



Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy

Policy Owner: Royal Botanic Gardens Board

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Reviewing Officer: Chief Finance Officer

POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy states the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's (RBGV's) position on:

- responding to offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality; and
- providing gifts, benefits and hospitality.

As a public sector agency, RBGV's management of any offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality is a practical demonstration of its integrity, impartiality and accountability. It allows the community, business associates and Government to be confident that RBGV makes decisions and provides advice free of favouritism, influence and conflicts of interest.

This Policy is intended to support individuals and RBGV to avoid conflicts of interest and maintain high levels of integrity and public trust.

CONTEXT

Transparent and accountable practices are vital to maintaining the Victorian community's trust in the public sector, and its confidence that public resources are being used responsibly and appropriately.

RBGV has issued this Policy to support behaviour consistent with the *Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees* (the Code) and the *Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities*. All employees are required under clause 1.2 of the Code to comply with this Policy.

APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all workplace participants. For the purposes of this Policy, this includes: members of the Royal Botanic Gardens Board (the Board) and its Committees, Executives, employees, contractors, consultants, and any individuals or groups undertaking activity for or on behalf of RBGV (including volunteers). This Policy does not apply to recipients of honoraria.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

This Policy has been developed in accordance with requirements outlined in the minimum accountabilities for the management gifts, benefits and hospitality issued by the Victorian Public Sector Commission.

Under the Instructions supporting the Standing Directions 2018 under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, the Victorian Public Sector Commission has set binding minimum accountabilities for the appropriate management of gifts, benefits and hospitality. These are provided at Appendix 1.

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RBGV is committed to and will uphold the following principles in applying this Policy:

Impartiality

1. Individuals have a duty to place the public interest above their private interests when carrying out their official functions.
2. Individuals will not accept gifts, benefits or hospitality that could raise a reasonable perception of, or actual, bias or preferential treatment.
3. Individuals do not accept offers from those about whom they are likely to make business decisions.

Accountability

4. Individuals are accountable for:
 - declaring all non-token offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality;
 - declining non-token offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality, or where an exception applies under this policy, seeking approval to accept the offer; and
 - the responsible provision of gifts, benefits and hospitality.
5. Individuals with direct reports are accountable for overseeing management of their direct reports' acceptance or refusal of non-token gifts, benefits and hospitality, modelling good practice and promoting awareness of gifts, benefits and hospitality policies and processes.

Integrity

6. Individuals strive to earn and sustain public trust through providing or responding to offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality in a manner that is consistent with community expectations.
7. Individuals will refuse any offer that may lead to an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest.

Risk-based approach

8. RBGV, through its policies, processes and the Board's Audit, Risk and Finance Committee, will ensure gifts, benefits and hospitality risks are appropriately assessed and managed.
9. Individuals with direct reports will ensure they are aware of the risks inherent in their team's work and functions and monitor the risks to which their direct reports are exposed.

MANAGEMENT OF OFFERS OF GIFTS, BENEFITS AND HOSPITALITY

This section sets out the process for accepting, declining and recording offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality. Any exceptions to this process must have prior written approval of the Director and Chief Executive.

Conflict of interest and reputational risks

When deciding whether to accept an offer, individuals should first consider if the offer could be perceived as influencing them in performing their duties or lead to reputational damage. The more valuable the offer, the more likely that a conflict of interest or reputational risk exists.

Figure 1. GIFT test

This table is a useful tool when considering how to respond to a gift offer.

G	Giver	<p>Who is offering the gift, benefit or hospitality and what is their relationship to me?</p> <p>Does my role require me to select contractors, award grants, regulate industries or determine government policies?</p> <p>Could the person or organisation benefit from a decision I make?</p>
I	Influence	<p>Are they seeking to gain an advantage or influence my decisions or actions?</p> <p>Has the gift, benefit or hospitality been offered to me publicly or privately? Is it a courtesy or a token of appreciation or valuable non-token offer?</p> <p>Does its timing coincide with a decision I am about to make or my endorsement of a product or service?</p>
F	Favour	<p>Are they seeking a favour in return for the gift, benefit or hospitality?</p> <p>Has the gift, benefit or hospitality been offered honestly? Has the person or organisation made several offers over the last 12 months?</p> <p>Would accepting it create an obligation to return a favour?</p>
T	Trust	<p>Would accepting the gift, benefit or hospitality diminish public trust?</p> <p>How would the public view acceptance of this gift, benefit or hospitality?</p> <p>What would my colleagues, family, friends or associates think?</p>

