

Acceptance of Gifts and Special Benefits from Vendors

Effective Date Monday, March 10, 2008

Status Final

Last Revised Monday, July 19, 2021

Policy Type [University](#)

Contact Office

[Procurement and Supplier Diversity Services](#)

Oversight Executive

[Vice President and Chief Financial Officer](#)

Applies To

Academic Division

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Reason for Policy

Acceptance of gifts or other special benefits from vendors can give the appearance of impropriety, compromise the employee's integrity or potentially place an employee in a conflict of interest situation. In certain circumstances, the employee also could be subject to criminal prosecution.

Definition of Terms

Gifts or Other Special Benefits

Money, meals, loans, entertainment, advances, favors, special discounts, certificates, coupons, services, free merchandise or any other thing of value other than frequent flyer miles, hotel points, and rental car points.

Vendor

Any entity that supplies goods or services.

Policy Statement

An employee of the University must not, other than on behalf of the University, solicit or accept any gift, payment, loan, or anything else of more than nominal or minimal value from a bidder, offeror, contractor, or

subcontractor. Items of nominal value bearing advertising, such as matchbooks, calendars, rulers, or note pads, may be accepted in circumstances that will not affect the integrity of the University Procurement process. This does not prohibit employees from buying goods or services, or obtaining loans, for their personal use where they pay consideration equal to that of the general public for the goods, services or loans; nor does it prohibit employees from accepting meals or beverages from vendors when offered to a large group of people at a trade show, exhibit or other professional meeting.

This policy does not apply to consulting agreements or other contractual arrangements where University employees are providing services to an outside vendor.

1. Good and Services:

All goods and services acquired by the University, through purchase, gift or otherwise, become the property of the University. Discount coupons or other things of value received in connection with a procurement transaction, even if not included in that transaction, also become the property of the University. Any department receiving such items should notify the Director of Procurement and Supplier Diversity Services within three business days of the receipt.

If the item can be used for University business by the department making the original purchase, the department will be authorized to retain the item. If the item cannot be used by the department, Procurement and Supplier Diversity Services will assist in the transfer of the item to another department which can use it or surplus it. Under no circumstances can the item be given to or retained by an employee for his/her personal use.

Gift of goods or services – past, present or future – to the University or to an individual cannot influence the selection of a vendor to provide goods or services to the University.

2. Unused Airline Tickets:

Any unused airline tickets resulting from University travel belong to the University and must be reported to the traveler's department and be used to reduce future University Business airline costs for the traveler.

3. Vendor Paid Travel:

Travelers may not seek reimbursement for travel expenses directly from the vendor but should coordinate travel reimbursement with their department administrator and obtain prior approval from the appropriate dean/vice president for the trip. The University may seek reimbursement for travel of its employees from a vendor or potential vendor. In some circumstances, arrangements may be made for vendors or potential vendors to reimburse the University for travel expenses incurred by University employees to inspect or be trained on new equipment; to visit a site where goods or services can best be evaluated; or for some other purpose which is in the best interests of the University.

4. Compliance with Policy:

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion in accordance with relevant University policies.

Questions about this policy should be directed to [Procurement and Supplier Diversity Services](#).

Procedures

Vendor Paid Travel:

1. Employees must notify the applicable dean/vice president in writing at least one month in advance of such travel to ensure adequate time for review. The employee must provide the name of the vendor, the dates of the trip and the estimated value of the trip. The employee must also explain the reason for the trip and the benefit of the trip to the University.
2. If pre-approved by the dean/vice president, the University employee may accept the trip. The traveler must seek reimbursement for travel expenditures from the University and the employee's department must seek reimbursement from the vendor. The traveler is bound by the same conditions and spending limits prescribed for regular travel on official University business as outlined in policy [FIN-004: Travel, Meals, and Entertainment Expenses Incurred on Behalf of the University](#). Procedures outlined under [Planning and Paying for Travel](#) must be followed.
3. The employee's supervisor should notify their department administrator to contact the vendor for the reimbursement. The reimbursement should be made payable to the University of Virginia (**not** the individual traveler) and deposited to University funds as an expenditure credit, as outlined in policy [FIN-050: Recording and Depositing Expenditure Credits](#).

Related Information

[EXT-005: Coordination of Development Activities at the University of Virginia](#)
[FIN-054: Employee Obligation to Report Potential Conflicts of Interest](#)
[GOV-002: Reporting and Investigation of Fraudulent Transactions](#)
[HRM-045: Faculty External Consulting and Internal Overload](#)

Major Category [Finance and Business Operations](#)

Next Scheduled Review Saturday, January 5, 2019

Revision History

Added Compliance section 7/19/21; Updated 4/16/18 (procedure section only); 1/5/16, 4/11/11.

Applies To Text

Academic Division.

Policy Summary

Employees may not, other than on behalf of the University, accept gifts or other benefits of value from vendors for services performed within the scope of their official duties as University employees.

Supersedes Policy Text

VII.D.5, Acceptance of Gifts or Other Special Benefits from Vendors to the University; Procedure 6-101, Preparing Payment Vouchers/Reimbursing Departments through Vendor Paid Travel.

Last modified April 17, 2024 - 1:21pm

Approved By Policy Review Committee

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