

City of Columbia

Code of Ethics – Columbia Purchasing Division

As an employee of the City of Columbia Purchasing Division, you are expected to conduct yourself as a professional at all times. Because your position is one of with power and authority to influence purchasing decisions, you are held to the highest level of accountability and trust. In light of this great responsibility and accountability to the citizens of Columbia, you must adhere to the code of ethics as outlined by the NIGP and City of Columbia Purchasing Division as stated below:

NIGP Code of Ethics (Adapted for City of Columbia)

The City of Columbia believes, and it is a condition of employment in the Purchasing Division, that the following ethical principles should govern the conduct of every person employed by a public sector procurement or materials management organization.

- Seeks or accepts a position as head (or employee) only when fully in accord with the professional principles applicable thereto and when confident of possessing the qualifications to serve under those principles to the advantage of the employing organization.
- Believes in the dignity and worth of the service rendered by the organization, and the societal responsibilities assumed as a trusted public servant.
- Is governed by the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships in order to merit the respect and inspire the confidence of the organization and the public being served.
- Believes that personal aggrandizement or personal profit obtained through misuse of public or personal relationships is dishonest and not tolerable.
- Identifies and eliminates participation of any individual in operational situations where a conflict of interest may be involved.
- Believes that members of the City of Columbia and its staff should at no time, or under any circumstances, accept directly or indirectly, gifts, gratuities, or other things of value from suppliers, which might influence or appear to influence purchasing decisions.
- Keeps the governmental organization informed, through appropriate channels, on problems and progress of applicable operations by emphasizing the importance of the facts.
- Resists encroachment on control of personnel in order to preserve integrity as a professional manager.
- Handles all personnel matters on a merit basis, and in compliance with applicable laws prohibiting discrimination in employment on the basis of politics, religion, color, national origin, disability, gender, age, pregnancy and other protected characteristics.
- Seeks or dispenses no personal favors. Handles each administrative problem objectively and empathetically, without discrimination.

- Subscribes to and supports the professional aims and objectives of the National Institute of Governmental the state purchasing association, MAPP and the Universal Public Purchasing Certification Council, the UPPCC.

RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR EMPLOYER

Purchasing Employees shall: Follow the lawful instructions or laws of the employer. Understand the authority granted by the employer. Avoid activities, which would compromise or give the perception of compromising the best interest of the employer. Reduce the potential for any charges of preferential treatment by actively promoting the concept of competition. Obtain the maximum benefit for funds spent as agents for the employer.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Purchasing Employees shall: Avoid any private or professional activity that would create a conflict between your personal interest and the interests of your employer. Avoid engaging in personal business with any company that is a supplier to your employer. Avoid lending money to or borrowing money from any supplier, regardless of the circumstance.

PERCEPTION

Purchasing Employees shall: Avoid the appearance of unethical or compromising practices in relationships, actions and communications. Avoid business relationships with personal friends. Request a reassignment if the situation arises. Avoid noticeable displays of affection, which may give an impression of impropriety. Avoid holding business meetings with suppliers outside the office. When such meetings do occur, the meeting location should be carefully chosen so as not to be perceived as inappropriate by other persons in the business community or your peers.

GRATUITIES

Purchasing Employees shall: Never solicit or accept money, loans, credits or prejudicial discounts, gifts, entertainment, favors or services from your present or potential suppliers which might influence or appear to influence purchasing decisions. Never solicit gratuities in any form for yourself or your employer. Items of nominal value offered by suppliers for public relations purposes are acceptable when the value of such items has been established by your employer and would not be perceived by the offeror, receiver or others as posing an ethical breach. Gifts offered exceeding nominal value should be returned with an explanation or if perishable set out for the entire office to share. In the case of any gift, care should be taken to evaluate the intent and perception of acceptance to ensure that it is legal, that it will not influence your buying decisions, and that it will not be perceived by your peers and others as unethical.

BUSINESS MEALS

There are times when during the course of business it may be appropriate to conduct business during meals. In such instances, the meal should be for a specific business purpose. Avoid frequent meals with the same supplier. Do not allow the vendor to pay for the meal, be polite but pay for your own meal and do not accept meals from the vendor.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Keep bidders proprietary information confidential, as approved by the Purchasing Agent/Procurement Officer.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SUPPLIER

Purchasing Employees shall: Maintain and practice, to the highest degree possible, business ethics, professional courtesy, and competence in all transactions. Association with suppliers at lunches, dinners or business organization meetings is an acceptable professional practice enabling the buyer to establish better business relations provided that the buyer keeps free of obligation. Purchase without prejudice, striving to obtain the maximum value for each dollar of expenditure. Preclude from showing favoritism or be influenced by suppliers through the acceptance of gifts, gratuities, loans or favors. Gifts of a nominal value that display the name of a firm which is intended for advertisement may or may not be accepted in accordance with the recipients own conscience or jurisdictional rules. Adhere to and protect the suppliers business and legal rights to confidentiality for trade secrets, and other proprietary information. Refrain from publicly endorsing products.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EMPLOYER

Purchasing Employees shall: Remain free of any and all interests and activities, which are or could be detrimental or in conflict with the best interests of the employer. Refrain from engaging in activities where the buyer has a significant personal or indirect financial interest. Exercise discretionary authority on behalf of the employer. Avoid acquiring interest or incurring obligations that could conflict with the interests of the employer.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

A buyer shall not use his position to exert leverage on individuals or firms for the purpose of creating a benefit for agencies or organizations that he may represent. All involvement and transactions shall be handled in a professional manner with the interest of the buyer's employer taking precedent.

RELATIONSHIP WITH PROFESSIONAL PURCHASING ORGANIZATIONS ASSOCIATIONS

It is the obligation and the responsibility of the buyer, through affiliation with professional organization, to represent that organization in a professional and ethical manner. A buyer shall not use his position to persuade an individual or firm to provide a benefit to an organization.

POLICY

It is the policy of City of Columbia that any purchasing employee who personally, or on behalf of his local purchasing chapter, is involved in the process of acquiring advertisers and/or exhibitors on behalf of a purchasing association event, shall act only in the capacity of providing referrals of potential or interested parties to the association. As a result of such referral, should the

association form a contractual obligation, appropriate credit shall be given to the individual or chapter. A vendors participation or lack thereof in any such event shall have no bearing whatsoever on any procurement related function at the City.

As a Procurement Officer of the City of Columbia, MO, I agree to adhere to the policies stated herein and conduct myself in accordance with the spirit and intent of this code of ethics.

Employee Name

Date