Requirement for refusing offers

Individuals should consider the GIFT test at Figure 1 and the requirements below to help decide whether to refuse an offer. Individuals are to refuse offers:

- likely to influence them, or be perceived to influence them, in the course of their duties or that raise an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest.
- could bring them, RBGV or the public sector into disrepute.
- made by a person or organisation about which they will likely make or influence a decision (this also applies to processes involving grants, sponsorship, regulation, enforcement or licensing), particularly offers:
 - made by a current or prospective supplier;
 - made during a procurement or tender process by a person or organisation involved in the process; or
 - made during a contract or agreement negotiation process by a party to the contract or agreement.
- likely to be a bribe or inducement to make a decision or act in a particular way.
- that extend to their relatives or friends.

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- of money, or can be used in a similar way to money, or something easily converted to money.
- where, in relation to hospitality and events, the organisation will already be sufficiently represented to meet its business needs. The number of employees attending an event is to be limited to only those who have a direct business need and this number should be proportional to the size of the event.
- where acceptance could be perceived as endorsement of a product or service, or acceptance would unfairly advantage the sponsor in future procurement decisions.
- made by a person or organisation with a primary purpose to lobby Ministers, Members of Parliament or public sector organisations.
- made in secret.

If an individual considers they have been offered a bribe or inducement, the offer must be reported to the Director and Chief Executive or their delegate (who should report any criminal or corrupt conduct to Victoria Police or the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC)).

Token offers

A token offer is an offer of a gift, benefit or hospitality that is of inconsequential or trivial value to both the person making the offer and the individual. It may include promotional items such as pens and note pads, and modest hospitality that would be considered a basic courtesy, such as light refreshments during a meeting.

The minimum accountabilities state that token offers cannot be worth more than \$50.

Individuals may generally accept token offers without approval or declaring the offer on RBGV's register, as long as the offer does not create a conflict of interest or lead to reputational damage.

Non-token offers

Individuals can only accept non-token offers if they have a legitimate business benefit.

Examples of legitimate offers include:

- ceremonial gifts offered as part of the cultural practice of a community (e.g. from an overseas delegation).
- acceptance of a conference invitation where the subject matter relates to an individual's official duties.
- flights, accommodation, tickets and reasonable other expenses in lieu of payment for presenting a paper or talk at a conference or seminar, but only where this is provided by the conference organiser and not by a third party.
- 'thank you' gifts, such as a gift to a speaker at a conference or seminar
- tickets to events such as performances and presentations, but only where attendance at the performance relates to an individual's official duties.

Offers to attend events

Events hosted by RBGV are not required to be declared. Such events are conducted in line with the principles of managing offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality outlined below. Examples include participation (including free of charge) in:

- RBGV-run public programs
- donor events
- RBGV-hosted private events held in connection with public programs delivered by a RBGV partner (e.g. a pre-show VIP event).

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However, events hosted by RBGV partners to which individuals are invited must be declared, particularly if this involves the waiving of ticket or entry fees.

Individuals can attend such events when:

- the invitation was extended by the event host rather than a third party;
- the event is directly related to their official duties at RBGV;
- it is for a business purpose consistent with RBGV's functions and objectives;
- it is in the public interest and RBGV's best interests to be represented at the event;
- the activities and level of hospitality at the event is consistent with community expectations;
- there is no conflict of interest (real, potential or perceived) for the employee to attend;
- attending the event will not bring the employee, RBGV or the public service into disrepute; and
- the host does not have an interest in any business decision the employee is likely to make or influence as part of their official duties.

Before an event invitation is accepted, consider:

- whether the employee is the most appropriate person to attend;
- the number of people from RBGV attending; and
- what the employee's purpose to attend is – to present, develop work skills or purely out of interest

Accepting non-token offers

All accepted non-token offers must be approved in writing by the individual's manager, or the Board Chair in the case of Board members, and submitted to the Chief Finance Officer to be recorded in the gifts, benefits and hospitality register and be consistent with the following requirements:

- it does not raise an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest or have the potential to bring the individual, RBGV or the public sector into disrepute; and
- there is a legitimate business reason for acceptance. It is offered in the course of the individual's official duties, relates to the individual's responsibilities and has a benefit to RBGV, the public sector or the State.

