

DEFINITIONS

Gift – Anything of value given without expectation of payment, e.g. presents, event tickets, or travel expenses.

Board Vendor Any person or legal entity doing business with or seeking to do business with the Board, also referred to as a contractor.

Supervisor Any official or employee with authority to hire, discharge, transfer, promote, direct, reward, or discipline employees.

GENERAL PROHIBITION

A CPS official or employee **may not** accept a gift that is understood as an attempt to influence official decisions, or in exchange for advice on matters concerning CPS. A contractor **may not** give a gift, directly or indirectly, to CPS or another contractor in order to secure a contract. This restriction also applies to spouses/partners and other household members. However, when not meant to influence official actions, single gifts of \$50 or less, or multiple gifts totaling \$100 or less from one source in one calendar year, are acceptable.

Please note that the Department of Procurement has a separate, zero tolerance policy regarding gifts.

ACCEPTABLE GIFTS

A CPS official or employee may accept:

- Public service awards
- Political contributions, provided they are reported as required by law
- Reasonable loans made in the ordinary course of business
- Reasonable hosting, including travel expenses
- Gifts from relatives and coworkers
- Trivial promotional products, e.g. pens, notepads, keychains, etc.
- General discounts for all CPS employees
- Gifts accepted on behalf of a school or department
- Honoraria for speaking engagements, lectures, debates, or organized discussion forums, as long as the honoraria are reported to the Chief Financial Officer within 10 business days

GIFTS FOR SUPERVISORS

A CPS employee may not spend more than \$50 on a single gift for a supervisor, or more than \$100 on multiple gifts during one calendar year. However, multiple employees may contribute to a larger gift if each individual contribution is \$50 or less.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: I am a teacher and the parents of my students bought me a class gift. Twenty families contributed \$10 each and the total value of the gift was \$200. May I accept the gift?

A: Yes. Each individual contribution was under \$50 and the gift is acceptable.

Q: I am a contract manager in Facilities. A construction company executive who is trying to secure a Board business recently offered me Bears tickets. May I keep them?

A: These tickets might be viewed as an attempt to influence your official actions and should be declined.

Q: A Board vendor has offered to pay my airfare, food, lodging, and entertainment at a conference that includes professional development and demonstrations of new products created for the education market. May I accept this offer?

A: The offer to pay for this travel is considered a gift under the Code of Ethics and should be vetted with the Ethics Advisor. The travel request should also be entered into the travel approval system in Oracle.

Q: I am a teacher and our assistant principal is having a baby. Is it permissible for the teachers at our school to contribute to a gift for a \$400 designer stroller?

A: Yes, as long as each individual teacher contribution is \$50 or less.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Violations of our Code of Ethics may result in disciplinary action up through discharge for employees, removal from office for officials, and debarment for vendors or contractors.

The above Guidelines are meant to explain and supplement, but not replace, the Code provisions regarding gifts.

Please review the complete [CPS Code of Ethics](#)

For specific inquiries, contact Jennifer L. Chan, Ethics Advisor, at ethicsinquiries@cps.edu.