

Ethics, Sunshine & Public Records

Manual for City Employees



City of Jacksonville
Office of Ethics, Compliance and Oversight
Kirby G. Oberdorfer, Director

City of Jacksonville

Employee Ethics Packet



On behalf of everyone in the City's Ethics Office we thank you for taking your time to participate in government Ethics training. In an effort to help you make informed choices, the office of Ethics, Compliance, and Oversight has developed this short packet to be sure you are aware of the ethics laws that apply to you as a City Employee.

The pages that follow should take about 15-minutes to review and contains important information including:

- ☐ Your duties under State and Local Ethics Laws
- ☐ Your duties under Public Records Law
- ☐ Your Ethics Training Requirement
- ☐ Your duty to report Conflicts of Interest to the Ethics Office
- ☐ Your duty to file Financial & Gift Disclosures (if applicable)

When you're finished, please sign the final page indicating you have understood the contents of this packet in its entirety and return it to your department ethics officer.

And if you ever have any questions or concerns, our office is here to help! Please feel free to reach out at anytime.

Kirby G. Oberdorfer, Director
Andrea B. Myers, Training and Program Manager
Paige H. Johnston, Ethics Attorney
Carla Miller, Senior Ethics Advisor
Sandra Homrighouse, Ethics Office Assistant
City of Jacksonville, Office of Ethics,
Compliance and Oversight
ethics@coj.net or 255-5507

DEPARTMENT ETHICS OFFICERS

- ☐ **Every City Department has a Department Ethics Officer or "DEO".**
- ☐ **DEOs are Department Employees with regular department related duties who are also trained and available to answer your Department Specific Ethics questions.**
- ☐ **DEOs assist with Secondary Employment applications and your department's gift registry.**
- ☐ **DEOs are a great resource and can answer many Ethics Questions directly or reach out to the Ethics Office on your behalf.**
- ☐ **Find your DEO by searching COJ.net for the DEO Directory or send an email to ethics@coj.net.**

Government Ethics Laws

Your duties under State and Local Law

State (Section 112) and Local (Chapter 602) Ethics laws requires that all City employees follow a code of conduct meant to promote fairness and transparency in government. These laws cover everything from acceptable gifts to conflicts of interests and bribes. Below you will find a quick summary of the danger areas most often encountered by City Employees. This list is meant to help you identify potential issues before they become problems.

DANGER AREAS



GIFTS – No City employee may accept gifts in excess of \$100 value, or \$250 in a year, from anyone doing business with the City, a lobbyist or a lobbyist's employer. In addition, each department may have a specialized Gift Policy. *Jacksonville Code section 602.701*

GIFTS TO THE CITY - If a gift comes in to your department (like flowers or cookies), it is a "gift to the City" and should be reported to your DEO to be posted on the City's website monthly. *Jacksonville Code section 602.702*

ASKING FOR THINGS – State law prohibits City employees from asking lobbyists for anything of value. Locally this may also be seen as a Misuse of Position or soliciting a Bribe. *Florida Statutes section 112.313(2) and Jacksonville Code section 112.313(2) and 112.31348(3)*



TRAVEL PAID BY THIRD PARTY – In order to protect City employees from unintentional gift liabilities, all City related travel should be paid for by the City or approved in writing by the Ethics Office and Office of General Counsel. *Jacksonville Code section 106.703*



CONFLICTS OF INTEREST– Danger areas include doing business with the City; you or your family or business partners having City contracts or business dealings; or being a consultant for a company doing business with the City. **Please see the Self-Assessment tool on Page 9 for more information on Conflicts of Interest.** *Florida Statutes Section 112.313(3)*



SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT – All full-time employees must get permission from their department director before accepting another job including part-time, seasonal work, entrepreneurial ventures, and volunteering for a benefit which could include event tickets and/or tee-shirts. The process is outlined in Employee Services Directive 519. *Jacksonville Code section 602.402*



MISUSE OF POSITION - Do not use your job with the City to get anything special for yourself or anyone else. This includes circumventing City protocol to get better or faster City services and workplace sexual harassment. *Florida Statutes section 112.3136 and Jacksonville Code section 602.401*



MISUSE OF PROPERTY/TIME – Do not use City property, computers, internet and time for personal reasons. This includes a prohibition on using City resources for political campaigns. *Jacksonville Code section 602.401*

MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY - Do not disclose information obtained through your job but not available to members of the general public for your own, or for another person or entity's, personal gain or benefit. *Florida Statutes section 112.313(8) and Jacksonville Code section 602.401*



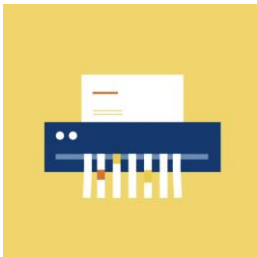
EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES – You are prohibited from appointing, employing, promoting, advancing or even advocating for a relative to be hired or promoted. *Florida Statutes section 112.3135*



POST EMPLOYMENT - When you leave City employment, you cannot be involved in City matters that you had a part in when you were a City employee. If you were involved in negotiating, approving or enacting a contract decision for the City in excess of \$250,000, you cannot go work for that company without approval. *Jacksonville Code sections 602.411 and 602.412*

FUTURE EMPLOYMENT – Do not accept or apply for a job if this could impact your judgment as a current City employee. *Jacksonville Code section 602.404*

PAST JOBS - Be careful of any connections to a former employer. For a period of two years after leaving a job, if you become a City employee, you cannot be involved in contracts with your former employer. *Jacksonville Code section 602.405*



PUBLIC RECORDS - Florida Statute Chapter 119

All documents generated by an employee related to City business are public records and must be open for public inspection and copying. This includes papers, emails, letters, books, tapes, photos, software, videos, audio recordings, or other material regardless of how or where it is kept. This can even include non-final documents, such as draft documents or notes you take to remember events.

