

800 Bradbury Dr. SE
Suite 215
Albuquerque, NM 87106
(505) 827 7800
www.sec.state.nm.us



Hon. William F. Lang (*Chair*)
Jeffrey L. Baker
Stuart M. Bluestone
Hon. Dr. Garrey Carruthers
Hon. Celia Foy Castillo
Ronald Solimon
Dr. Judy Villanueva

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

CONTACT:

For Immediate Release:

02/09/2023

Suha Musa
Communications Manager
suha.musa@sec.nm.gov
505.554.7706

PRESS RELEASE

State Ethics Commission files civil enforcement action against Yvonne Otero to enforce the Governmental Conduct Act

Albuquerque, NM, February 9, 2023 – The State Ethics Commission has filed a civil enforcement action against Yvonne Otero to enforce the public trust provisions of New Mexico’s Governmental Conduct Act. The Governmental Conduct Act requires public officials generally to treat their government office as a public trust and not to abuse the powers and resources of their office.

The complaint alleges Ms. Otero dramatically failed in this regard by using her elected office as Torrance County Clerk and the public property of that office for her own personal benefit and to pursue personal interests and further abused her office: by deleting absentee ballots cast electronically under the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act; by failing to correctly process ballots she did not delete; by attempting to pre-certify ballot tabulators so she could go on vacation to Las Vegas, Nevada; by engaging in intimate encounters in her office during work hours; by making open references to illicit drug use; and by subjecting subordinate employees to danger and threats for both amusement and coercion.

The Commission’s director, Jeremy Farris, says “The State Ethics Commission exists to protect the public’s trust. In our democracy, the public places its greatest trust in those public officials who regulate our elections.”

[Click here to read the State Ethics Commission's complaint.](#)

Under New Mexico's Governmental Conduct Act, the State Ethics Commission may pursue civil remedies only. Accordingly, the Commission has also referred the matter to the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Office of the Attorney General.

For more information about the State Ethics Commission, please visit sec.nm.gov.