



Cranbourne Secondary College

WHILE WE LIVE WE GROW

GIFTS, BENEFITS and HOSPITALITY POLICY

Statement of Belief:

The community expects high standards of integrity and impartiality from Victorian public sector employees and school councillors. These individuals must not accept gifts, benefits or hospitality from people seeking to influence their decisions unfairly. Whenever Department employees, school council employees or school councillors do accept gifts, they must always act fairly and objectively and maintain public trust by being honest, open and transparent.

This policy applies to all Departmental employees (including Teaching Service), school council employees and school councillors. It is underpinned by the integrity and impartiality values and principles specified in the *Public Administration Act 2004*, the *Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees* and the *School Council Code of Conduct*.

All terms and more detailed explanation are available in the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Appendix.

Guiding Principles:

1. Teachers, other employees and school councillors should not solicit gifts, benefits or hospitality from anyone who could reasonably be seen to be seeking support in any decision or anyway be perceived to be bribery or anyone associated with a tendering process.
2. This policy also includes gifts, benefits or hospitality given to a staff member's or a school councillor's immediate family if the donor can be linked back to the staff member's or school councillor's duties and responsibilities. The policy does not apply to gifts received in a private context.
3. Individuals who may be offered a gift should seek advice from the Principal.
4. Employees or school councillors may accept benefits and hospitality, such as invitations to official functions or events of reasonable value, as long as they are related to the business of the Department or school, and provided that they do not involve a conflict of interest or create a perception that the employee or school councillor will be unduly influenced by accepting the benefit or hospitality.
5. Benefits and hospitality in relation to for-profit organisations sponsoring conferences or industry tours should generally be declined, unless reasons why there is no conflict of can be demonstrated. However, if attendance at the conference or industry tour is in the public interest, then the Department or school should consider paying for the travel and accommodation.
6. Employees and school councillors may keep token gifts (under \$100) such as a box of chocolates, for the work they have done. In limited circumstances, employees and school

councillors may be able to keep a gift worth \$100 or more, but less than \$500, **subject to the documented approval** of their Deputy Secretary or school council.

7. When an employee or school councillor is representing the Department or school at an event, and the Department or school has paid for their time, labour or accommodation to attend the event, any benefits accruing from this event belong to the Department or school.
8. For school-based employees and school councillors, acceptance and offers of a gift worth more than \$100 (nominal value) **must** be formally registered on the school's gift register.
9. Gifts worth \$500 or more must be surrendered to the State or school **under all circumstances**.
10. Catered activities may be occasionally provided for employees. Legitimate reasons include a training course, workshop, planning day seminar or conference; and to recognise an organisational or individual staff achievement. The appropriate senior authorising officer must determine if any catered function for staff would be considered reasonable and must take into consideration community expectations.
11. All gifts that are of an entertainment nature and/or any other gifts of \$300 or more in value, accepted by an individual from an employer, associate of an employer, or third party are subject to FBT.
12. Any event where alcohol is served should be held at a time which minimises the risk of employees returning to work impaired by alcohol. For example, if normal office hours are worked, the event should be held in the late afternoon or early evening. Any event should not exceed two hours in duration. No more than two standard drinks per person should be provided.
13. The school may wish to recognise significant staff achievements and provide token gifts as part of reward and recognition programs or events; and celebrating length of service milestones and/or retirements.
14. A token, such as a card and/or flowers, may also be sent to family members to acknowledge an employees' contribution to the workplace in the event of their death.
15. Gifts given in celebrations of events such as birthdays, marriages or the birth of children should not be funded using public monies.
16. The full Departmental guidelines are available in the school procedures folder.