

**SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION,  
SAN FRANCISCO BUILDING INSPECTION COMMISSION, ACCESS APPEALS COMMISSION,  
BOARD OF EXAMINERS AND UNREINFORCED MASONRY BUILDING APPEALS BOARD  
STATEMENT OF INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

This Statement of Incompatible Activities is intended to guide officers and employees of the San Francisco Department of Building Inspection (“Department” or “DBI”), the Building Inspection Commission (“Commission”), the Access Appeals Commission, the Board of Examiners and the Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board about the kinds of activities that are incompatible with their public duties and therefore prohibited. For the purposes of this Statement, and except where otherwise provided, “officer” shall mean the executive director (“director”), a member of the Commission, or a member of the Access Appeals Commission, the Board of Examiners or the Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board; and “employee” shall mean all employees of the Department.

This Statement is adopted under the provisions of San Francisco Campaign & Governmental Conduct Code (“C&GC Code”) section 3.218. Engaging in the activities that are prohibited by this Statement may subject an officer or employee to discipline, up to and including possible termination of employment or removal from office, as well as to monetary fines and penalties. (C&GC Code § 3.242; Charter § 15.105.) Before an officer or employee is subjected to discipline or penalties for violation of this Statement, the officer or employee will have an opportunity to explain why the activity should not be deemed to be incompatible with his or her City duties. (C&GC Code § 3.218.) Nothing in this document shall modify or reduce any due process rights provided pursuant to the officer’s or employee’s collective bargaining agreement.

In addition to this Statement, officers and employees are subject to Department policies and State and local laws and rules governing the conduct of public officers and employees, including but not limited to:

- Political Reform Act, California Government Code § 87100 *et seq.*;
- California Government Code § 1090;
- San Francisco Charter;
- San Francisco Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code;
- San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance;
- Applicable Civil Service Rules; and
- ***Department of Building Inspection Code of Professional Conduct.***

Nothing in this Statement shall exempt any officer or employee from applicable provisions of law, or limit his or her liability for violations of law. Examples provided in this Statement are for illustration purposes only, and are not intended to limit application of this Statement. Nothing in this Statement shall interfere with the rights of employees under a collective bargaining agreement or Memorandum of Understanding applicable to that employee.

Nothing in this Statement shall be construed to prohibit or discourage any City officer or employee from bringing to the City’s and/or public’s attention matters of actual or perceived malfeasance or misappropriation in the conduct of City business, or from filing a complaint alleging that a City officer or employee has engaged in improper governmental activity by violating local campaign finance, lobbying, conflicts of interest or governmental ethics laws, regulations or rules; violating the California Penal Code by misusing City resources; creating

a specified and substantial danger to public health or safety by failing to perform duties required by the officer's or employee's City position; or abusing his or her City position to advance a private interest.

No amendment to any Statement of Incompatible Activities shall become operative until the City and County has satisfied the meet and confer requirements of State law and the collective bargaining agreement.

If an employee has questions about this Statement, the questions should be directed to the employee's supervisor or to the director. Similarly, questions about other applicable laws governing the conduct of public employees should be directed to the employee's supervisor or the director, although the supervisor or director may determine that the question must be addressed to the Ethics Commission or City Attorney. Employees may also contact their unions for advice or information about their rights and responsibilities under these and other laws.

If a City officer has questions about this Statement, the questions should be directed to the officer's appointing authority, the Ethics Commission or the City Attorney.

