

SECTION 17 ETHICS

A. GENERAL POLICY:

1. Employees are expected to adhere to the highest standards of personal, professional and business ethics, and to use common sense and good judgment about the way they conduct themselves when on duty or representing Tooele County. Honesty, respect and care in dealings with others on the job, in performance of duties, and in dealings with customers, vendors, and visitors should be standard benchmarks of each employee's behavior.
2. Employees shall avoid even the appearance of unethical behavior in all business relationships, both foreign and domestic. Tooele County's business success does not require unethical actions, and such conduct is not condoned. Employees should contact their supervisor or department head with any questions or concerns regarding business ethics at Tooele County. Engaging in unethical conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. "Unethical conduct" includes but is not limited to:
 - a. engaging in business conduct which is damaging to Tooele County's reputation;
 - b. disclosing or misusing trade secrets or confidential or proprietary information belonging to the county or its customers;
 - c. promising or giving something of value to anyone doing or seeking to do business with the county in order to influence them in matters relating to the county;
 - d. accepting gifts, entertainment, services, or other benefits where the purpose is to unduly influence business decisions;
 - e. selecting vendors based on non-business reasons, such as personal or former non-business relationships;
 - f. directing business to a relative, friend, or company in which the employee or one of the employee's family members has a direct or indirect financial or personal interest;
 - g. representing or discussing county affairs with the media without proper authorization;
 - h. undermining business decisions, unless they are perceived to be illegal or dishonest;
 - i. engaging in illegal activity; and
 - j. using county confidential information or trade secrets, facilities and supplies, or merchandise for personal gain.

B. RECEIPT OF GIFTS:

1. Elected officials and employees shall comply with the requirements of Utah Code Ann. § 67-16-5, Accepting gift, compensation, or loan -- When prohibited. Elected officials and employees shall not knowingly receive, accept, take, seek, or solicit, directly or indirectly for himself or another a gift of substantial value or a substantial economic benefit tantamount to a gift:
 - a. that would tend improperly to influence a reasonable person in the person's position to depart from the faithful and impartial discharge of the person's public duties;
 - b. that the public officer or public employee knows or that a reasonable person in that position should know under the circumstances is primarily for the purpose of rewarding the public officer or public employee for official action taken; or
 - c. if the public officer or public employee recently has been, is now, or in the near future may be involved in any governmental action directly affecting the donor or lender, unless a disclosure of the gift, compensation, or loan and other relevant information has been made in the manner provided in Utah Code Ann. § 67-16-6.
2. As used in this section, "economic benefit tantamount to a gift" includes:
 - a. a loan at an interest rate that is substantially lower than the commercial rate then currently prevalent for similar loans; and
 - b. compensation received for private services rendered at a rate substantially exceeding the fair market value of the services.
3. This subsection does not apply to:
 - a. an occasional nonpecuniary gift, having a value of not in excess of \$50;
 - b. an award publicly presented in recognition of public services;
 - c. any bona fide loan made in the ordinary course of business; or
 - d. a political campaign contribution.

C. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT: No employee may engage in additional employment that interferes with the proper and effective performance of official duties or which results in a conflict of interest. It is necessary that every employee give priority to the job with Tooele County. The county shall not be held liable to grant leave in any cases of injury to an employee while that employee is engaged in outside employment.

D. PRIVILEGED INFORMATION: County employees who are involved with information of significant public interest may not use this privileged information for personal gain or to

benefit friends or acquaintances. If an employee has an outside interest that could be affected by any county plan or activity, this situation must be reported to the employee's supervisor immediately. Each employee is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that only information that should be made available to the general public is released. Violation of these provisions regarding privileged information or use for private gain shall be cause for disciplinary action.

E. POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF EMPLOYEES: Except as otherwise provided by law or by policies and procedures promulgated for federally aided programs, county employees may voluntarily participate in political activity subject to the following provisions:

1. No person shall be denied the opportunity to become an applicant for a position under the merit system in any covered department by virtue of political opinion or affiliation.
2. No person employed by the county under the merit system may be dismissed from service as a result of political opinion or affiliation.
3. A career service employee may voluntarily contribute funds to political groups and become a candidate for public office.
4. No county officer or employee, whether elected or appointed, may directly or indirectly coerce, command, or advise any officer or employee covered under the merit system to pay, lend, or contribute part of his or her salary or compensation or anything else of value to any party, committee, organization, agency, or person for political purposes. No county officer or employee, whether elected or appointed, may attempt to make any officer's or employee's personnel status dependent upon the employee's support or lack of support for any political party, committee, organization, agency, or person engaged in a political activity.
5. No officer or employee may engage in any political activity during the hours of employment nor shall any person solicit political contributions from county employees during hours of employment for political purposes, but nothing in this section shall preclude voluntary contribution by a county employee to the party or candidate of the employee's choice.
6. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to permit partisan political activity of any county employee who is prevented or restricted from engaging in such political activity by the provision of the federal Hatch Act.

F. LOSS OF PROPERTY OR FUNDS:

1. Any officer or employee who is responsible for, has access to, or has been given possession of county property or funds shall immediately notify his or her department head of the loss of, or inability to account for, said property or funds. Also, any other employee who is aware of such a loss, irrespective of who may be the responsible party, shall also notify their department head of the loss.

2. Upon discovering a loss of property or funds or upon receiving such notice from another person, the department head shall immediately notify the County Auditor and Sheriff. If the auditor determines that the loss is one that may be covered by the county's public employee bond, he shall cause that notice of the loss, or facts indicating that a loss has occurred, be immediately given to the county's insurance company by certified mail.
3. The Auditor and Sheriff shall jointly conduct an investigation of the facts surrounding the loss. The results of the investigation shall be forwarded to the County Commission and County Attorney.