

Tacoma Community College Ethics Policy

Tacoma Community College (TCC) operates in an environment of diversity, fairness and equity.

The College has appointed the Executive Director of Human Resources as the College's Ethics Advisor.

To give the highest public service to Washington's citizens, college employees are obligated to treat their position as a public trust, using their official powers and duties and the resources of the college to advance the public interest. RCW 42.52, Washington State Ethics in Public Service Law sets the ethical standards for all state employees, which the term "employee" is used in this document to include officers and employees, including student and non-student temporary employees and the Board of Trustees.

Employees must observe the highest standards of ethical conduct. Each employee is expected to place the College's best interest above their own self-interest in all educational, business and other matters and decisions, where there is any actual or potential conflict or appearance of a conflict.

The Ethics in Public Service Act encourages employees to attend ethics training offered by the Executive Ethics Board at least once every 36 months. Training comes in different options, e.g. online and in-person training. Therefore TCC requires college employees to attend training offered by the Executive Ethics Board at least once every 36 months. The Human Resource department is responsible for ensuring each employee receives this training.

All employees are responsible for knowing and adhering to the State Ethics Law (42.52) and regulations (WAC 292-110).

The following are prohibited actions:

- a. Having a financial or other interest or engage in a business or professional activity that is in conflict with official duties.
- b. Use their official position to secure special privileges for themselves or any other person.
- c. Receive any compensation for a source, except from the state, for performing or deferring the performance of any official duty.
- d. Accept any gifts not allowed under RCW 42.52.150, and with a value of more than \$50.
- e. Disclose confidential information to an unauthorized person or use confidential information for benefit or to benefit another.
- f. Use state resources for personal benefit or to benefit another, except as required during the performance of official duties.
- g. Use state resources for political campaigns or lobbying.
- h. Assist another person in a transaction involving the state if they participated in that transaction or the transaction was part of their job responsibilities within the past two (2) years, except as required by the execution of their official duties.

It is the responsibility of employees who suspect fraud, waste or abuse, to report this to the College's Ethics Advisor, or the State Auditors' Office (SAO) hotline.

In order to make any gift analysis uncomplicated, TCC has designated all employees as Section 4 employees. In the statute, "Section 4" employees are those who participate in regulation or acquisition of goods or services.

Gifts in the form of food and beverage that exceed fifty dollars on a single occasion shall be reported as provided in chapter [42.17A](#) RCW.

APPROVED
Executive Ethics Board

Date: 5-10-19

Tacoma Community College Ethics Policy

An employee may make occasional personal use of state resources with prior supervisor approval if:

- a. there is little or no cost to the state;
- b. Any use is brief;
- c. Any use occurs infrequently;
- d. The use does not interfere with the performance of the employee's official duties;
- e. The use does not compromise the security or integrity of state property, information systems or software;
- f. The use is not for the purpose of conducting an outside business, in furtherance of private employment, or to realize a private financial gain; and
- g. The use is not for supporting, promoting the interests of, or soliciting for an outside organization or group.

Honoraria:

1. No employee may receive honoraria unless specifically authorized.
2. The college may not permit honoraria under the following circumstances:
 - (a) The person offering the honorarium is seeking or is reasonably expected to seek contractual relations with or a grant from the employer of the state officer or state employee, and the officer or employee is in a position to participate in the terms or the award of the contract or grant;
 - (b) The person offering the honorarium is regulated by the employer of the state officer or state employee and the officer or employee is in a position to participate in the regulation; or
 - (c) The person offering the honorarium (i) is seeking or opposing or is reasonably likely to seek or oppose enactment of legislation or adoption of administrative rules or actions, or policy changes by the state officer's or state employee's agency; and (ii) the officer or employee may participate in the enactment or adoption

Communications from an employee organization or charitable organization RCW [42.52.560](#) —Distribution by employee(s):

- a. Nothing in this chapter prohibits an employee from distributing communications from an employee organization or charitable organization to other employees if the communications do not support or oppose a ballot proposition or candidate for federal, state, or local public office. Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize any lobbying activity with public funds beyond the activity permitted by RCW [42.17A.635](#).
- b. "Employee organization," for purposes of this section, means any organization, union, or association in which employees participate and that exists for the purpose of collective bargaining with employers or for the purpose of opposing collective bargaining or certification of a union.

Outside Employment Contracts:

Per WAC 292-110-060, a state employee must receive ethics board approval before entering into, or obtaining a beneficial interest in, a contract or grant with a state agency only if the process for awarding the contract or grant was not open and competitive, or, whenever only one bid or application was received.

Employment after public service:

1. No former employee may, within a period of one year from the date of termination of state employment, accept employment or receive compensation from an employer if:
 - (a) The employee, during the two years immediately preceding termination of state employment, was engaged in the negotiation or administration on behalf of the state or agency of one or more contracts with that employer and was in a position to make discretionary decisions affecting the outcome of such negotiation or the nature of such administration;

APPROVED
Executive Ethics Board

Date: 5-10-19

Tacoma Community College Ethics Policy

(b) Such a contract or contracts have a total value of more than ten thousand dollars; and

(c) The duties of the employment with the employer or the activities for which the compensation would be received include fulfilling or implementing, in whole or in part, the provisions of such a contract or contracts or include the supervision or control of actions taken to fulfill or implement, in whole or in part, the provisions of such a contract or contracts. This subsection shall not be construed to prohibit a state officer or state employee from accepting employment with a state employee organization.

2. No person who has served as an employee may, within a period of two years following the termination of state employment, have a direct or indirect beneficial interest in a contract or grant that was expressly authorized or funded by specific legislative or executive action in which the former state employee participated.

3. No former employee may accept an offer of employment or receive compensation from an employer if the employee knows or has reason to believe that the offer of employment or compensation was intended, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, to influence the employee or as compensation or reward for the performance or nonperformance of a duty by the officer or employee during the course of state employment.

4. No former employee may accept an offer of employment or receive compensation from an employer if the circumstances would lead a reasonable person to believe the offer has been made, or compensation given, for the purpose of influencing the performance or nonperformance of duties by the employee during the course of state employment.

5. No former employee may at any time subsequent to his or her state employment assist another person, whether or not for compensation, in any transaction involving the state in which the former state employee at any time participated during state employment. This subsection shall not be construed to prohibit any employee or officer of a state employee organization from rendering assistance to state officers or state employees in the course of employee organization business.

6. As used in this section, "employer" means a person as defined in RCW [42.52.010](#) or any other entity or business that the person owns or in which the person has a controlling interest. For purposes of subsection (1) of this section, the term "employer" does not include a successor organization to the rural development council under chapter [43.31](#) RCW.

APPROVED
Executive Ethics Board

Date: 5-10-19