



New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics

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JCOPE Settles Ethics Law Violations with Former Executive Director of Committee on Open Government

Admitted Inappropriate Conduct and Inappropriate Use of State Computers

(ALBANY, NY) September 9, 2020 – The Joint Commission on Public Ethics (“Commission”) today announced that it has reached a settlement agreement with former Committee on Open Government Executive Director Robert Freeman in connection with allegations that he violated State ethics laws through his sexually inappropriate conduct during interactions with colleagues and members of the media, as well as for his misuse of State resources during his time on the job.

As part of the settlement, Freeman, who served in his position from 1976 until his termination in 2019, agreed to pay \$15,000 to settle violations of two sections of Public Officers Law § 74. Freeman admitted that his conduct with women during official meetings and other interactions, as well as his use of a State computer to view sexual images, constituted an abuse of his official position and a violation of the Public Officers Law.

This case was referred to the Commission by the Office of the Inspector General following its own investigation and report.

For more about this settlement agreement, go to jcope.ny.gov, click on the ‘Investigations’ tab, and then go to ‘Enforcement Actions.’