

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY STATEMENT OF VALUES AND ETHICS

Written by, and for, the employees of the Department of Public Health, this statement provides guiding principles for the accomplishment of our agency's mission.

At the Department of Public Health, we believe that the overriding purpose of an ethics statement is to encourage employees to do the right thing. As this statement cannot address every conceivable situation, employees are expected to apply common sense in the exercise of their responsibilities. Accordingly, this Statement of Values and Ethics is designed to help provide guidance, by defining values that employees are expected to embody in their daily work and by identifying the types of activities that are prohibited.

STATEMENT OF VALUES

All employees are expected to:

- Respect the rights and dignity of all individuals, both employees and members of the public.
- Adhere to the principles of fair treatment, regardless of an individual's economic or educational status, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religious creed, age, national origin, ancestry, mental retardation, physical disability, learning disability, past or present history of mental disability, genetic information, or prior conviction of a crime.
- Deliver their services in a timely, objective, consistent and appropriate manner.
- Communicate relevant and significant information to employees, our public health partners, and the public in a timely manner. Recognize that communication is a shared responsibility and includes listening to the concerns of others, respecting their needs and differences, and responding accordingly.
- Respect the privacy rights of employees and members of the public.
- Adhere to the Department's confidentiality pledge.
- Be conscientious in their attendance and in the performance of their duties. Comply with applicable statutes, regulations, and agency policies.
- Recognize that professional development is an ongoing process. Pursue relevant educational and training opportunities and support other employees in such efforts.
- Exercise care regarding their own health and safety and the health and safety of other employees and members of the public. Report safety concerns to their supervisor or other appropriate authorities.
- Properly utilize, maintain and care for facilities, vehicles and assigned equipment.
- Project a positive image of the Department through their appearance, attitude and actions.
- Understand and comply with the statutory Code of Ethics for Public Officials (Connecticut General Statutes, Section 1-79 et seq., summary attached). **Note that these provisions include certain restrictions on employment upon leaving State service, as well as restrictions on some activities by certain relatives of current state employees, as detailed in the attached summary.** Bring questions and concerns regarding compliance to the attention of supervisory or other appropriate authorities.

- Foster an environment in which employees are encouraged to report any suspected ethics violation without fear of retaliation or retribution.
- Disclose outside employment and candidacy for elected office, to facilitate proper supervisory review for potential conflicts.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

These represent minimum expectations for compliance with the Agency Statement of Values and Ethics. As it is not possible to write a statement to cover each and every situation, employees should direct questions to their supervisor, manager, agency human resource administrator, agency ethics officer, or the Office of State Ethics. Noncompliance could result in disciplinary action, up to and including, termination.

Activities that are prohibited by agency employees include the following:

- **Accepting or soliciting** any gift or gratuity, either directly or indirectly, from any individuals or entities regulated by, doing business with, or seeking to do business with the agency, or from any registered lobbyist. Soliciting or receiving gifts or gratuities from any member of the public, as an inducement or in exchange for agency services, is not permitted. Meals or refreshments cannot be accepted while engaged in any regulatory activity. Meals or refreshments may be accepted when consumed at a professional meeting, training or conference if they do not exceed the statutory gift limit (See, General Statutes §§1-79(e)(9) and 1-79(e)(16)) and are made available to agency employees and non-employees on an equal basis.
- **Accepting** other employment or business which impairs independence of judgment in their state employment or which requires or induces disclosure of confidential information gained in state employment.
- **Accepting** any fee or honorarium given in return for a speech or appearance made or article written in their official capacity. Acceptance of the individual's necessary expenses is permissible, however.
- **Altering** or falsifying data or information.
- **Disclosing** confidential information in any manner prohibited by the agency's confidentiality pledge.
- **Accessing** or attempting to access personal or confidential information not required to perform their assigned agency responsibilities.
- **Engaging** in partisan political activities while on state time. This includes using state materials or equipment or their position of authority for the purpose of influencing any political election.
- **Entering** into any contract with the state valued at \$100 or more, unless the contract has been awarded through an open, public, and competitive process.
- **Using** state equipment or materials, including telephone, computers, fax machines, and state vehicles for personal purposes.
- **Using** their employment status in an attempt to interfere with, or influence the outcome of, their personal involvement with proceedings involving the application of any law.
- **Influencing** the appointment or terms and conditions of employment of any relative.
- **Retaliating** against any individual who reports any potential violation of this policy or other misconduct.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency Ethics Officer: Stacy Owens
509-7962
stacy.owens@po.state.ct.us

Office of State Ethics: Staff Attorneys
566-4472
<http://www.ct.gov/ethics>