



## CITY OF PROVIDENCE

### 1.7 GIFT POLICY

#### Purpose

This policy is intended to promote and enforce the standards of integrity, public trust, and ethics, to avoid any real and perceived conflict of interest, and prevent the genuine and perception of influence professional decisions and/or actions.

#### Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the City of Providence, including full-time, part-time, temporary, seasonal, contract staff, volunteers, interns, and fellows.

Nothing in this policy shall supersede, modify, or diminish any rights, benefits, or obligations contained within applicable collective bargaining agreements (CBAs). In the event of a conflict between this policy and a CBA, the CBA shall prevail for covered employees. For all other employees, this policy shall govern.

#### Definitions

**Gift:** For the purposes of this policy, a "gift" is defined as any item of value, including both nominal and substantial gifts, offered or given to an employee

**External Gift** An external gift is any item of value, nominal and substantial, given to an employee by any outside organization and/or individual which include vendors, suppliers, customers, potential customers, potential vendors, or any other external individual(s) or organization.

**Internal Gift** An internal gift is any item of value, nominal and substantial, given to an employee by another employee.

#### Policy

##### 1. **External Gifts**

City of Providence employees may not accept gifts under any circumstances from vendors, suppliers, customers, potential customers, potential vendors, suppliers, or any other external individual or organization, regardless of the value.

##### 2. **Internal Gifts**

- A. Employees may give and/or accept gifts from another employee.
- B. Gifts given and accepted shall not exceed the value of fifty dollars (\$50), or one-hundred fifty dollars (\$150) in the aggregate per calendar year.
- C. Gifts shall not be given to influence, coerce, harass, or otherwise displace any employee(s), nor shall gifts be given in exchange for favors, or any other reason that violates this and/or any other applicable policy.

##### 3. **Gift Examples**

The following are examples of items that fall under this gift policy include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Cash, debt forbearance, or debt forgiveness in any amount
- B. Food, beverages, or meals provided by vendors, suppliers, or potential vendors, whether delivered to work locations or provided in a restaurant setting
- C. Gift baskets or similar items containing food, beverages, or other valuable items



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- D. Tickets to entertainment venues, including sporting events, theatrical performances, cultural events, or other forms of entertainment

### 4. **Employee Responsibilities**

Employees are required to proactively and professionally communicate the City's no-gift policy to vendors, suppliers, and any other relevant parties. Employees should politely explain that the City has adopted this policy to avoid conflicts of interest and request that vendors refrain from providing gifts to any employee, department, or office at any time.

### 5. **Procedure for Handling Gifts Received**

If a City employee or department receives an external gift, or one that is of exceeding value than that allowed by this policy, the following actions should be taken:

- A. **Return of the Gift:** If feasible, the gift should be returned to the sender, accompanied by a note of thanks that includes an explanation of the City's no-gift policy.
- B. **Donation of the Gift:** If returning the gift is not feasible, the gift must be donated to an appropriate City-approved charity. This includes gifts of food, beverages, or gift baskets containing food, beverages, or other items of value.
- C. **Charitable Donations:** Charitable donations of gifts should be coordinated through the City's Department of People and Culture (DPC). Employees should contact DPC for assistance with the donation process.

### 6. **Code of Ethics and Policy**

The City of Providence's Gift Policy may differ from the State's policy. While City employees and officials are bound by both the City's and the State's Codes of Ethics, where such conflicts exist, the City's policy on gifts takes precedence.

### 7. **Clarifications and Questions**

Employees who have questions about this policy or need clarification on any aspect of it should first consult with their immediate supervisor. If further clarification is necessary, the Department of People and Culture will serve as the authority on the application of the gift policy to ensure consistent and fair treatment across the City. Employees may also contact the City Municipal Integrity Officer 401-680-5333 for questions about a gift.

### 8. **Compliance**

Employees found in violation of this policy may be subjected to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

#### **Related Policies:**

Ethics guide  
Discipline Policy  
Code of Conduct

#### **Other Related Information:**

Local 1033 [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#)  
Rhode Island Code of Ethics  
Providence Code of Ethics