Summary of Ethics Law and Policies

OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief summary of applicable elements of the Washington State Ethics Law (RCW 42.52) and provides cross-references to related University policies and procedures.

State Executive Ethics Board

For a complete description and interpretation of the Law, refer to the Executive Ethics Board web site at:

www.ethics.wa.gov/

Internal Audit Office

For information regarding ethics-related issues, contact the Internal Audit Office; telephone 509-335-2001 (see BPPM 10.22).

APPLICABILITY

The Ethics Law applies to all University employees and officers.

SELECTED ETHICS LAW PROVISIONS

The following provides a brief summary of pertinent items from the Ethics Law.

NOTE: Because many provisions of the Ethics Law have conditional exceptions, readers should review, in entirety, any provision of interest.

If an employee has questions about any particular item, he or she should review the law and contact the Internal Audit Office.

For convenience, some related University policies and procedures are also referenced.

NOTE: Any single referenced policy or procedure may only deal with a limited aspect of the specified legal provision.

Activities Incompatible with Public Duties

A University employee may not have an interest in or engage in an activity that is in conflict with the proper discharge of his or her official duties.

Related Policies/Procedures

Nepotism (BPPM 60.14)

University Purchases from State Employees (BPPM 70.15)

Financial Interests in Transactions

A University employee may not have a beneficial interest in a contract, sale, lease, purchase, or grant that may be made through, or is under the supervision of the employee.

Related Policies/Procedures

University Purchases from State Employees (BPPM 70.15)

Washington State University Ethics, Conflict of Interest, and Technology Transfer Policy, Executive Policy Manual EP27
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Assisting in Transactions (RCW 42.52.040)  
Except in the course of performing official duties, a University employee may not assist another person, directly or indirectly, whether or not for compensation, in a transaction involving the state: (a) in which the employee has at any time participated; or (b) if the transaction involving the state is or has been under the official responsibility of the employee within a period of two years preceding such assistance. A University employee may not share in compensation received by another for assistance that the employee is prohibited from providing by law.

Related Policies/Procedures  
University Purchases from State Employees (BPPM 70.15)

Confidential Information (RCW 42.52.050)  
A University employee may not disclose confidential information to unauthorized persons or use confidential information for personal benefit or the benefit of others.

Related Policy/Procedure  
Release of Public Records (BPPM 90.05)

Special Privileges (RCW 42.52.070)  
Except as required to perform duties within the scope of employment, a University employee may not use his or her position to secure special privileges or exemptions for himself or herself, or his or her spouse, child, parents, or other persons.

Related Policy/Procedure  
University Purchases from State Employees (BPPM 70.15)

Employment after Public Service (RCW 42.52.080)  
There are statutory limitations which restrict employment of University employees after they leave state employment.

Related Policies/Procedures  
Personal Services Contracts (BPPM 70.50)

Compensation for Official Duties or Nonperformance (RCW 42.52.110)  
A University employee may not ask for, give, or receive, or agree to receive compensation, gift, reward, or gratuity for performing or deferring the performance of official state duties except as permitted by the State or by law.

Compensation for Outside Activities (RCW 42.52.120)  
A University employee may not receive any thing of economic value under any contract or grant outside of his or her official duties, except as permitted by law.

Related Policies/Procedures  
Policy on Compensated Outside Service by Faculty Members, Faculty Manual Section IV. D

Extended Professional Activities, Faculty Manual Section IV. E

Compensated Outside Service and Extended Professional Activities by Faculty (BPPM 60.44)

University Purchases from State Employees (BPPM 70.15).
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**Honoraria**  
*(RCW 42.52.130)*  
A University employee may not receive an honorarium unless specifically authorized by WSU and receipt is consistent with applicable laws.

**Related Policy/Procedures**  

**Gifts**  
*(RCW 42.52.140)*  
A University employee may not receive, accept, take, seek, or solicit, directly or indirectly, gifts that reasonably appear to influence the performance or nonperformance of official duties.

**Limitations on Gifts**  
*(RCW 42.52.150)*  
A University employee may not accept gifts with an aggregate value in excess of fifty dollars from a single source in a calendar year or a single gift from multiple sources with a value in excess of fifty dollars.

The following items may be accepted without regard to the limit: unsolicited flowers, plants, and floral arrangements; unsolicited advertising or promotional items of nominal value, such as pens and note pads; unsolicited tokens or awards of appreciation in the form of a plaque, trophy, desk item, wall memento, or similar item; unsolicited items received by an employee for the purpose of evaluation or review; informational material, publications, or subscriptions related to the recipient's performance of official duties; food and beverages consumed at hosted receptions where attendance is related to official duties; admission to, and the cost of food and beverages consumed at, events sponsored by or in conjunction with a civic, charitable, governmental, or community organization; and unsolicited gifts from dignitaries from another state or a foreign country that are intended to be personal in nature.

An employee having regulatory responsibilities or responsibilities for initiating University contracts has a more stringent set of rules. See *RCW 42.52.150 (4).*

An employee receiving gifts in the form of food and beverages that exceed fifty dollars on a single occasion must report the gift in accordance with *RCW 42.17.170(2)(f).*

**Use of Resources for Private Gain**  
*(RCW 42.52.160)*  
*(WAC 292-110-010)*  
A University employee may not employ or use any person, money, or property under the officer's or employee's official control or direction, or in his or her official custody, for the private benefit or gain of the employee, or another.

**Related Policies/Procedures**  
Use of University Property (*BPPM 20.35*)  
Personal Use of University Resources (*BPPM 20.37*)  
### Summary of Ethics Law and Policies

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<tr>
<th><strong>Giving, Paying, Loaning Any Thing of Economic Value to State Employee (RCW 42.52.170)</strong></th>
<th>No person shall give, pay, loan, transfer, or deliver, directly or indirectly, to any other person any thing of economic value if receipt constitutes a violation of RCW 42.52.040, 42.52.110, 42.52.120, 42.52.140, or 42.52.150.</th>
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<td><strong>Use of Public Resources for Political Campaigns (RCW 42.52.180)</strong></td>
<td>A University employee may not use or authorize the use of University facilities directly or indirectly, for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of a person to an office or for the promotion of or opposition to a ballot proposition.</td>
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<td><strong>Related Policies/Procedures</strong></td>
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