




DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
CITY OF CHICAGO

To: Steve Berlin
Executive Director
Board of Ethics

From: 
Marisa Novara
Commissioner
Department of Housing

Re: Potential conflict of interest regarding GMP Labs

Date: October 17, 2019

This memorandum is intended to address what could be conceived as a potential conflict of interest between me and GMP Labs (GMP) – a nonprofit doing business in Chicago. My husband, Ted Christians, was asked to join the Board of Directors of GMP, given their shared work focused on young men with criminal justice involvement. GMP Labs does not have any formal agreements with the City as of the date on this memo, but they are in discussion with Department of Housing staff on the possibility of acquiring City-owned land as part of their workforce development programming.

Therefore, I will take the following step in regards to any management or control decisions regarding GMP Labs:

1. I will set up a wall between me and any decisions or formal agreements regarding GMP Labs as follows:
 - a. Approval from City departments regarding any GMP requests will be reviewed and approved or declined by the Department of Housing's (DOH) Managing Deputy Commissioner Anthony Simpkins, without any input from me.
 - b. For any land sale or land write-down decisions or agreements regarding GMP, Deputy Commissioner Simpkins is authorized to make all determinations without input from me. Deputy Commissioner Simpkins has been designated my proxy since 10.17.19.

- c. For any future City bid specifications that GMP submits a bid or proposal on, or determinations whether or not GMP may be considered the responsive and responsible bidder or proposer on any contract will be made by Deputy Commissioner Simpkins without input from me. Any contracts awarded or formal agreements with GMP will be signed by Deputy Commissioner Simpkins.
2. These measures shall take effect immediately and will remain in place for the duration of my tenure as Commissioner of the Department of Housing.

Please contact me should there be any questions, or should you require further information regarding this matter.

Cc: Anthony Simpkins
Will Edwards
Brian O'Donnell
Irma Morales