



CITY OF HOUSTON

Executive Order

Subject: **Executive Order Regarding Gifts**

E.O. No:

1-28 Revised

Effective Date:

January 4, 2011

1. AUTHORITY

1.1 City of Houston Code of Ordinances §14-183 and §18-3.

2. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

2.1 The purpose of this Executive Order is to set forth the rules applicable to all City employees with respect to the acceptance of gifts.

3. SCOPE

3.1 This policy applies to all City employees.

4. DEFINITIONS

Benefit – includes any of the following:

(1) any gift of food, goods, services, money, lodging, transportation, or any other thing of value;

(2) the extension of a discount, rebate, or other privilege or thing that could reasonably be regarded as economic gain or advantage, whether given directly or indirectly to a City employee.

City employee – any person who receives compensation as an employee of the City. For purposes of this Executive Order, this term does not include elected officials or members of City boards and commissions.

Relative – any person who is connected to an employee of the *City by blood or marriage or who regularly resides in the same household with the employee.*

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The director of each department shall ensure that this policy is enforced in the department, including appropriate discipline of City employees who violate this Order. The Mayor or designee shall ensure that department directors are in compliance.

6. REQUIREMENTS

Approved:

Date Approved:

01/04/2011

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- 6.1 A City employee shall not directly or indirectly accept a benefit under any circumstances that create the appearance of impropriety or intent to influence City affairs.
- 6.2 Except as provided below, City employees shall not directly or indirectly accept benefits from any person, including a relative, who has any of the following relationship with any department or other operation of the City:
 - 6.2.1 Persons who are subject to inspection by permitting, licensing, or regulatory programs;
 - 6.2.2 Persons who are under criminal investigation or who are the subject of pending municipal prosecution;
 - 6.2.3 Persons who regularly engage in business or activity that requires the approval or licensure of the City;
 - 6.2.4 Persons who act as lobbyists or consultants to represent any interests before the City;
 - 6.2.5 Persons who are seeking or who hold contracts, purchase orders, or other business interests with the City;
 - 6.2.6 Persons who have claims or pending litigation with the City, including legal counsel who represent their interests; or
 - 6.2.7 Persons who may benefit personally or professionally in any way from City action.

7. EXCEPTIONS

- 7.1 The provisions of section 6.2 do not apply to the following:
 - 7.1.1 Special events for which the offeror is reimbursed.
 - 7.1.2 Offers for an employee to receive food, lodging, transportation, or entertainment, if attendance would be of substantial benefit to the City. Employees who wish to accept such offers must receive authorization in advance from the department director. Requests from department directors shall be approved by the Mayor or designee. Any such approval shall require the employee to assume all costs for expenses not required to effectuate legitimate City business.

8. PROCEDURES

- 8.1 Department directors and the Mayor’s Office shall maintain written records of all requests and actions taken pursuant to section 7.
- 8.2 Violations of this Executive Order by persons other than the department director shall be reported to the director for appropriate disciplinary action.
- 8.3 Violations by department directors shall be reported to the Mayor or designee for appropriate disciplinary action.