A gift is anything you receive that gives you a personal benefit for which you do not provide consideration of equal or greater value. Even a well-intentioned gift can create an actual or apparent conflict of interests. To help preserve the public trust, state and City laws place limits and reporting requirements on gifts to City officials.

A City official is an individual who is required by state law to file a Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700) because the individual holds a position that is listed in a City agency’s Conflict of Interests (COI) code. To help you determine whether a gift may or may not be accepted, you must first identify the source and the value of the gift.

However, a gift may never be solicited, given, or accepted—regardless of source or value—if it is reasonably foreseeable that your City decisions could be influenced by the gift.

### KNOW THE GIFT SOURCE

It is important to know the source of a gift (the gift giver). This determines whether a gift is prohibited, limited, or exempt. The panels on the right summarize the prohibitions and limitations on gifts from different types of sources. Please see the back of this brochure for exceptions.

### KNOW THE GIFT VALUE

A gift’s value is generally its fair market value. The simplest way to determine a gift’s value is to ask the gift giver. State law also provides methods for determining the value of certain types of gifts. Keeping a record of all gifts accepted can help you stay within gift limits and properly report gifts on Form 700 or Form 60. Please see the back of this brochure for more information.

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All City officials are required to disclose on the state’s Form 700 gifts from a restricted or reportable source that are cumulatively valued at $50 or more in a calendar year and given to them or (subject to limited exceptions) their immediate family members.

In addition, elected City officials, agency heads, and members of City boards and commissions are required to disclose on the City’s Form 60 gifts from a restricted source that are cumulatively valued at $50 or more and given to them or their immediate family.

Gifts from immediate family members.

Reciprocal exchanges between you and another individual (other than a lobbyist) where no single payment is $520 or more.

Informational material, such as books, reports, pamphlets, seminars, or informational conferences, used exclusively for the performance of your City duties.

Two tickets for admission to a fundraiser for a 501(c)(3) organization when the tickets are provided to you by the 501(c)(3) organization, itself.

Two tickets for admission to a political fundraiser when the tickets are provided to you by the candidate or committee holding the fundraiser.

Gifts that are not used and, within 30 days, are:
1. Returned to or purchased from the source;
2. Donated to a 501(c)(3) organization in which neither you nor a member of your immediate family holds a position, without being claimed as a charitable contribution for tax purposes; or
3. Donated to a local, state, or federal government agency without being claimed as a deduction for tax purposes.

Even small variations in the facts surrounding a gift can significantly affect how the gift laws apply. Please contact the Ethics Commission with questions before soliciting or accepting a gift.

Avoid Violations

It is a violation to solicit or accept a gift if it is reasonably foreseeable that the gift could influence your City decision making; to solicit or accept a prohibited gift or a gift that exceeds a gift limit; or to fail to properly disclose a gift.

Be sure to maintain records that show your compliance with the gift laws. A gift journal is available at ethics.lacity.org/publications/#ethics.

This is a brief overview of the gift laws. Please contact us for more information about how the laws apply to you or to report a possible violation.

Web:
ethics.lacity.org

Phone:
(213) 978-1960

Whistleblower Hotline:
(800) 824-4825

Address:
200 North Spring Street
City Hall 24th Floor
Los Angeles CA 90012

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