

avoid issuing opinions or decisions contrary to Commission policy which can be mistaken as official Commission policy.

**§ 700.527 Endorsements.**

Employees are prohibited from endorsing in an official capacity business products or processes or the services of commercial firms for advertising publicity or sale purposes. Use of materials, products or services, by the Commission does not constitute official endorsement. Employees may not recommend for or against any particular builder, supplier, realtor, contractor or other person or business seeking to sell any product or service to relocatees.

**§ 700.529 Negotiations for employment.**

An employee shall inform the supervisor and seek the advice of the Designated Agency Ethics Official if he or she wishes to negotiate for future non-Federal employment with persons or organizations having business with the Commission if the employee is involved in making recommendations or decisions affecting those persons or organizations.

**§ 700.531 Government property.**

Employees shall be held accountable for Government property and monies entrusted to their individual use or in connection with their official duties. An employee has a positive duty to protect and conserve Government property and to use it economically and for official purposes only, for example:

- (a) Only official documents and materials may be reproduced on Government reproduction equipment.
- (b) Government vehicles may be used only on official business and may not be used for personal use or for travel to or from an employee's place of residence, unless specifically authorized or assigned by the supervisor.
- (c) An employee may not use FTS to make personal phone calls at Government expense.
- (d) An employee may not use Government purchase authority for personal acquisitions even though reimbursement is made.

**§ 700.533 Restrictions affecting travel and travel expense reimbursement.**

- (a) When an employee is on officially authorized travel his or her expenses are reimbursed by the Government. The employee may not request nor accept reimbursement in cash or kind for travel expenses from any other source, even when the employee's expenses exceed the maximum Government allowance.
- (b) An employee who is authorized to attend a convention, seminar, or similar meeting while on official duty, whose travel is being paid by the sponsoring association, may not also claim travel expenses from the Government.
- (c) An employee may accept accommodations and expense reimbursement for attending meetings, functions, etc. in his or her private capacity and on his or her own time, provided that such acceptance does not produce an actual or apparent conflict of interest. This restriction prohibits an employee from accepting accommodations or reimbursement from anyone having or seeking business with the Commission.
- (d) Commission employees traveling on official business, as well as employees traveling on personal business, may not accept the use of private airplanes, cars, or other means of transportation offered at no expense by individuals conducting or seeking business dealings with the Commission, nor from clients of the Commission.

*Exception:* An employee may accept transportation and meals of modest value provided by a contractor or client in connection with official business when it is not practical to make arrangements for Government or commercial accommodations. The employee must receive prior approval of the supervisor in such case. This might occur, for example, if an employee were traveling to a remote area where no Government vehicle were available, or where there are no nearby restaurants or eating places. There is no prohibition against a contractor or private citizen traveling as a passenger in a Government vehicle driven by a Commission employee on official business, provided administrative procedures have been followed in making the travel arrangements.

**§ 700.535 Nepotism.**

An employee may not appoint or advocate the appointment to any position under his or her control, any individual

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who is a relative of the employee. No employee shall supervise a member of his or her own family except in emergency situations.

**§ 700.537 Indebtedness.**

(a) Commission personnel shall pay their just financial obligations in a timely manner, especially those imposed by law, such as Federal, state, or local taxes. For the purposes of this paragraph, "just financial obligation" means one acknowledged by the employee or reduced to judgment by a court.

(b) Employees shall promptly refund any salary overpayments and excess travel advances.

(c) An employee's debts to private creditors are his or her personal concern. Any complaints or questions concerning such obligations will be referred to the employee for handling. Creditors and collectors shall not have access to employees on Agency premises during duty hours.

**§ 700.539 Soliciting contributions.**

(a) An employee shall not solicit a contribution from another employee for a gift to an official superior, make a donation as a gift to an official superior or accept a gift from an employee receiving less pay than himself or herself. (5 U.S.C. 7351) However, this paragraph does not preclude a voluntary gift of nominal value made on a special occasion.

(b) If authorized by the supervisor, an employee may solicit contributions for charitable causes. He or she may also be permitted to collect small donations for gifts for fellow employees for special occasions during slack moments.

**§ 700.541 Fraud or false statement in a Government matter.**

"Whoever, in any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the United States, knowingly or wilfully falsifies, conceals or covers up by a trick, scheme or device a material fact, or makes or uses any false writing or document knowing the same to contain false, fictitious or fraudulent statement or entry, shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned not more than 5 years or both (18 U.S.C. 1001)." Special attention is required in

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the certification of time and attendance reports, applications for employment, personnel security forms, requests for travel reimbursement, client certification documents, and purchase orders and receiving forms.

**§ 700.543 Gambling.**

An employee shall not sponsor or participate in any gambling activity during working hours on Government premises.

**§ 700.545 Alcoholism and drug abuse.**

An employee who habitually uses intoxicants to excess is subject to removal (5 U.S.C. 7352). The Relocation Commission recognizes alcoholism and drug abuse as serious and treatable illnesses. Excessive absence and poor work performance are two of the specific problems resulting from excessive use of alcohol and drugs. The Commission management will assist any employee who has such a problem to obtain professional help and will make reasonable allowance as permitted by work schedules to allow an employee approved leave for professional treatment. Anyone who seeks such assistance will be guaranteed confidential handling of his or her case. Disciplinary action will be considered if an employee rejects or ignores treatment or other appropriate assistance.

**§ 700.547 Consuming intoxicants on Government premises or during duty hours.**

Consuming alcohol or non-prescription drugs on agency premises, or while driving or riding in a Government vehicle, or during working hours are prohibited conduct and employees violating this regulation are subject to disciplinary action, including discharge.

**§ 700.549 Employee organizations.**

An employee may not knowingly be a member of an organization of Government employees that advocates the overthrow of the United States' constitutional form of government (5 U.S.C. 7311). Employees are also prohibited from striking against the Federal Government. With these restrictions, an employee has the right to form, join, or assist lawful employee organizations. Similarly, an employee has