## **II. MISSION OF THE SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION, THE BUILDING INSPECTION COMMISSION, THE ACCESS APPEALS COMMISSION, THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS, AND THE UNREINFORCED MASONRY BUILDING APPEALS BOARD**

*The Department is generally responsible for the enforcement, administration and interpretation of the City's Housing, Building, Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing Codes. The Department inspects and regulates additions, alterations and repairs in buildings and structures covered by these Codes to ensure public safety and accessibility. The mission of the Department is to ensure fair, efficient and effective enforcement of the City's codes and disability access laws and regulations. The Building Inspection Commission oversees the Department and considers appeals of certain decisions made by the Department of Public Works, Water Department or Department of Building Inspection. (S.F. Charter § D3.750-4.)*

*The Board of Examiners is a group of experts created under Section 105.1 of the San Francisco Building Code. The purpose of the Board is to hear and determine the requests by the public as to whether new materials, new methods or types of construction comply with the standards of safety established by the San Francisco Construction Codes which include San Francisco Building Code, Plumbing Code, Electrical Code and Mechanical Code. The Board also has the power to determine reasonable interpretation of the provisions of the San Francisco Building Code, and to hear the appeals from the Director's condemnation order involving construction methods, assemblies or materials or where safety is involved.*

*The Access Appeals Commission serves the City and County of San Francisco and the general public by hearing written appeals brought by any person regarding actions taken by the Department of Building Inspection in the enforcement of the requirements for Access to Public Accommodations by Physically Handicapped Persons (Part 5.5, Sections 19955-59 of the Health and Safety Code of the State of California), as well as action taken by the Department in the enforcement of the disabled access and adaptability provisions of this code. San Francisco Building Code Section 105.3. Consisting of five-members, the AAC conducts hearings to approve or disapprove the Department's interpretations of applicable*

*disability access regulations and actions taken by the Department to enforce said regulations and abate violations. It establishes reasonable rules and regulations for its own procedures, chooses its officers, conducts public meetings, designates an official reporter, and makes decisions and recommendations by resolution.*

*The purpose of the Unreinforced Masonry Buildings Appeals Board is to hear applications for variance from or interpretations of code requirements for Unreinforced Masonry Buildings (UMB), recommend approval or disapproval of new materials, new methods and types of constructions for UMBs, hear appeals from the Director of Building Inspection's Abatement Orders for UMBs, review UMB retrofit alteration permits and cost estimate for demolition permits, and assist the Seismic Safety Retrofit Bond Program and Advisory Boards pursuant to the authority granted to the Board under Chapters 16B & 16C of the SFBC.*

### **III. RESTRICTIONS ON INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES**

This section prohibits outside activities, including self-employment, that are incompatible with the mission of the Department. Under subsection C, an officer or employee may seek an advance written determination whether a proposed outside activity is incompatible and therefore prohibited by this Statement. Outside activities other than those expressly identified here may be determined to be incompatible and therefore prohibited. For an advance written determination request from an employee, if the director delegates the decision-making to a designee and if the designee determines that the proposed activity is incompatible under this Statement, the employee may appeal that determination to the director. *Nothing in this Statement shall be construed to restrict an officer's or employee's ability to perform volunteer functions with non-profit charitable organizations as long as those volunteer functions do not conflict with official duties, require excessive time demands or are subject to the review of the Department, as defined in this section.*

*For the purposes of this section, family member is defined as the officer's or employee's spouse, registered domestic partner, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, sibling, the child of a sibling, aunt, uncle and the child of an aunt or uncle, the spouse or registered domestic partner of such individual, and the same family members of the officer's or employee's spouse or registered domestic partner. This shall include any such biological relationship; step-relationship formed as a result of marriage or domestic partnership; or relationship formed by adoption, legal guardianship, foster parenting or other operation of law.*

#### **A. RESTRICTIONS THAT APPLY TO ALL OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES**

##### **1. ACTIVITIES THAT CONFLICT WITH OFFICIAL DUTIES**

No officer or employee may engage in an outside activity (regardless of whether the activity is compensated) that conflicts with his or her City duties. An outside activity conflicts with City duties when the ability of the officer or employee to perform the duties of his or her City position is materially impaired. Outside activities that materially impair the ability of an officer or employee to perform his or her City duties include, but are not limited to, activities that disqualify the officer or employee from City assignments or responsibilities on a regular basis. Unless (a) otherwise noted in this section or (b) an advance written determination under subsection C concludes that such activities are not incompatible, the following activities are expressly prohibited by this section.

