

# NIGP CODE OF ETHICS



The Institute believes, and it is a condition of membership, that the following ethical principles should govern the conduct of every person employed by a public sector procurement or materials management organization:

- Seeks or accepts a position as head (or employee) only when fully in accord with the professional principles applicable thereto and when confident of possessing the qualifications to serve under those principles to the advantage of the employing organization.
- Believes in the dignity and worth of the service rendered by the organization, and the societal responsibilities assumed as a trusted public servant.
- Is governed by the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships in order to merit the respect and inspire the confidence of the organization and the public being served.
- Believes that personal aggrandizement or personal profit obtained through misuse of public or personal relationships is dishonest and not tolerable.
- Identifies and eliminates participation of any individual in operational situations where a conflict of interest may be involved.
- Believes that members of the Institute and its staff should at no time, or under any circumstances, accept directly or indirectly, gifts, gratuities, or other things of value from suppliers, which might influence or appear to influence purchasing decisions.
- Keeps the governmental organization informed, through appropriate channels, on problems and progress of applicable operations by emphasizing the importance of the facts.
- Resists encroachment on control of personnel in order to preserve integrity as a professional manager.
- Handles all personnel matters on a merit basis, and in compliance with applicable laws prohibiting discrimination in employment on the basis of politics, religion, color, national origin, disability, gender, age, pregnancy and other protected characteristics.
- Seeks or dispenses no personal favors. Handles each administrative problem objectively and empathetically, without discrimination.
- Subscribes to and supports the professional aims and objectives of the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc.

# GUIDELINES TO THE NIGP CODE OF ETHICS



## RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR EMPLOYER

- Follow the lawful instructions or laws of the employer
- Understand the authority granted by the employer
- Avoid activities which would compromise or give the perception of compromising the best interest of the employer
- Reduce the potential for any charges of preferential treatment by actively promoting the concept of competition
- Obtain the maximum benefit for funds spent as agents for the employer

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Avoid any private or professional activity that would create a conflict between your personal interest and the interests of your employer
- Avoid engaging in personal business with any company that is a supplier to your employer
- Avoid lending money to or borrowing money from any supplier

## PERCEPTION

- Avoid the appearance of unethical or compromising practices in relationships, actions and communications
- Avoid business relationships with personal friends. Request a reassignment if the situation arises
- Avoid noticeable displays of affection, which may give an impression of impropriety
- Avoid holding business meetings with suppliers outside the office. When such meetings do occur, the meeting location should be carefully chosen so as not to be perceived as inappropriate by other persons in the business community or your peers.

## GRATUITIES

- Never solicit or accept money, loans, credits or prejudicial discounts, gifts, entertainment, favors or services from your present or potential suppliers which might influence or appear to influence purchasing decisions
- Never solicit gratuities in any form for yourself or your employer. Items of nominal value offered by suppliers for public relations purposes are acceptable when the value of such items has been established by your employer and would not be perceived by the offeror, receiver or others as posing an ethical breach.
- Gifts offered exceeding nominal value should be returned with an explanation or if perishable either returned or donated to a charity in the name of the supplier. In the case of any gift, care should be taken to evaluate the intent and perception of acceptance to ensure that it is legal, that it will not influence your buying decisions, and that it will not be perceived by your peers and others as unethical.

## BUSINESS MEALS

- There are times when during the course of business it may be appropriate to conduct business during meals. In such instances, the meal should be for a specific business purpose
- Avoid frequent meals with the same supplier. The purchasing professional should be able to pay for meals as frequently as the supplier
- Budgeted funds should be available for such purposes.

## CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

- Keep bidders proprietary information confidential
- Develop a formal policy on the handling of confidential information.

## RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SUPPLIER

- Maintain and practice, to the highest degree possible, business ethics, professional courtesy and competence in all transactions
- Association with suppliers at lunches, dinners or business organization meetings is an acceptable professional practice enabling the buyer to establish better business relations provided that the buyer keeps free of obligation. Accordingly, it is strongly recommended that if a seller pays for an activity that the buyer reciprocate.
- Purchase without prejudice, striving to obtain the maximum value for each dollar of expenditure
- Preclude from showing favoritism or be influenced by suppliers through the acceptance of gifts, gratuities, loans or favors. Gifts of a nominal value that display the name of a firm which is intended for advertisement may or may not be accepted in accordance with the recipients own conscience or jurisdictional rules
- Adhere to and protect the suppliers business and legal rights to confidentiality for trade secrets, and other proprietary information
- Refrain from publicly endorsing products

## RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EMPLOYER

- Remain free of any and all interests and activities, which are or could be detrimental or in conflict with the best interests of the employer. Refrain from engaging in activities where the buyer has a significant personal or indirect financial interest
- Exercise discretionary authority on behalf of the employer. Avoid acquiring interest or incurring obligations that could conflict with the interests of the employer

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- A buyer shall not use his position to exert leverage on individuals or firms for the purpose of creating a benefit for agencies or organizations that he may represent
- All involvement and transactions shall be handled in a professional manner with the interest of the buyers employer taking precedent

## RELATIONSHIP WITH PROFESSIONAL PURCHASING ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

- It is the obligation and the responsibility of the buyer, through affiliation with professional organization, to represent that organization in a professional and ethical manner
- A buyer shall not use his position to persuade an individual or firm to provide a benefit to an organization

## POLICY

- It is the policy of NIGP that any member of the Institute who personally, or on behalf of his local chapter, is involved in the process of acquiring advertisers and/or exhibitors on behalf of the Institute, shall act only in the capacity of providing referrals of potential or interested parties to the Institute. As a result of such referral, should the Institute form a contractual obligation, appropriate credit shall be given to the individual or chapter