



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
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RICHARD H. CAMPBELL

CAPITAL COMPLEX EAST  
1025 CAPITAL CENTER DRIVE, SUITE #104  
FRANKFORT, KY 40601  
(502) 564-7954  
FAX: (502) 696-5091  
[HTTPS://ETHICS.KY.GOV/](https://ethics.ky.gov/)

SUSAN STOKLEY CLARY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SUCHETA MEENA MOHANTY  
GENERAL COUNSEL

EDEN DAVIS STEPHENS  
DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL

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**CONTACT: Susan Stokley Clary  
(502) 892-3400  
[SUSAN.CLARY@KY.GOV](mailto:SUSAN.CLARY@KY.GOV)**

FRANKFORT, KY –

At its meeting today the Executive Branch Ethics Commission presented Rosemary G. Holbrook, General Counsel and Executive Director of Legal Services, Kentucky Personnel Cabinet, with the Second Annual Governor Brereton C. Jones Outstanding Ethics Officer Award for 2024. In honor of Governor Brereton C. Jones and the role he played in establishing the Executive Branch Ethics Code and in the establishment of this Commission, the Commission renamed its annual award to the “Governor Brereton C. Jones Outstanding Ethics Officer Award.” In 1992, it was Governor Jones’ vision and leadership that first established an Ethics Code for the Executive Branch of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. He then worked with the legislature to draft and enact legislation that codified the Ethics Code and established an independent ethics commission, the Executive Branch Ethics Commission. Ethical requirements were placed upon state workers and an independent body was set up and funded to enforce those requirements—a truly positive step forward for the Commonwealth. This award program was established to recognize an individual serving as a designated Ethics Officer for an executive branch agency for his or her outstanding achievement and contributions in promoting the ethical conduct of executive branch employees.

Rosemary G. Holbrook was awarded the Governor Brereton C. Jones Outstanding Ethics Officer Award-2024 for her efforts to enforce the Executive Branch Code of Ethics while serving as a designated Ethics Officer and for implementing policies and procedures for the effective enforcement of the Ethics Code.

Mrs. Holbrook currently serves as General Counsel, Ethics Officer, and Executive Director of the Office of Legal Services for the Personnel Cabinet. She is an attorney licensed by the Kentucky Bar Association and a CPA licensed by the Kentucky Board of Accountancy. Prior to her time in state government, she served six years of active duty in the United States Air Force as a JAG attorney, serving both in the United States and in Baghdad, Iraq as a member of Task Force 134 which oversaw conduct of detainee operations. Her career as a Kentucky public servant began as an Assistant County

Attorney in Fayette County and as a staff attorney for the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, before she joined the Personnel Cabinet's Office of Legal Services.

Rosemary Holbrook was nominated for the 2024 Governor Brereton C. Jones Outstanding Ethics Officer award by the Secretary of the Personnel Cabinet, Mary Elizabeth Bailey, who described Ms. Holbrook's service to the Personnel Cabinet and the Commonwealth as follows:

"As Secretary of the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet, I understand that, as public servants, we work for the benefit of the people of this Commonwealth, and in doing so, we must conduct ourselves in an ethical manner so that the people of this Commonwealth have trust and confidence in the integrity of government operations. I can think of no one that upholds these high standards more than Rosemary Holbrook; therefore, I would like to nominate her consideration for the 2024 Outstanding Ethics Officer Award.

As the Ethics Officer for the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet, Rosemary Holbrook ensures the Cabinet complies with all provisions of the Executive Branch Code of Ethics. She often advises Cabinet leadership and employees on the interpretation of the code, potential conflicts of interest and seeks clarification and guidance from the Executive Branch Ethics Commission staff when needed.

In her role as General Counsel, she serves as chief legal counsel on the interpretation of KRS Chapter 18A. She provides daily guidance to attorneys and human resource executives across the executive branch. This is imperative in order to ensure that each agency has a clear and comprehensive understanding of Chapter 18A and how it applies to all personnel actions and employee situations within their agency. This year, she has continued to work tirelessly to educate human resources executives on the recent modernization of KRS Chapter 18A, passed by the General Assembly, and she prioritizes her availability to provide legal guidance to state agencies on all employment matters.

In just the 2023-2024 fiscal year alone, the Office of Legal Services reviewed 2,559 personnel actions for legal sufficiency, consulted with executive branch human resources and legal staff on 810 personnel issues, and responded to 734 investigative requests regarding state employment. This is in addition to other responsibilities of her office, including open records requests, background checks, prelitigation settlement agreements, and much more.

Simply put, Mrs. Holbrook plays a vital role in keeping the executive branch compliant with employment laws and regulations, and I cannot overstate her value to both the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet and to the executive branch.

Because of her efforts in maintaining the highest standards of ethical and legal conduct throughout state government, I believe that she would be a most deserving recipient of this year's Outstanding Ethics Officer Award."

Rosemary attended high school in Matewan, West Virginia, where she graduated as Valedictorian before obtaining a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Pikeville. Not only excelling in her academic pursuits, Rose was also captain of the women's basketball team, a two-time collegiate academic All-American, and she led her team to the school's first appearance at the national tournament after winning the Kentucky Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championship. She received her law degree from the University of Louisville and her Master of Science in Accounting from Marshall university. She is married to Tim Holbrook, the Chief Human Resources Officer for the Legislative Research Commission, and they reside in Versailles, Kentucky.