***a. No officer or employee may provide services in exchange for compensation or anything of value worth more than \$100 per occasion or more than \$500 in a calendar year from any individual or entity that has a pending application or matter under review before the DBI or has had an application or matter under review before the DBI in the preceding 12 month-period. In addition, no officer or employee may provide construction, permit or inspection-related services in exchange for any compensation or anything of value from any individual or entity that has a pending application or matter under review before the DBI or has had an application or matter under review before the DBI in the preceding 12-month period. An individual or entity includes a property owner, architect, designer, developer, engineer, contractor, permit expediter, and associations of such individuals or entities. Compensation or anything of value includes construction materials (new and salvage), a loan or below-market rental of construction tools or equipment, and free or below-market-rate services from an architect, designer, developer, engineer, contractor, permit expediter, real estate agent or other individual or entity that is regulated by the DBI. The prohibitions in this section III.A.1.a do not apply to an officer on the Access Appeals Commission, the Board of Examiners or the Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board.***

***Example. A DBI employee is a musician who often plays for compensation on weekends. An individual who has a permit pending at DBI wishes to hire her to play music at an event. The employee may accept the engagement as long as she is not paid more than \$100 at the event.***

***Example. A DBI employee is a puppeteer who entertains at birthday parties. An entity that does not have a permit pending at DBI and did not have a permit pending during the past 12 months wishes to hire him to entertain at a weekend event. The employee may accept the engagement.***

***Example. A DBI employee who is an engineer has been asked to provide engineering services to an entity that has a permit pending at DBI. Without an advance written determination pursuant to subsection C that such an activity is not incompatible, the employee may not provide such services.***

***b. No officer or employee may provide services or information to any individual or entity if the services or information is not available to other members of the public on the same terms (regardless of whether the services or information is provided in exchange for any material benefit).***

***c. Unless required by law or as a condition of employment at DBI, no officer or employee may use an active contractor's license, or a real estate agent or broker's license in the City and County of San Francisco. However, nothing in this Statement prohibits an officer or employee from participating in such activities concerning real property owned, controlled or occupied by the officer or employee, provided that such ownership or control is at least 50 percent, or real property owned and occupied by a family member of the officer or employee, provided that such ownership or control is at least 50 percent.***

**d. No officer or employee may utilize non-public information, obtained through the course of his or her public duties, to purchase or invest in real property located within the City and County of San Francisco.**

**e. No officer or employee, other than an officer on the Access Appeals Commission, the Board of Examiners or the Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board, may purchase property in San Francisco if there is a code enforcement action currently under review by the DBI on the property or if the property has had a code enforcement action within the past 12 months. For the purposes of this section, a code enforcement action is defined as an issuance of a Notice of Violation.**

**Example. An employee wishes to purchase a condominium in a building that has had a code enforcement action during the past twelve months. If an advance written determination under subsection C determines that such an activity is not incompatible, the employee may purchase the condominium.**

**f. No officer or employee may purchase property in San Francisco if that officer or employee has provided direct services for that property address within the past 12 months. For the purposes of this section, direct services include performing plan check services, field inspections, pre-application assistance, representation before the Board of Appeals, and clerical duties such as report preparation or code enforcement file processing. For the purposes of this section, a code enforcement action is defined as an issuance of a Notice of Violation.**

**Example. An employee wishes to purchase a condominium in a building on which she has provided direct services during the past twelve months. If an advance written determination under subsection C determines that such an activity is not incompatible, the employee may purchase the condominium.**

**g. All officers, other than an officer on the Access Appeals Commission, the Board of Examiners or the Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board, must disclose all permit applications and other matters pertaining to their official business before the DBI to the Ethics Commission and the Building Inspection Commission within fifteen calendar days of such application or action. All officers must also disclose all permit applications and other matters pertaining to their official business before the DBI to the Ethics Commission and the Building Inspection Commission submitted by secondary parties such as their clients, Limited Liability Companies, Partnerships, Limited Partnerships, Corporations or any other entity in which the officer has an ownership or controlling interest of at least 10 percent or from which the officer has received income exceeding \$500 in the past 12 months within fifteen calendar days of such application or action. The officer may not at any time perform any official work related to the application or matter. The Ethics Commission will list such matters on its website.**

