

Q&A City of Austin Gift Policy

What is the City's gift policy?

Under the City's policy on gifts, a city employee or official may not:

- Accept or solicit any gift or favor that might reasonably tend to influence the city employee or official in the discharge of official duties.
- Accept or solicit any gift or favor that the city employee or official should know has been offered with the intent to **influence** your official conduct.
- Accept or solicit any gift or favor that the city employee or official should know has been offered with the intent to **reward** your official conduct.

Does the city gift policy have a dollar limit?

There is no dollar amount associated with prohibited gifts. People sometimes confuse the City's policy with the state law on gifts to public servants, which does utilize a dollar number.

The city has made its gift policy even stricter by further limiting the value of *allowed* gifts to an aggregate of \$50 per calendar year per single source.

Where can I find the gift policy?

The gift policy is part of the City Code and City Personnel Policies. For gifts, see City Code Section 2-7-62(G) *Standards of Conduct*. For discussion of the \$50 limit, see city Administrative Bulletin [14-03](#).

Are promotional items from vendors considered gifts?

Employees attending trade shows or similar events may accept promotional trinkets of negligible values such as inexpensive pens and key chains; these items are generally offered to everyone who attends and not targeted at City employees. However, an item of value from a vendor, such as a meal, is prohibited by the gift policy.

What is an honorarium and can a city employee take it?

An honorarium is a payment for a service (like making a speech or presentation). Employees asked to represent the City at speaking engagements may not accept money for their services.