations of the Commission into the conduct of state and local officials. This responsibility has often involved joint investigations with federal and state investigative agencies and special prosecutors. In this capacity, Mr. Freel has also served as a special assistant prosecutor in ethics-related prosecutions. One example involved the investigation and prosecution of the former Columbiana County Treasurer, and his son, in 1994, for felony ethics violations and related crimes resulting from the son's embezzlement of millions of dollars of public funds controlled by the county.

Mr. Freel represents the Commission before the Ohio General Assembly, state and local agencies, and the public. Mr. Freel has written articles on Ohio's Ethics Law and given ethics presentations at seminars and conferences in the United States and Canada. He is a past President of the Council of Governmental Ethics Laws (COGEL) and was honored with the COGEL Outstanding Service Award in 2002. COGEL is an international organization composed of federal, state, local, and provincial agencies, and individuals, responsible for the administration and implementation of ethics, financial disclosure, elections, campaign finance, and freedom of information laws and provisions.

Before joining the Ethics Commission staff, Mr. Freel was a faculty member of The Ohio State University College of Law, serving as a Clinical Teaching Fellow and Staff Attorney in the College of Law's Clinical Programs from 1979 to 1983. Prior to that, he was a trial attorney with the Franklin County Public Defender's Office from 1977 to 1979.

Mr. Freel received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science from The Ohio State University in 1974, and his Juris Doctor degree from Capital University School of Law in 1977.