**Officers who are officers on the Access Appeals Commission, the Board of Examiners and the Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board must disclose all permit applications and other matters pertaining to their official business before the DBI to the Ethics Commission within fifteen calendar days of the end of each quarter. For purposes of this section, the end of a quarter is the end of September, December, March and June. All officers who are officers on the Access Appeals Commission, the Board of Examiners and the Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board must also disclose all permit applications and other matters pertaining to their official business before the DBI to the Ethics Commission and**

***the Building Inspection Commission submitted by secondary parties such as their clients, Limited Liability Companies, Partnerships, Limited Partnerships, Corporations or any other entity in which the officer has an ownership or controlling interest of at least 10 percent or from which the officer has received income exceeding \$500 in the past 12 months within fifteen calendar days of the end of the quarter. The officer may not at any time perform any official work related to the application or matter. The Ethics Commission will list such matters on its website.***

***h. All employees must disclose all permit applications and other matters pertaining to their official business before the DBI to their supervisor(s) within fifteen calendar days of such application or action. All employees must also disclose all permit applications and other matters pertaining to their official business before the DBI to their supervisor(s) submitted by secondary parties such as Limited Liability Companies, Partnerships, Limited Partnerships, Corporations or any other entity in which the employee has an ownership or controlling interest of at least 10 percent or from which the employee has received income exceeding \$500 in the past 12 months within fifteen calendar days of such application or action. The employee may not at any time perform any official work related to the application or matter.***

***i. Officers or employees may not engage in any activity prohibited by Section III.A.1 through secondary parties such as Limited Liability Companies, Partnerships, Limited Partnerships, Corporations or any other entity or association.***

## **2. ACTIVITIES WITH EXCESSIVE TIME DEMANDS**

Neither the director nor any employee may engage in outside activity (regardless of whether the activity is compensated) that would cause the director or employee to be absent from his or her assignments on a regular basis, or otherwise require a time commitment that is demonstrated to interfere with the director's or employee's performance of his or her City duties.

*Example.* An employee who works at the Department's front desk answering questions from the public wants to take time off every Tuesday and Thursday from 2:00 to 5:00 to coach soccer. Because the employee's duties require the employee to be at the Department's front desk during regular business hours, and because this outside activity would require the employee to be absent from the office during regular business hours on a regular basis, the director or his/her designee may, pursuant to subsection C, determine that the employee may not engage in this activity.

## **3. ACTIVITIES THAT ARE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY THE DEPARTMENT**

Unless (a) otherwise noted in this section or (b) an advance written determination under subsection C concludes that such activities are not incompatible, no officer or employee may engage in an outside activity (regardless of whether the activity is compensated) that is subject to the control, inspection, review, audit or enforcement of the Department. In addition to any activity permitted pursuant to subsection C, nothing in this subsection prohibits the following activities: appearing before one's own department or commission on behalf of oneself; filing or otherwise pursuing claims against the City on one's own behalf; running for City elective office; or making a public records disclosure request pursuant to the Sunshine Ordinance or Public Records Act. Unless (a) otherwise noted in this section or (b) an advance written determination under subsection C concludes that such activities are not incompatible, the following activities are expressly prohibited by this section.

a. Assistance in Responding to City Bids, RFQs and RFPs. No officer or employee may knowingly provide selective assistance (i.e., assistance that is not generally available to all competitors) to individuals or entities, ***including non-profit entities for whom an officer or employee volunteers***, in a manner that confers a competitive advantage on a bidder or proposer who is competing for a City contract. Nothing in this Statement prohibits an officer or employee from providing general information about a bid for a City contract, a Department Request for Qualifications or Request for Proposals or corresponding application process that is available to any member of the public. Nothing in this Statement prohibits an officer or employee from speaking to or meeting with individual applicants regarding the individual's application, provided that such assistance is provided on an impartial basis to all applicants who request it.

