

Kansas law prohibits state employees of the executive branch and members of boards, commissions, or authorities of the executive branch from accepting or requesting meals, gifts, entertainment, and travel with a few exceptions (KSA 46-237a).



WHAT YOU CAN NOT DO

As a general rule, you are prohibited from soliciting or accepting a free or discounted meal, the value of which exceeds \$40.00, from a source outside state government.

Exceptions to the meal rule are:

1. Meals motivated by a personal or family relationship.
2. Beverages and snack foods not offered as part of a meal.
3. Meals provided at public events which you attend in your state capacity.
4. Meals provided when it is obvious the meal is not being provided because of your state position.
5. Meals provided at the time you make a speech you provide in your state capacity.
6. Meals provided to you at an event or meeting when your attendance at that event or meeting serves a legitimate state interest and your agency authorizes your attendance.
7. Meals provided by a lobbyist if they properly report the expenditure.



As a state employee, you are prohibited from soliciting or

accepting any gift because of your official position. This includes, but is not limited to, speaker's gifts, pens, key chains, mugs, and flowers.

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

Events

You are prohibited from accepting gifts in the form of entertainment. Entertainment includes free or discounted tickets or passes to events such as plays, concerts, games, golf, hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities.



You may not receive discounted or complimentary registration fees to attend conferences and seminars from any person or company because of your official position unless your agency would be willing to pay for the registration fee.



You may not accept travel and/or lodging provided to you because of your official position

by any person or company. An exception to this travel expense rule exists when the state agency would be willing to pay your expenses for travel, lodging, and related expenses.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

The following can be accepted without violating the law:

- ✓ Gifts given to you by someone based on a personal relationship totally unrelated to your state 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 your state service; or 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.

ADVISORY OPINIONS

The Governmental Ethics Commission issues advisory opinions on its own initiative and on the request of any person to whom the state law applies.

Advisory opinions serve to interpret the law and may be especially useful to public servants who are considering an activity they suspect may involve a conflict of interests. Any person who acts in accordance with the provisions of an opinion issued to that person shall be presumed to have complied with the provisions of the conflict of interests laws.

Advisory opinions issued by the Commission can be viewed at:

<https://ethics.kansas.gov>



You should consult with the Governmental Ethics Commission when you are not sure if you can accept a meal, gift, entertainment, or travel.

A violation of any of these provisions may subject you to a civil fine of up to \$5,000. In addition, the Governor may reprimand or remove you from state service.

Do not hesitate to call the Governmental Ethics Commission office if you have any questions:

**Contact us at:
901 S. Kansas Avenue
Topeka, Kansas 66612
Ofc (785) 296-4219
Fax (785) 296-2548
email: KGEC_Ethics@ks.gov**

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STATE OF KANSAS



Guidelines for State Employees Concerning Meals, Gifts, Entertainment, and Travel



Governmental
Ethics
Commission