

# Highlights

## Why We Did This Audit

Government is most effective when elected and appointed officials and employees follow ethical principles and act in the best interest of the people they serve. An ethical work environment helps retain quality employees, increase productivity, reduce risks associated with misconduct, and sustain public trust and confidence.

## Background

The City Auditor’s Office conducted an employee survey in 2008 that included questions related to the city’s ethical environment. In 2011, we conducted an audit of the city’s efforts to encourage ethical conduct. Since then, the city has revised its code of ethics, provided ethics training, and expanded the authority of the Municipal Officials and Officers Ethics Commission, but has not surveyed employees to gauge the city’s current ethical environment and identify areas for ethical improvement.

## Audit Methodology

We surveyed all 4,410 active city employees through a web-based or paper survey in February 2016. We received 2,005 responses, a response rate of 46 percent. We compared the survey results with those of our 2008 employee survey and identified significant changes.

For more information, contact the City Auditor’s Office at 816-513-3300 or [cityauditor@kcmo.org](mailto:cityauditor@kcmo.org).

To view the complete report, go to [kcmo.gov/cityauditor](http://kcmo.gov/cityauditor) and click on Search Audit Reports.

# PERFORMANCE AUDIT

## Listening to the Workforce – 2016 Employee Ethics Survey

### Survey Results

Employee perceptions of the city’s ethical environment have improved since 2008.

- A majority of survey respondents agree that Kansas City government is an ethical place to work.
- Significantly more respondents, although not yet a majority, agree that top city management and elected officials set good examples of ethical conduct.
- Respondents continue to be positive about the ethical example set by their supervisors and department management.
- Most respondents report being familiar with the city’s code of ethics, knowing how to report unethical behavior, and being expected to report unethical behavior. Respondents’ knowledge about how to handle ethical concerns, however, is mixed.
- Although improved significantly, less than half of the respondents agree they can report unethical behavior without fear of retaliation and only about one third of respondents believe unethical behavior will probably be detected and punished.
- Ten to fifteen percent of respondents reported being asked by an elected official or department management to do something that contradicted the city’s rules and procedures while performing their job duties during the past twelve months.