Individuals may be offered a gift or hospitality where there is no opportunity to seek written approval from their manager, the Chief Finance Officer, or the Board Chair prior to accepting. For example, they may be offered a wrapped gift that they later identify as being a non-token gift. In these cases, the individual must seek approval from their manager, the Chief Finance Officer, or the Board Chair within five business days.

Where the gift would likely bring you or RBGV into disrepute, RBGV should return the gift. If it represents a conflict of interest for you, RBGV should either return the gift or transfer ownership to RBGV to mitigate this risk.

Recording non-token offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality

All non-token offers, whether accepted or declined, must be recorded in RBGV's Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality register. The business reason for accepting the non-token offer must be recorded in the register with sufficient detail to link the acceptance to the individual's work functions and benefit to RBGV, the public sector or the State.

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Individuals should consider the following examples of acceptable and unacceptable levels of detail to be included in RBGV's Gifts Benefits and Hospitality register when recording the business reason:

Unacceptable:

- "Networking"
- "Maintaining stakeholder relationships"

Acceptable

- "Individual is responsible for evaluating and reporting on the outcomes of Event A, delivered by RBGV partner. Individual attended Event A in an official capacity and reported back to RBGV on the event."
- "Individual presented to a visiting international delegation. The delegation presented the individual with a cultural item worth an estimated \$200. Declining the gift would have caused offence. The gift was accepted on behalf of RBGV."

RBGV requires individuals to:

- Disclose the offer to their manager, Chief Finance Officer or the Board Chair (either by email or in person) as soon as practicable (wherever possible, prior to acceptance); and
- Sign and provide a Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Declaration Form to their manager or the Board Chair and then to the Chief Finance Officer within five working days.

The Chief Finance Officer or their delegate must add the declaration to the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register.

Access to the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality register is restricted to relevant persons within RBGV, such as the Chief Finance Officer and/or their delegate.

In accordance with the minimum accountabilities outlined in Appendix 1, RBGV will also publish a public copy of its register on its website. The public register will, as far as possible, be anonymised and will be consistent with the RBGV Privacy Policy. The public register will contain a subset of the information detailed in RBGV's Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality register for current and previous financial years and will be updated annually.

- Information captured on RBGV's internal Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register includes the following items. Starred items will also be included in RBGV's public register. The date an offer was made*;
- the person being made the offer*;
- the individual or organisation making the offer* and whether they are a business associate;
- the nature of the offer and its estimated or actual value*;
- the reason given for making the offer;
- any legitimate business reason for accepting the offer;
- whether the offer is a ceremonial gift;
- any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest or reputational risks (to the individual, the public sector organisation or the public sector) that the offer raises;
- if the offer was accepted or declined*;

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- the decision on ownership of the offer (e.g. if it was kept by the declarant, transferred to RBGV, returned, or donated to charity)*; and
- details of the manager, Board Chair or delegate who reviewed the offer and approved the offer if accepted.

The Board's Audit, Risk and Finance Committee will receive a report at least annually on the administration and quality control of the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy, processes and register. The report will include analysis of RBGV's gifts, benefits and hospitality risks (including multiple offers from the same source and offers from business associates), risk mitigation measures and any proposed improvements.

Ownership of gifts offered to individuals

Non-token gifts with a legitimate business benefit that have been accepted by an individual for their work or contribution may be retained by the individual where the gift is not likely to bring them or RBGV into disrepute, and where their manager, the Chief Finance Officer or the Board Chair has provided written approval. Employees must transfer to RBGV official gifts or any gift of cultural significance or significant value. Retention or disposal of gifts will be recorded in the Gifts Benefits and Hospitality Register. Significant gifts accepted on behalf of RBGV or the State of Victoria should also be recorded in RBGV's Asset Register.

Repeat offers

Receiving multiple offers (token or non-token) from the same person or organisation can generate a stronger perception that the person or organisation could influence you. Individuals should refuse repeat offers from the same source if they create a conflict of interest or may lead to reputational damage. Individuals and approving managers (including the Board Chair) should also be aware of the cumulative value of repeat offers, both token and non-token.

Ceremonial gifts

Ceremonial gifts are official gifts provided as part of the culture and practices of communities and government, within Australia or internationally. Ceremonial gifts are usually provided when conducting business with official delegates or representatives from another organisation, community or foreign government.

Ceremonial gifts are the property of RBGV, irrespective of value, and should be accepted by individuals on behalf of the organisation. The receipt of ceremonial gifts should be recorded on RBGV's register but this information does not need to be published online.

