

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

WHAT EMPLOYEES SHOULD KNOW

College employees are individually responsible for demonstrating ethical conduct. They are expected to be familiar with College policies and procedures, use good judgment, and should be careful not to place themselves in situations in which a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, exists between their personal interests and their duties to act in the best interest of the College.



Employees have the ethical and professional responsibility to report, in good faith, verbally or in writing, promptly and confidentially, to their supervisors, or next level supervisor, internal auditors, or College management, any evidence of improper, unethical, fraudulent, or illegal activities they suspect or become aware of.

Examples of conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Using College facilities, resources, or time for personal gain and/or activities for which one is paid by anyone other than the College, except when such activities have been approved in compliance with College policies and procedures.
2. Accepting or soliciting any gift, favor, service, benefit, or monetary award that one should reasonably know is offered to influence decisions or actions.
3. Doing personal business with the College, employees or trustees, or their immediate family members or business partners, which may have an influence on College activities and decision making.
4. Participating in the hiring of or having supervisory authority over a family member.

5. Participating in the decision making process related to the use of general or instructional materials from which one may personally benefit.
6. Accepting additional employment which competes or conflicts with one's primary duties to the College.
7. Excessively browsing the web, participating in social media, or participating in entertainment or leisure activities during College time for reasons not related to College duties.
8. Accepting compensation for referring students or College employees to vendors.
9. Reselling materials such as textbooks, software, laboratory manuals, promotional materials or any other item received as part of one's role at the College.
10. Using College web space to deliver, link, advertise, or sell products and services for personal gain.
11. Engaging in a sexual or amorous relationship with someone over whom one has supervisory, decision-making, advising, and other evaluative responsibilities.

WHAT EMPLOYEES SHOULD DO

1. Familiarize yourself with the terms and conditions of Board Policy F-11 Conflicts of Interest, Administrative Rule 6.11.001 Ethics, ACC Employee Handbook, and seek guidance from reliable sources, e.g., the content of this newsletter.
2. Avoid being in situations that give the appearance of or can create an actual or potential conflict of interest.
3. Disclose to your supervisor, verbally or in writing, any conflict of interest you may or will have.
4. If you suspect conflict of interest, gather enough reliable evidence and information to determine whether or not the situation is an actual or potential conflict of interest. Gathering evidence may include discussing concerns with the employee suspected of the conflict of interest.
5. Make sure you know all the facts. Be aware that actions can lead to harmful consequences if they are not based on valid evidence and information.
6. If in doubt about the conflict of interest, seek guidance from your supervisor.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: What should I do if I suspect I am involved or may become involved in a conflict of interest?

Answer:

1. Review the content of Board Policy F-11 Conflicts of Interest, Administrative Rule 6.11.001 Ethics, ACC Employee and Faculty Handbooks, and the information provided in this newsletter.
2. Seek guidance from an appropriate source (e.g. immediate supervisor(s), Human Resources, Internal Audit, etc.), and if deemed appropriate, disclose the actual or potential conflict of interest (with the gathered evidence and information) to the supervisor.
3. If the situation remains unresolved, the supervisor should follow the supervisory hierarchy.

Question: I think another employee has a conflict of interest. What should I do?

Answer:

1. Gather specific information and data to support your suspicions. Be aware that the duties of some employees may give the appearance of a conflict of interest.
2. If possible, inform the employee involved about your concerns.
3. Encourage the employee to perform the steps listed in the answers to the question above.
4. If you are still uncertain, take the information collected and seek guidance from the supervisor(s) of the employee involved.

Question: Can I use College resources for personal matters during work hours?

Answer: Refer to College policies and administrative rules regarding the matter, and if in doubt, speak directly with your supervisor. Personal matters are best dealt with during breaks, but there may be times when they must be handled during work time. Many supervisors may be understanding and will assist employees with making this determination.

Question: Is it a conflict of interest if I use my ACC web space to promote my personal business, products, or services?

Answer: Yes.

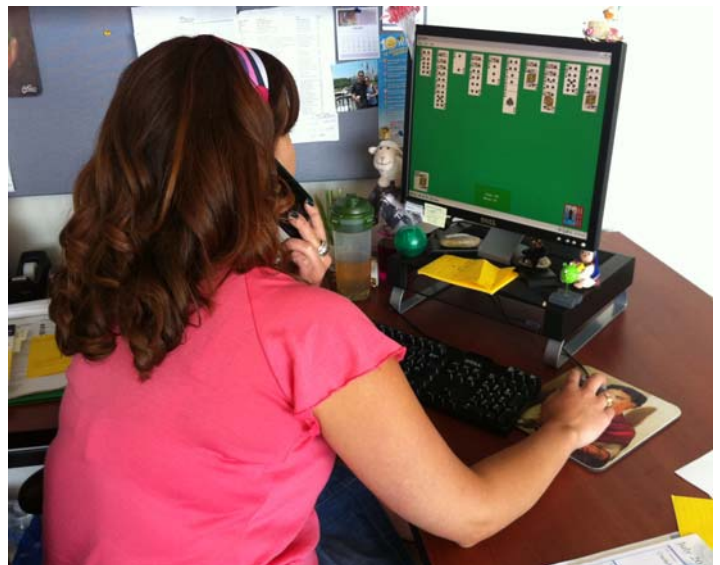
Question: Is receiving a gift considered a conflict of interest?

Answer: Employees should not accept any gift with an

estimated value exceeding \$50, or any type of hospitality that may appear to be disproportionately generous or could reasonably be construed as an incentive to affect their professional decision. Employees must exercise judgment about how the acceptance of any gift or hospitality may be perceived. Repeated gifts, hospitalities, or invitations also may be perceived as inappropriate. Employees who have authority or provide advisory input over procurement decisions should not accept any gift or hospitality from those who may benefit from such decisions. Employees should be able to justify their acceptance of any gift or hospitality. If in doubt, employees are encouraged to discuss the acceptance of such gifts with their supervisors.

Question: Will a conflict of interest resolution result in a disciplinary action?

Answer: If a proven conflict of interest has been addressed and persists, it is likely to lead to a disciplinary action.



Question: Should a conflict of interest be handled with the College's grievance procedure?

Answer: If the conflict cannot be resolved using the College's standard communication processes or the recommendations listed above, the employee should investigate if the College's grievance procedure is appropriate in the situation.

Question: Is it a conflict of interest to promote and sell products (art, books, papers, jewelry, services, etc.) that I produced during college working hours using College resources and equipment?

Answer: Yes.



This newsletter is a communication tool produced by the Office of Internal Audit to keep College employees informed about emerging issues. These emerging issues and professional topics are carefully selected to improve overall productivity and efficiency and to enhance employee's skills and knowledge of College policies, rules, and practices.



Special thanks to the following employees who contributed to the creation of this newsletter:

Kelly Grant, Human Resources Specialist II

David Lydic, English Professor

Julie Todaro, Dean of Library Services

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Office of Internal Audit

5930 Middle Fiskville Rd., Austin TX 78752

Imad Mouchayleh, Director of Internal Audit
512.223.7696, imouchay@austincc.edu

Jacqueline Belvin, Internal Auditor II
512.223.7016, jpieczyn@austincc.edu