



OHIO ETHICS COMMISSION

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Model Ethics Policy for Local Agencies

Policy Statement

It is policy of the [Agency] to carry out its mission in accordance with the strictest ethical guidelines and to ensure that [Agency] members and employees conduct themselves in a manner that fosters public confidence in the integrity of the [Agency], its processes, and its accomplishments.

General Standards of Ethical Conduct

[Agency] officials and employees must, at all times, abide by protections to the public embodied in Ohio's ethics laws, as found in Chapters 102. and 2921. of the Ohio Revised Code, and as interpreted by the Ohio Ethics Commission and Ohio courts. (A copy of these laws is provided by the [Agency], and receipt acknowledged, as required in R.C. 102.09(D).) Officials and employees must conduct themselves, at all times, in a manner that avoids favoritism, bias, and the appearance of impropriety.

A general summary of the restraints upon the conduct of all officials and employees includes, but is not limited to, those listed below. No official or employee shall:

- Solicit or accept anything of value from anyone doing business with the [Agency];
- Solicit or accept employment from anyone doing business with the [Agency], unless the official or employee completely withdraws from [Agency] activity regarding the party offering employment, and the [Agency] approves the withdrawal;
- Use his or her public position to obtain benefits for the official or employee, a family member, or anyone with whom the official or employee has a business or employment relationship;
- Be paid or accept any form of compensation for personal services rendered on a matter before any board, commission, or other body of the [Agency], unless the official or employee qualifies for the exception, and files the statement, described in R.C. 102.04(D);
- Hold or benefit from a contract with, authorized by, or approved by, the [Agency], (the Ethics Law does except some limited stockholdings, and some contracts objectively shown as the lowest cost services, where all criteria under R.C. 2921.42 are met);
- Vote, authorize, recommend, or in any other way use his or her position to secure approval of an [Agency] contract (including employment or personal services) in which the official or employee, a family member, or anyone with whom the official or employee has a business or employment relationship, has an interest;
- Solicit or accept honoraria (see R.C. 102.01(H) and 102.03(H));
- During public service, and for one year after leaving public service, represent any person, in any fashion, before any public agency, with respect to a matter in which the official or employee personally participated while serving with the [Agency];
- Use or disclose confidential information protected by law, unless appropriately authorized; or

- Use, or authorize the use of, his or her title, the name “[Agency],” or “[the Agency’s acronym],” or the [Agency]’s logo in a manner that suggests impropriety, favoritism, or bias by the [Agency] or the official or employee;

For purposes of this policy:

- “Anything of value” includes anything of monetary value, including, but not limited to, money, gifts, food or beverages, social event tickets and expenses, travel expenses, golf outings, consulting fees, compensation, or employment. “Value” means worth greater than de minimis or nominal.
- “Anyone doing business with the [Agency]” includes, but is not limited to, any person, corporation, or other party that is doing or seeking to do business with, regulated by, or has interests before [Agency].

Financial Disclosure

Every [Agency] official or employee required to file a financial disclosure statement must file a complete and accurate statement with the Ethics Commission by May 15 of each year. An official or employee elected, appointed, or employed to a filing position after February 15 must file a statement within ninety days of appointment or employment.

Ethics Education

Providing ethics education and information is an inherent part of good ethics governance. The Ethics Commission is available to provide educational seminars and informational materials. The Commission can be contacted at (614) 466-7090.

Assistance

The Ethics Commission is available to provide advice and assistance regarding the application of the Ethics Law and related statutes. The Commission can be contacted at (614) 466-7090. The Commission’s web site address is: www.ethics.ohio.gov. [Agency] counsel is available to answer questions involving this policy.

Penalties

Failure of any [Agency] official or employee to abide by this Ethics policy, or to comply with the Ethics Law and related statutes, will result in discipline, which may include dismissal, as well as any potential civil or criminal sanctions under the law.

Changes

This policy may be changed only by [stipulated official or majority vote of the legislative authority of the Agency].