

Atlanta Ethics Guide for Employees

Atlanta's Ethics Code is a statement of our shared values: Honesty, Integrity, Trust, Accountability, and Transparency. These shared values help us foster an ethical culture in city government and assure public confidence. The code is our written pledge to work in the best interests of the people of Atlanta when we conduct city business and make every effort to avoid financial and personal interests that could interfere with our impartiality or independence.

Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

- It is a conflict of interest to have a financial or personal interest in a matter that comes before you or your department. Avoid participating in situations where either you or an immediate family member:
 - Has a financial interest or personal benefit
 - Serves as an officer, director, stockholder, creditor, trustee, partner, or employee in a business with a financial interest
 - Seeks employment or a business relationship with a person or entity with a financial interest.

Using Public Property

- City facilities and resources are to be used only for public purposes. Don't make use of city property, labor, and services:
 - To gain a personal benefit that's not available to the general public
 - To conduct your private business
 - To campaign for anyone.
- Of course, you shouldn't disclose confidential information learned on the job for non-city purposes.

Engaging in Outside Employment

- If you're going to work a second job, be sure to get your department head's permission first.
- The Code of Ethics permits you to work a second job unless your work is:
 - Adverse to or incompatible with your city job
 - Subject to regulation by your department
 - Representing your outside employer in a matter before a city agency
 - For a company doing business with the City of Atlanta. There is an exception to this rule when the contract is awarded through a sealed competitive bid process.

No Personal Gifts

- Taking gifts and favors can compromise your integrity, impartiality, and independence. Don't:
 - Accept gifts, meals, or tickets as a thank you for official action you have taken or as an inducement to take favorable action
 - Solicit anything of value from a city contractor, vendor, lobbyist, customer, or other prohibited source
 - Accept personal honoraria from a prohibited source.

Gifts Allowed

- There are a few exceptions to the gift ban. You may accept certain things of value such as:
 - Non-lavish meals and refreshments at a public event
 - Gifts accepted on behalf of your department
 - Holiday gifts that are perishable, of modest value, and shared with coworkers
 - Expenses for attending a conference or seminar
 - Awards given in recognition of your public service.

One-year cooling-off period

- For one year after you leave your city job, you can't represent outside parties before any city agency or receive compensation for matters in which you were directly involved, personally participated, actively considered, or acquired knowledge while with the City
- Within that year, your department may engage you directly to provide services on its behalf.

When In Doubt, Ask for Advice

- Some of these rules are complex; others have exceptions or require disclosure. When in doubt, it's best to ask for advice.

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