

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS ETHICS LAW SUMMARY

DISCLAIMER: THIS IS ONLY A GENERALIZED SUMMARY AND IS NOT INTENDED TO BE LEGAL ADVICE. PLEASE REVIEW ORS CHAPTER 244 AND CONSULT AN ATTORNEY OR THE ETHICS COMMISSION FOR ADVICE ABOUT YOUR SPECIFIC SITUATION.

Gifts (Except Entertainment)

- ✓ **Receiving Gifts:** As a public official, you may not receive gifts worth more than \$50 total per calendar year from a source *with any administrative or legislative interest in your board or commission*.
 - Note: This rule applies regardless of whether you are paid for your service on a board or commission.
 - People you live with as well as your immediate relatives are bound by this rule and cannot receive gifts worth more than \$50 total per calendar year from a source with any administrative or legislative interest in your board or commission.
 - “Legislative or administrative interest” means an economic interest, distinct from that of the general public, in your board or commission’s actions.
- ✓ **Giving Gifts:** gift limit does not apply when you are giving gifts to persons who are *not* public officials (or their relatives or members of household).
- ✓ **Relative Exception:** gift limit does not apply to gifts you receive from people you live with or certain relatives (including your spouse, domestic partner, children, siblings and parents).
- ✓ **Political Contribution Exception:** Limit does not apply to political contributions.

Food & Drink

- ✓ Generally, gift rules and exceptions apply to food and drink.
- ✓ **Reception Exception:** you may enjoy *incidental* food and drink that is free to everyone at receptions (does not include sit-down dinners).
- ✓ **Speaker or Panel Member Exception:** you may enjoy food or drink when you speak or answer questions as part of a scheduled program.
- ✓ **Government/Membership/Nonprofit Exception:** you may enjoy food or drink at an official meeting or convention, or on a fact-finding mission if paid for by:
 - Federal, state or local government;
 - Tribal government;
 - Membership organization to which your board or commission pays dues; or
 - 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that receive < 5% of funding from private sources.

Travel

- ✓ Generally, gift rules and exceptions apply to gifts of travel.
- ✓ All travel paid for by a 3rd Party should be *pre-approved* by your board or commission.
- ✓ **Carpool Exception:** You can travel together with another public official to an in-state event you are attending in your official capacity without splitting the cost of travel.
- ✓ **Government/Membership/Nonprofit Exception:** travel and reasonable expenses to attend an official meeting or convention, or on a fact-finding mission if paid for by:
 - Federal, state or local government;
 - Tribal government;
 - Membership organization to which your board or commission pays dues; or
 - 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that receive < 5% of funding from private sources.
- ✓ **Economic Development Exception:** certain travel to engage in trade or fact-finding missions.

Entertainment

- ✓ **No gifts** of entertainment from any source with a legislative or administrative interest in your board or commission (not even gifts worth less than \$50).
- ✓ **Incidental Entertainment Exception:** may enjoy incidental entertainment at an otherwise permissible event (e.g. the guitarist in the corner).
- ✓ **First Pitch Exception:** acting in an official capacity for a ceremonial purpose (i.e., first pitch, ribbon cutting).