Hospitality provided by Victorian public sector organisations

Victorian public sector organisations may provide hospitality to stakeholders, as part of their functions. When offered hospitality by a Victorian public sector organisation, individuals should consider the requirements of the minimum accountabilities (see Appendix 1).

Accepted hospitality offered by a Victorian public sector organisation as part of official business does not need to be declared or reported, where the reason for the individual's attendance is consistent with RBGV's functions and objectives and with the individual's role.

MANAGEMENT OF THE PROVISION OF GIFTS, BENEFITS AND HOSPITALITY

This section sets out the requirements for providing gifts, benefits and hospitality.

Figure 2. HOST test

H	Hospitality	<p>To whom is the gift or hospitality being provided? Will recipients be external business partners, or individuals of the host organisation?</p>
O	Objectives	<p>For what purpose will hospitality be provided? Is the hospitality being provided to further the conduct of official business? Will it promote and support government policy objectives and priorities? Will it contribute to staff wellbeing and workplace satisfaction?</p>
S	Spend	<p>Will public funds be spent? What type of hospitality will be provided? Will it be modest or expensive, and will alcohol be provided as a courtesy or an indulgence? Will the costs incurred be proportionate to the benefits obtained?</p>
T	Trust	<p>Will public trust be enhanced or diminished? Could you publicly explain the rationale for providing the gift or hospitality? Will the event be conducted in a manner which upholds the reputation of the public sector? Have records in relation to the gift or hospitality been kept in accordance with reporting and recording procedures?</p>

Requirements for providing gifts, benefits and hospitality

Gifts, benefits and hospitality may be provided when welcoming guests, to facilitate the development of business relationships, further public sector business outcomes and to celebrate achievements.

When deciding whether to provide gifts, benefits or hospitality or the type of gift, benefit or hospitality to provide, individuals must ensure that:

- any gift, benefit or hospitality must be provided for a business reason that furthers the conduct of official business or other legitimate organisational goals, or promotes and supports government policy objectives and priorities;
- any costs are proportionate to the benefits obtained for the State, and would be considered reasonable in terms of community expectations (the ‘HOST’ test at Figure 2 is a good reminder of what to think about in making this assessment); and
- it must not raise an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest.

Containing Costs

Individuals should contain costs involved with providing gifts, benefits and hospitality wherever possible, and should comply with the financial probity and efficient use of resources guidance outlined in the *Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees* and the *Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities*. The following questions may be useful to assist individuals to decide on the type of gift, benefit or hospitality to provide:

- Will the cost of providing the gift, benefit or hospitality be proportionate to the potential benefits?
- Is an external venue necessary or does the organisation have facilities to host the event?
- Is the proposed catering or hospitality proportionate to the number of attendees?
- Does the size of the event and number of attendees align with intended outcomes?
- Is the gift symbolic, rather than financial, in value?
- Will providing the gift, benefit or hospitality be viewed by the public as excessive?

RBGV has set a nominal value of \$150 as the maximum expenditure on gifts, benefits and hospitality to others without Director and Chief Executive approval.

In addition, the following should be adhered to:

- *Recognising achievement*: avoid financial gifts to employees or workplace participants. Do not give out vouchers, gift cards or consumables, and ensure that any expenditure is prudent, modest and in line with community expectations.
- *Offering flowers*: do not buy flowers using a purchasing card without receiving prior approval from the relevant Executive Director or Director and Chief Executive and, in the event of death of a colleague or family member, do not spend more than \$100 on bereavement flowers.
- *Offering alcohol*: decisions relating to provision of alcohol should be made on a case-by-case basis. Gifts of alcohol should be avoided. Alcohol should only be purchased with public funds to serve at functions with external guests if:
 - provision of alcohol would be relatively common practice and be associated with food;
 - the event is held at a time that minimises the risk of employees returning to work impaired by alcohol (e.g. if standard office hours are worked, the event should be held in the late afternoon or early evening);
 - no more than two standard drinks per person are provided; and
 - the provision of alcohol is commensurate to the overall level of hospitality provided.
- *Catering for internal events*: if catering is necessary for an internal function, this should only be provided if:
 - it can be justified as a reasonable expense;
 - the expenditure is modest (e.g. sandwiches, fruit platters, cakes); and
 - no alcohol is provided.

Consideration should be made as to:

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- the extent to which the event will contribute to organisational objectives by, for example, reinforcing particular values or motivating staff;
- whether there have been multiple recent events that would result in perceptions of excess, or
- the need to balance the positive benefits of public recognition with community expectations.

