

**PERSONNEL POLICY XII
ETHICAL STANDARDS**

EFFECTIVE: 02/17/04

I. PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT

Employees will not use or attempt to use their official County positions to secure or grant privileges, exemptions, advantages, contracts, or preferential treatment for themselves or others.

II. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

- A. Employees will not directly or indirectly solicit, accept, or receive any gift whether in the form of money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, promise, or in any other form, except as provided herein. Unsolicited gifts must be returned, shared with other employees, or given to charity. Gifts which may influence a reasonable employee in the performance of his/her duties, or which appear to be intended as a reward for any official action on the employee's part, or which potentially create the perception of impropriety, as determined by the Department Head or Assistant County Manager, shall be refused.

Unsolicited payment of meals with a value less than \$50 may be accepted provided the acceptance of a meal is not intended to influence the employee's performance; or is not intended as a reward for official action; or does not create a potential for a perception of impropriety; or does not occur on a regular basis. The acceptance of a meal with a value of less than \$50 must be disclosed to the employee's Department Head, or in the case of Department Heads to the applicable Assistant County Manager.

Tickets to community events (e.g., not-for-profit banquets, charitable events, openings of commercial properties, etc.), which may provide an opportunity to build working relationships within the community, must be disclosed by the employee to his/her Department Head prior to being accepted. In the case of a Department Head, the disclosure must be to the applicable Assistant County Manager. Tickets which have the potential to influence a reasonable employee in the performance of his/her duties, or which appear to be intended as a reward for any official action on the employee's part, or which creates a potential for a perception of impropriety, as determined by the Department Head or Assistant County Manager, shall be refused.

Any violation of this policy is subject to discipline up to and including termination.

- B. An employee's involvement in any activity that is a conflict of interest is prohibited. A conflict of interest is any interest of the employee (financial, personal, collaborative or otherwise) that could impair the independence of judgment or the ability of a reasonable employee to act in the County's or public's best interests in any matter. A conflict of interest may arise from outside

employment, donor/donee or debtor/creditor relationships, consulting arrangements, family or personal relationships, legal or fiduciary arrangements and financial investments, or any other matter that could be construed by a reasonable third party as conflicting with the employee's duties.

C. The following guidelines are minimum standards:

1. No employee will accept from any person a loan, cash, credit, gift, or other benefit in connection with his/her County employment.
2. No employee will accept complimentary benefits or offerings of any kind from any person with whom that employee is currently dealing in an official County business capacity.
3. No employee will use public property, funds, or discretionary decisions toward personal or political gain.
4. No employee will publicly endorse any particular product or service.
5. Any violation of this Policy or the ethical standards of NRS 281.481 may be cause for discipline up to and including termination.

D. Department Heads, in cooperation with the Office of Human Resources, will prepare guidelines for their respective department's employees further defining employment activities that are potentially a conflict of interest and other conflict of interest situations in that department, including:

1. Examples of activities indigenous to that department that could be construed to be a conflict of interest;
2. Examples of activities indigenous to that department that would not be construed to be a conflict of interest; and
3. A list of any additional departmental requirements necessary to ensure compliance with this Policy.

III. FULL DISCLOSURE

A. Employees will disclose to their Department Heads any potential conflicts of interest that may affect any matter or aspect of their County duties. Employees will not participate as agents or representatives of a County department or take any action or make recommendations on any matter in which they have a conflict of interest as determined by the Department Head.

B. The following minimum standards for full disclosure by employees may be further delineated by individual departments or directives of the County Manager.

1. It is the responsibility of each employee to inform his/her Department Head of any potential conflict of interest and the full nature of that interest which may affect an assigned duty.
 2. The Department Head will determine whether a conflict exists and if the employee must recuse himself/herself from taking any action in a matter that may be affected by his or her interest.
 3. Department Heads may make individual policies to reassign duties where a conflict exists and when an employee has a conflict of interest.
- C. Employees in position classifications that exercise significant discretionary authority in the provision of service within a department will submit Financial Disclosure Statements to the Deputy Director of the Office of Human Resources and the County Clerk's Office, Commission Division, no later than March 31st of every year. The County Manager will determine the position classifications in each department that exercise significant discretionary authority. At a minimum, this provision will apply to Department Heads and Staff Directors. Financial Disclosure Statement forms will be designed by the County Manager and, once completed, made available for public inspection in the County Clerk's Office.

IV. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

- A. Employees will respect and protect confidential information to which they have access in the course of official County duties; avoid any interest or activity that lies in conflict with the conduct of official County duties; and seek no favor for personal economic interest or the interest of others secured by confidential information.
1. No employee who acquires information in the course of his/her duties, which information by law or policy is not available at the time to the general public, will use such information to further his/her own economic interest or that of others.
 2. No employee may use work hours or County resources to secure information intended to be used to further his/her economic interest or that of others.

V. ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION/NOTICE OF ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT

- A. An employee will not accept any salary, retainer, augmentation, expense allowance, or other compensation from any private source for the performance of his/her duties as a public employee. An employee will inform the County of any outside employment unrelated to official duties. Prior to beginning any employment activity in addition to County service, the employee must complete a "Notice of Additional Employment" form and submit it to the Department Head

for approval. If it is determined that a conflict exists, the employee will be informed that he/she may not hold both positions simultaneously.

- B. To ensure no conflict of interest exists, no employee may:
 - 1. Seek or accept additional employment, ownership, or partnership in a business outside County service which is determined to be in conflict with his/her duties as an employee or in conflict with the functions and responsibilities of the department;
 - 2. Hold two County positions of any type simultaneously; or
 - 3. Hold a County position and contract employment with the County simultaneously.

VI. USE OF COUNTY PROPERTY

- A. Employees will not directly or indirectly use or permit others to use County property of any kind for personal use. Employees will protect and conserve all County property, including equipment and supplies entrusted or issued to them. Employees will be required to replace or reimburse the County for any property lost or damaged due to the employee's negligence. Administrative Guideline No. 16 provides further details concerning appropriate use of County property.
- B. The following are minimum standards for the use, security, and care of County property and equipment. Additional guidelines for the use of property may be established by directive of the County Manager or by individual departments.
 - 1. County equipment and vehicles are for employee use in the performance of assigned duties; and
 - 2. Any equipment or supplies entrusted or issued to an employee should be cared for properly.

VII. POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

- A. Employees will not perform or participate in improper political activities in the workplace, including, without limitation, any act which detracts from or impairs the effectiveness of an employee in his/her work, or involves obligations or considerations inconsistent with his/her work, or involves obligations or considerations inconsistent with his/her status as a County employee.
- B. The following standards are established to further delineate the conduct of employees with respect to political activities during business hours:

1. Each employee is encouraged to exercise his/her rights as a citizen to vote and become involved in political campaigns of his/her choice outside work hours;
2. An employee must exercise extreme diligence in separating personal political views from his/her official duties and position as an employee, especially on the job;
3. An employee must not engage in any political activities at the workplace; and
4. An employee must not wear campaign buttons, hats, or other paraphernalia during the workday, or display political items in the work area, including but not limited to in restrooms and other building common areas.