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.

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