As a guideline, refreshments can be provided when meetings exceed the following times:

- 2 hours – for morning or afternoon tea
 - 3 hours – for lunch
 - 5 hours – for lunch and either morning or afternoon tea
 - 7 hours – for lunch, morning tea and afternoon tea
- *Reporting*: records relating to the provision of hospitality, such as approval forms and records relating to procurement and expenditure, must be retained in accordance with the requirements of the Standing Directions 2018 under the *Financial Management Act 1994*.

DEFINITIONS

Benefits

Benefits include preferential treatment, privileged access, favours or other advantage offered to an individual. They may include invitations to sporting, cultural or social events, access to discounts and loyalty programs and promises of a new job.

The value of benefits may be difficult to define in dollars, but as they are valued by the individual, they may be used to influence the individual's behaviour.

Bribes

Bribes are money or other inducements given or promised to an individual to corruptly influence the performance of their role. Bribery of a public official is an offence punishable by law.

Business associate

An individual or body that RBGV has, or plans to establish, some form of business relationship with, or who may seek commercial or other advantage by offering gifts, benefits or hospitality.

Ceremonial gifts

Ceremonial gifts are official gifts provided as part of the culture and practices of communities and government, within Australia or internationally. Ceremonial gifts are usually provided when conducting business with official delegates or representatives from another organisation, community or foreign government.

Ceremonial gifts are the property of RBGV, irrespective of value, and should be accepted by individuals on behalf of RBGV. The receipt of ceremonial gifts should be recorded on the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality register but do not need to be published online.

Conflict of interest

Conflicts may be:

- **Actual:** There is a real conflict between an employee's public duties and private interests.
- **Potential:** An employee has private interests that could conflict with their public duties. This refers to circumstances where it is foreseeable that a conflict may arise in future and steps should be taken immediately to mitigate that future risk.
- **Perceived:** The public or a third party could reasonably form the view that an employee's private interests could improperly influence their decisions or actions, now or in the future.

Gifts

Gifts are free or discounted items or services and any item or service that would generally be seen by the public as a gift. These include items of high value (e.g. artwork, jewellery, or expensive pens), low value (e.g. small bunch of flowers), consumables (e.g. chocolates) and services (e.g. painting and repairs). Fundraising by RBGV that is consistent with the Fundraising and Development Policy, relevant legislation and any government policy is not prohibited under the minimum accountabilities.

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register

The Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register is a record, preferably digital, of all declarable gifts, benefits and hospitality.

Hospitality

Hospitality is the friendly reception and entertainment of guests. Hospitality may range from light refreshments at a business meeting to expensive restaurant meals and sponsored travel and accommodation.

Legitimate business benefit

A gift, benefit or hospitality may have a legitimate business benefit if it furthers the conduct of official business or other legitimate goals of RBGV, the public sector or the State.

Non-token offer

A non-token offer is a gift, benefit or hospitality that is, or may be perceived to be by the recipient, the person making the offer or by the wider community, of more than inconsequential value. All offers worth more than \$50 are non-token offers and must be recorded on the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register.

Public official

Public official has the same meaning as section 4 of *the Public Administration Act 2004* and includes public sector employees, statutory office holders and directors of public entities.

Public register

A public register is a record, preferably digital, of a subset of the information contained in the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality register, for publication as required by the minimum accountabilities. Guidance regarding the information that should be published is provided in the Victorian Public Sector Commission Policy Guide.

Internal events

Internal events are either formal or informal functions or gatherings where the majority of attendees are internal to RBGV (e.g. staff, board members). These may include meetings, events relating to RBGV business, recognition events or events marking the completion of a project. These events may be held either on RBGV sites or at an off-site location. Internal events may include those at which non-employees, guests or stakeholders are present.

Token offer

A token offer is a gift, benefit or hospitality that is of inconsequential or trivial value to both the person making the offer and the recipient (such as basic courtesy). The minimum accountabilities state that token offers cannot be worth more than \$50.

Value

The value of a gift, benefit or hospitality is its estimated or actual value in Australian dollars and including GST.

BREACH OF POLICY

Any breaches of this policy will be addressed via the appropriate channel subject to whether it is determined to be unsatisfactory performance or misconduct. This includes where an individual fails to avoid wherever possible or identify, declare and manage a conflict of interest related to gifts, benefits and hospitality in accordance with RBGV's Conflict of Interest Policies.