***b. Construction, alteration or remodeling of structures. No officer or employee, other than an officer on the Access Appeals Commission, the Board of Examiners or the Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board, may participate, directly or indirectly, in the construction, alteration or remodeling of structures within the jurisdiction of the DBI or Commission. However, nothing in this Statement prohibits an officer or employee from participating in such activities concerning (i) real property owned, controlled or occupied by the officer or employee, provided that such ownership or control is at least 50 percent; or (ii) real property owned and occupied by a family member of the officer or employee, provided that such ownership or control is at least 50 percent; or (iii) real property owned or occupied by a family member for whom the officer or employee has legal custody, guardianship or conservatorship.***

***c. Design, layout or similar plan preparation. No officer or employee, other than an officer on the Access Appeals Commission, the Board of Examiners or the Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board, may participate, directly or indirectly, in the design, layout, drafting, checking, or similar plan preparation or review for structures to be constructed, altered or remodeled within the jurisdiction of the DBI or Commission. However, nothing in this Statement prohibits an officer or employee from participating in such activities concerning (i) real property owned, controlled or occupied by the officer or employee, provided that such ownership or control is at least 50 percent; or (ii) real property owned and occupied by a family member of the officer or employee, provided that such ownership or control is at least 50 percent; or (iii) real property owned or occupied by a family member for whom the officer or employee has legal custody, guardianship or conservatorship.***

***d. Officers or employees may not engage in any activity prohibited by Section III.A.3 through secondary parties such as Limited Liability Companies, Partnerships, Limited Partnerships, Corporations or any other entity or association.***

## **B. RESTRICTIONS THAT APPLY TO EMPLOYEES IN SPECIFIED POSITIONS**

In addition to the restrictions that apply to all officers and employees of the Department, unless (a) otherwise noted in this section or (b) an advance written determination under subsection C concludes that such activities are not incompatible, the following activities are expressly prohibited by this section for individual employees holding specific positions.

**[RESERVED.]**

## **C. ADVANCE WRITTEN DETERMINATION**

As set forth below, an employee of the Department, the director, or a member of the Building Inspection Commission, Access Appeals Commission, Board of Examiners or Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board may seek an advance written determination whether a proposed outside activity conflicts with the mission of the Department, imposes excessive time demands, is subject to review by the Department, or is otherwise incompatible and therefore prohibited by section III of this Statement. For the purposes of this section, an employee or other person seeking an advance written determination shall be called “the requestor”; the individual or entity that provides an advance written determination shall be called “the decision-maker.”

## **1. PURPOSE**

This subsection permits an officer or employee to seek an advance written determination regarding his or her obligations under subsections A or B of this section. A written determination by the decision-maker that an activity is not incompatible under subsection A or B provides the requestor immunity from any subsequent enforcement action for a violation of this Statement if the material facts are as presented in the requestor’s written submission. A written determination cannot exempt the requestor from any applicable law.

If an individual has not requested an advance written determination under subsection C as to whether an activity is incompatible with this Statement, and the individual engages in that activity, the individual will not be immune from any subsequent enforcement action brought pursuant to this Statement.

Similarly, if an individual has requested an advance written determination under subsection C as to whether an activity is incompatible with this Statement, and the individual engages in that activity, the individual will not be immune from any subsequent enforcement action brought pursuant to this Statement if:

- (a) the requestor is an *employee* who has not received a determination under subsection C from the decision-maker, and 20 working days have not yet elapsed since the request was made; or
- (b) the requestor is an *officer* who has not received a determination under subsection C from the decision-maker; or
- (c) the requestor has received a determination under subsection C that an activity is incompatible.

