

May 23, 2006

To State Ethics Liaisons and Ethics Compliance Officers:

Reminder: RSVP by May 26!

Educational Workshop for State Agency Ethics Liaisons/Compliance Officers

The Office of State Ethics (OSE) is pleased to invite each state agency Ethics Liaison Officer, and/or Ethics Compliance Officer and/or agency head to attend *one* of the following workshop sessions. The sessions are identical, and repeated for your planning convenience.

- **Tuesday, June 6, 2006, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Room 310 Capitol Building**
- **Wednesday, June 7, 2006, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Room 310 Capitol Building**

Visitor parking is available at the Capitol as well as at the nearby Legislative Office Building. We will offer complimentary morning coffee or tea and break-time refreshments.

Please RSVP to Meredith.Trimble@ct.gov no later than May 26, 2006.

The workshops will provide you with an overview of the role of the Governor's Office and Executive Order Number 1; and an introduction to OSE's history, structure and staff. OSE staff will provide training on the Code of Ethics, Part I for Public Officials, as well as provide an overview of the enforcement process. You will also become familiar with OSE's many materials and resources that are available for your use.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Necessary Expenses and Gifts to the State

Since the issuance of [Advisory Opinion 2006-3](#), there have been many questions concerning necessary expenses and gifts to the state.

Necessary Expenses

Necessary expenses are important because they are what public officials and state employees may still receive from both regulated and non-regulated donors *if* the official or employee is actively participating in an event. Again, in order to receive payment or reimbursement for necessary expenses, an individual must have an **active, participatory** role in an event, such as giving a speech or presentation, running a workshop, etc.

Necessary expenses, among others, include:

- Travel (coach);
- Lodging (the standard cost for rooms for the nights before, of, and after the event in which you are participating);
- Meals; and
- Related conference expenses.

Note that entertainment costs, such as tickets to a sporting event, night club or golf outing, are not necessary expenses.

If you receive pre-payment or reimbursement for necessary expenses for out-of-state travel, you must fill out an [ETH-NE](#) form and file it with the OSE within 30 days of receiving such payment or reimbursement. We will be updating this form soon to make it more closely reflect the current law.

Fees and Honorariums

Public officials and state employees **may not** accept fees or honorariums for “an article, appearance, speech or participation in an event” if they are participating in their official capacity. (If an individual is speaking because of his/her expertise on a particular subject and not in his/her official capacity, s/he may be able to accept a fee or honorarium.) Please check with the OSE before engaging in such activity and accepting any payment.

Gifts to the State

New with [Advisory Opinion 2006-3](#), (which interpreted the new Connecticut General Statutes, Section 1-84 (q)), public officials and state employees may no longer accept gifts to the state from regulated donors.

How this impacts you: In the past, public officials and state employees were permitted to accept goods or services provided to the state for use on state property (i.e., a fax machine or a truck), or free training or conference/event participation that would facilitate state functions. For example, a regulated donor could have paid for a DEP employee to attend a seminar on issues directly relating to the work of DEP, such as forestry or wetlands protection.

This is no longer the case.

Public officials and state employees may no longer accept gifts that formerly fell under the “gifts to the state” provision (Conn. Gen. Stat. Sec. 1-79 (e) (5)) from regulated donors. For example, if you want to attend a conference or seminar, your agency must now pay for your attendance instead of receiving free registration or reimbursement from a regulated donor.

Non-regulated donors may still provide gifts to the state.

Who is a Regulated Donor?

Regulated donors are:

- Registered lobbyists (OSE can help you determine who is registered);
- Persons doing business with your department or agency;
- Persons seeking to do business with your department or agency;
- Persons engaged in activities regulated by your department or agency; or
- Pre-qualified on the DAS [“Pre-qual” list](#).

Outreach

Thank you again for your participation as your agency’s liaison or compliance officer. I encourage those who are new to this e-mail distribution list to visit the [Ethics Liaison/Compliance Officer Corner](#) of OSE’s Web site. All previous OSE communications to liaisons are posted on this page for your reference.

Please do not hesitate to call or e-mail me at any time with questions or comments, and I look forward to meeting most of you in person on June 6 or June 7!