If you receive any request for the records or documents, immediately forward that request to you 630-City so it can be handled correctly and in a timely fashion



SUNSHINE LAW – Florida Statutes section 286.011

All official decision making in the state of Florida is governed by the Sunshine Law. This includes the meetings of Boards and Commissions as well as committees that score and evaluate proposals and the like. The Sunshine Law contains three major requirements:

- (1) All Board meetings must be open and accessible to the public,
- (2) Reasonable advance notice of the meetings must be given, and
- (3) Written minutes must be taken and open for public inspection. **A detailed Sunshine guide is provided by the State Attorney General at**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/sun.nsf/sunmanual>



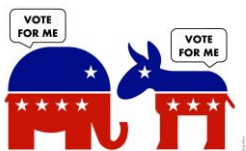
OBSTRUCTION OF CITY MEETINGS - Local law prohibits City employees from intimidating, obstructing or generally disrupting a City hearing, proceeding or public meeting. It also does not allow City employees to do anything to prevent a person from appearing or speaking at City meetings. *Jacksonville Code section 602.407*



LENDING MONEY – There are limits on the amount of money you may lend or borrow from those with whom you work. The limit is \$100 if you are in the chain of command; \$500 for anyone else. This is to prevent the unintentional influence of coworkers. *Jacksonville Code section 602.401*



CLAIMS AGAINST THE CITY - Be careful if you or your family are involved in any suits or legal claims against the City. *Jacksonville Code section 602.402*



POLITICS AT WORK - City employees may not campaign in City buildings or use City resources, including email addresses and phones, for campaigning. This is prevent the appearance that City resources are being used to support one candidate for public office over another and to promote a collegial workplace. *Jacksonville Code, Chapter 350 and Employee Services Directive 0527.*



LOBBYISTS CANNOT GIVE ILLEGAL GIFTS - If a lobbyist tries to give you a gift worth more than \$100 at a time or \$250 in a year, they are violating City law. *Jacksonville Code section 602.703*

LOBBYIST REGISTRATION - Before a lobbyist can try to influence a governmental decision, they must register in the online lobbyist system found on the City's website. *Jacksonville Code section 602.801*



WHISTLEBLOWERS - The Office of Inspector General and the Office of Ethics, Compliance and Oversight are deemed "safe havens" and whistleblower report-to authorities for the receipt of information and complaints related to ethics, waste, fraud, and corruption. *Jacksonville Code section 602.623*



ETHICS EDUCATION - All City employees must be trained on ethics laws during the first six months of City employment. *Jacksonville Code section 602.1001*

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES - A small number of City employees are required to file financial disclosures with the State of Florida. Please see the Self-Assessment on **Page 10 to verify your financial filing status.**

Conflicts of Interest

Self-Assessment For City Employees



Florida Statutes section 112.313(3) identifies potential conflicts for City Employees in the State of Florida that involve contractual or business relationships with the City or the Department in which an employee works.

To determine if you may have a potential conflict, please answer the following questions:

1. Are you (or your spouse or child) employed by, or an officer of, an entity doing business with, or receiving funds from, the City of Jacksonville (including independent authorities)?
2. Do you, your spouse, or your child own a business that is doing business with, or receiving funds from, the City of Jacksonville (including independent authorities)?
3. Do you engage in any consulting or contract work with a business that is doing business with, or receiving funds from, the City of Jacksonville (including independent authorities)?
4. Are you (your spouse or child) a member (voting or non-voting) of any nonprofit or corporate boards that are doing business with, or receiving funds from, the City of Jacksonville (including independent authorities)?

If you answered yes to any of the questions above, do not worry! Call the Office of Ethics Compliance and Oversight at 904-255-5510 or send an email to ethics@coj.net for more information.

Conflicts happen all the time and the Ethics Office will work with the Office of General Counsel to provide guidance on how you should proceed in order to comply with the law.

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE GOVERNMENT ETHICS



PROMOTING PUBLIC TRUST IN GOVERNMENT
More on the Ethics Page at COJ.NET

QUICK GLANCE: TOP DANGER AREAS



**GIFTS AND
ASKING FOR THINGS**



**TRAVEL PAID
BY 3RD PARTY**



**CONFLICTS
OF INTEREST**



**SECONDARY
EMPLOYMENT**



**MISUSE
OF POSITION**



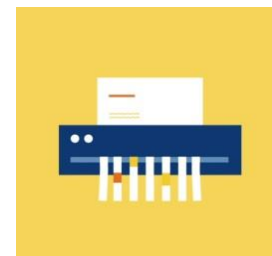
**PERSONAL USE
OF CITY RESOURCES**



**HIRING OR PROMOTING
RELATIVES**



**POST EMPLOYMENT
POSITIONS**



**PUBLIC RECORDS
& SUNSHINE**

ASK BEFORE YOU ACT!
ETHICS HOTLINE 630-1015

Acknowledgement of Duties

For City Employees



Pursuant to Section 602.1001, Jacksonville Code, I hereby certify that I have read and understood the summary of the state and local ethics laws provided to me, including the following requirements provided to me:

- ☐ My duties under State and Local Ethics Laws
- ☐ My duties under Public Records Law
- ☐ My Ethics Training Requirement
- ☐ My duty to report Conflicts of Interest to the Ethics Office

Employee Signature

Printed Name

Employee ID#

Date

Completed acknowledgements should be returned to you Department Ethics Officer which can be found at <https://www.coj.net/departments/ethics-office/department-ethics-officers/deo-contact-information.aspx>.