

ETHICS POLICY

The Ethics laws of the State of Ohio are applicable to all staff of ACCESS. It is imperative that each staff member understand what ethical limitations are in place so that they may conform their behavior accordingly. ACCESS staff should avoid even the appearance of ethical impropriety. If any staff member has a question about whether any particular action is in compliance with the ethics laws, that person should speak with their immediate supervisor.

All ACCESS Board members, officers and employees (“staff”) must adhere to the following standards:

I. NEPOTISM

Staff members may not hire or supervise family members. For purposes of this policy, “family member” includes a staff member’s spouse; parents and step-parents; grandparents; children and step-children; grandchildren; and siblings and any other person related to the staff member by blood or by marriage who resides in the same household with the staff member.

That an employee is related to another employee of ACCESS is not in and of itself, a violation. This policy requires that no ACCESS staff member have any influence or participation in the decision to hire a family member covered by this policy. Staff should not recommend family members for employment positions with ACCESS. If a family member of an ACCESS staff applies for a position, the conflicted staff member should have no involvement or input whatsoever into the matter

II. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Staff members are prohibited from having an interest in or using the authority or influence of their position to obtain an interest in a contract of ACCESS that provides a benefit for themselves, their family members (defined above) and business associates. “Business associates” includes any individuals, companies, or organizations with which the official is acting together to pursue a common business purpose. Examples of a public official’s business associates include, but are not limited to, the official’s: (1) partners in a partnership; (2) co-owners of a business; (3) outside employer; and (4) co-members of an LLC.

Staff members are prohibited from having a position of profit in a contract of ACCESS and are also prohibited from selling goods or services to ACCESS, in which the staff member has an interest. Staff members may sell goods or services to ACCESS, if all of the following are met:

1. The goods or services are necessary goods or services for the operations of ACCESS; and
2. Either the goods or services are part of a continuing course of dealing with the staff member that began prior to the employment relationship, or they are unobtainable elsewhere for the same or lower cost; and

3. The treatment that the staff member provides to ACCESS is the same as, or better than, the treatment that the staff member provides to other customers or clients in similar transactions; and
4. The transaction is conducted at arm's length, the agency has full knowledge of the staff member's interest in the sale of goods or services, and the staff member has taken no part in the deliberations or decision with respect to the transaction.

ACCESS desires to avoid even the appearance of impropriety and so it shall not purchase goods and services from staff members, even when the above factors are satisfied, unless it is determined to be in the best interests of ACCESS to do so.

III. GIFTS AND OTHER ITEMS OF VALUE

ACCESS staff are prohibited from:

1. Soliciting, accepting, or using the authority of the staff member's public position to secure a gift, meal, entertainment, or any other thing of value if it is of a substantial nature and is provided by someone that is regulated by, interested in matters before, or doing or seeking to do business with ACCESS; and
2. Accepting anything, regardless of its value, if the item is provided to the staff member as compensation for the performance of the staff member's public duties.

Staff members who are offered a gift meal, entertainment, or any other thing of value by someone that is regulated by, interested in matters before, or doing or seeking to do business with ACCESS, shall alert their immediate supervisor for consultation.