

HOLIDAY GIFT BASKET FAQ

In addition to general holiday cheer, December brings about many questions regarding the acceptance of gift baskets that may arrive at your agency from regulated donors. This answer, though *not* different from years past, is to provide helpful guidance to you on our most frequently-asked question this month.

If a gift basket is accepted on behalf of an entire staffing unit (and not any particular employee/s), the gift may be divided among the employees in that unit so long as the value to each employee is not more than \$10.00.

For example, if a fruit basket from a regulated donor arrives at Agency X and is worth \$50.00, the ethics liaison of Agency X may set the fruit basket in a common area that serves 12 staff members. (Alternately, the employees of Agency X could collectively send the basket to a charity.) Because the value to each staff member would be just over \$4.00, this would be permissible, as it falls under the gift exception in CGS § 1-79 (e) (16) that permits gifts of not more than \$10.00 from regulated donors.

A letter to the donor explaining the gift provisions in the Code of Ethics is recommended.

Some agencies have more restrictive ethics policies in place. Agency personnel should be encouraged to check with their ethics liaison or compliance officer to see whether the above scenario is acceptable under the agency's own policy.

Please feel free to contact the legal division at 860-566-4472; Ethics.Code@ct.gov with any questions regarding this or any other matter.

Best regards (and good wishes for a happy, festive season),

Meredith Trimble
Director of Education