Actions inconsistent with this policy may constitute misconduct under the *Public Administration Act 2004*, which includes:

- breaches of the binding *Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees* or *Code of Conduct for Directors of Public Entities*, such as sections of these Codes covering conflict of interest, public trust and gifts and benefits; and
- individuals making improper use of their position.

For further information on managing breaches of this Policy, please contact the Chief Finance Officer.

RBGV will communicate its policy on the offering and provision of gifts, benefits and hospitality to contractors, consultants and other business associates. Those identified as acting inconsistently with this policy may be subject to contract re-negotiation, including termination.

Speak Up

Individuals who consider that gifts, benefits and hospitality or conflict of interest within RBGV may not have been declared or are not being appropriately managed should speak up and notify their manager, the Board Chair, or the Chief Finance Officer. Individuals who believe they have observed corrupt conduct in their colleagues may also make a public interest disclosure directly to IBAC.

RBGV will take decisive action, including possible disciplinary action, against individuals who discriminate against or victimise those who speak up in good faith.

RELATED DOCUMENTATION

- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Declaration Form
- Board Conflict of Interest Policy
- Staff Conflict of Interest Policy
- Fundraising and Development Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Public Interest Disclosures Policy
- Guide to Entertainment Fringe Benefits

FURTHER INFORMATION

- *Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees*
- *Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities*
- Standing Directions 2018 under the *Financial Management Act 1994* and associated Instructions and Guidelines.
- *Public Administration Act 2004*
- Victorian Public Sector Commission *Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy Guide*

CONTACT

Chief Finance Officer

VERSION CONTROL

Policy Name	Version No.	Approved By	Date
Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy	4	Finance and Audit Committee	21 / 02 / 2019
Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy	5	RBG Board	21 / 04 / 2021
Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy	6	RBG Board	12 / 12 / 2023

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier as required.

APPENDIX 1

VICTORIAN PUBLIC SECTOR COMMISSION MINIMUM ACCOUNTABILITIES

Public officials offered gifts, benefits and hospitality:

1. Do not, for themselves or others, seek or solicit gifts, benefits and hospitality.
2. Refuse all offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality that:
 - are money, items used in a similar way to money, or items easily converted to money;
 - give rise to an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest;
 - may adversely affect their standing as a public official or which may bring their public sector employer or the public sector into disrepute; or
 - are non-token offers without a legitimate business benefit.
3. Declare all non-token offers (valued at \$50 or more) of gifts, benefits and hospitality (whether accepted or declined) on their organisation's register, and seek written approval from their manager or organisational delegate to accept any non-token offer.
4. Refuse bribes or inducements and report inducements and bribery attempts to the head of the public sector organisation or their delegate (who should report any criminal or corrupt conduct to Victoria Police or the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission).

Public officials providing gifts, benefits and hospitality:

5. Ensure that any gift, benefit and hospitality is provided for a business purpose in that it furthers the conduct of official business or other legitimate organisational goals, or promotes and supports government policy objectives and priorities.
6. Ensure that any costs are proportionate to the benefits obtained for the State, and would be considered reasonable in terms of community expectations.
7. Ensure that when hospitality is provided, individuals demonstrate professionalism in their conduct, and uphold their obligation to extend a duty of care to other participants.

Heads of public sector organisations:

8. Establish, implement and review organisational policies and processes for the effective management of gifts, benefits and hospitality that comprehensively address these minimum accountabilities.
9. Establish and maintain a register for gifts, benefits and hospitality offered to public officials that, at a minimum, records sufficient information to effectively monitor, assess and report on these minimum accountabilities.
10. Communicate and make clear within the organisation that a breach of the gifts, benefits and hospitality policies or processes may constitute a breach of binding codes of conduct and may constitute criminal or corrupt conduct, and may result in disciplinary action.
11. Establish and communicate a clear policy position to business associates on the offering of gifts, benefits and hospitality to employees, including possible consequences for a business associate acting contrary to the organisation's policy position. This must take into consideration any whole of Victorian Government supplier codes of conduct.

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12. Report at least annually to the organisation's audit committee on the administration and quality control of its gifts, benefits and hospitality policy, processes and register. This report must include analysis of the organisation's gifts, benefits and hospitality risks (including repeat offers from the same source and offers from business associates), risk mitigation measures and any proposed improvements.
13. Publish the organisation's gifts, benefits and hospitality policy and register on the organisation's public website. The published register should cover the current and the previous financial year.