

**TO:** All KU Faculty & Staff

**SUBJECT:** State Law on Gifts

The holiday gift-giving season is a good time to brush up on the restrictions in Kansas law on what KU employees can and cannot accept when it comes to gifts, including meals, that are a result of your employment at KU.

**K.S.A. 46-237a generally prohibits KU employees from accepting or requesting meals, gifts, entertainment, and travel provided due to their university employment.**

The rules for KU employees are explained in additional detail below, with additional information available on the [Kansas Governmental Ethics webpage](#).

If you have questions about whether you can or should accept a meal or gift, talk to your supervisor. You may also consult with the Office of the General Counsel, 864-3276.

**MEALS:**

**As a general rule, KU employees may not solicit or accept free or discounted meals from a source outside state government.**

Exceptions to the meal rule are:

1. Meals motivated by a personal or family relationship or provided at a “widely attended” event.
2. Meals valued at \$25 or less.
3. Meals provided at public events you attend in your capacity as a KU employee.
4. Meals provided when you make a speech in your capacity as a KU employee.
5. Meals provided at an event or meeting where your attendance serves a legitimate University interest and your supervisor authorizes your attendance.

**GIFTS:**

**KU employees may not solicit or accept any gift provided because of their KU employment. This prohibition includes speaker's gifts, pens, key chains, mugs, and flowers. You also may not designate a friend, family member, or entity (for example, a charity) to receive a gift that you cannot receive.**

Exceptions to the gift rule are:

1. Gifts from relatives or personal friends.
2. Gifts accepted on behalf of the University and that become University property.
3. Gifts valued at less than \$40 given at ceremonies or public functions when attended in your capacity as a University employee.

### **ENTERTAINMENT:**

**KU employees may not solicit or accept gifts in the form of entertainment. Entertainment includes free or discounted tickets or passes to events such as plays, concerts, sporting events, golf, hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities.**

The only exception to this prohibition is for employees whose KU position requires them to be present at such activities.

### **TRAVEL:**

KU employees may not accept travel and/or lodging provided because of their KU employment by any person or company. An exception to the travel rule exists when the University would be willing to pay those expenses.

### **CONFERENCES/SEMINARS:**

KU employees may not receive discounted or complimentary registration fees to attend conferences and seminars from any person or company because of your KU employment. An exception to this rule exists when the University would be willing to pay those fees.

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

KU employees can accept the following without violating the law:

- Gifts given to you by someone based on a personal relationship totally unrelated to your University duties.
- Intra-office gift exchanges, gifts for boss's day, secretary's day, etc.
- Soft drinks, coffee, or snack foods not offered as part of a meal.
- Plaques or awards with a value of less than \$40 presented in recognition of service to the community, etc., when presented at a ceremony or public function.
- Prizes given in truly random drawings.
- Rebates, discounts or promotional items available to any citizen or to all state employees.

### **PENALTIES**

KU employees that are found to have violated any of these prohibitions may be subject to discipline by the University, up to and including the termination of their employment. In addition, the Kansas Governmental Ethics Commission can impose a civil fine of up to \$5,000 for each violation, and you also could be criminally prosecuted, as a violation may constitute a class B misdemeanor. (K.S.A. 46-276).

Policy Office

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