In addition to the advance written determination process set forth below, the San Francisco Charter also permits any person to seek a written opinion from the Ethics Commission with respect to that person's duties under provisions of the Charter or any City ordinance relating to conflicts of interest and governmental ethics. Any person who acts in good faith on an opinion issued by the Commission and concurred in by the City Attorney and District Attorney is immune from criminal or civil penalties for so acting, provided that the material facts are as stated in the opinion request. Nothing in this subsection precludes a person from requesting a written opinion from the Ethics Commission regarding that person's duties under this Statement.

## **2. THE DECISION-MAKER**

Decision-maker for request by an employee: An employee of the Department may seek an advance written determination from the director or his or her designee. The director or his or her designee will be deemed the decision-maker for the employee’s request.



Decision-maker for request by the director: The director may seek an advance written determination from his or her appointing authority. The appointing authority will be deemed the decision-maker for the director's request.

***Decision-maker for request by a member of the Access Appeals Board, Board of Examiners or Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board: A member of the Access Appeals Board, the Board of Examiners or the Unreinforced Masonry Building Appeals Board may seek an advance written determination from the Ethics Commission. The Ethics Commission will be deemed the decision-maker for the member's request.***

Decision-maker for request by a member of the Building Inspection Commission: A member of the Commission may seek an advance written determination from his or her own appointing authority or from the Ethics Commission. The appointing authority or Ethics Commission will be deemed the decision-maker for the member's request.

### **3. THE PROCESS**

The requestor must provide, in writing, a description of the proposed activity and an explanation of why the activity is not incompatible under this Statement. The written material must describe the proposed activity in sufficient detail for the decision-maker to make a fully informed determination whether it is incompatible under this Statement.

When making a determination under this subsection, the decision-maker may consider any relevant factors including, but not limited to, the impact on the requestor's ability to perform his or her job, the impact upon the Department as a whole, compliance with applicable laws and rules and the spirit and intent of this Statement. The decision-maker shall consider all relevant written materials submitted by the requestor. The decision-maker shall also consider whether the written material provided by the requestor is sufficiently specific and detailed to enable the decision-maker to make a fully informed determination. The decision-maker may request additional information from the requestor if the decision-maker deems such information necessary. For an advance written determination request from an employee, if the director delegates the decision-making to a designee and if the designee determines that the proposed activity is incompatible under this Statement, the employee may appeal that determination to the director.

The decision-maker shall respond to the request by providing a written determination to the requestor by mail, email, personal delivery, or other reliable means. For a request by an employee, the decision-maker shall provide the determination within a reasonable period of time depending on the circumstances and the complexity of the request, but not later than 20 working days from the date of the request. If the decision-maker does not provide a written determination to the employee within **10** working days from the date of the employee's request, the proposed activity will be determined not to violate this Statement.

The decision-maker may revoke the determination at any time based on changed facts or circumstances or other good cause by providing advance written notice to the requestor. The written notice shall specify the changed facts or circumstances or other good cause that warrants revocation of the advance written determination.

### **4. DETERMINATIONS ARE PUBLIC RECORDS**

To assure that these rules are enforced equally, requests for advance written determinations and written determinations, including approvals and denials, are public records to the extent permitted by law.

**IV. RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF CITY RESOURCES, CITY WORK-PRODUCT AND PRESTIGE**

**A. USE OF CITY RESOURCES**

No officer or employee may use City resources, including, without limitation, facilities, telephone, computer, copier, fax machine, e-mail, internet access, stationery and supplies, for any non-City purpose, including any political activity or personal purpose. No officer or employee may allow any other person to use City resources, including, without limitation, facilities, telephone, computer, copier, fax machine, e-mail, internet access, stationery and supplies, for any non-City purpose, including any political activity or personal purpose. Notwithstanding these general prohibitions, any incidental and minimal use of City resources does not constitute a violation of this section. Nothing in this subsection shall be interpreted or applied to interfere with, restrict or supersede any rights or entitlements of employees, recognized employee organizations, or their members under state law or regulation or pursuant to provisions of a collective bargaining agreement to use City facilities, equipment or resources, as defined herein.

*Example.* An officer or employee may use the telephone to make occasional calls to arrange medical appointments or speak with a child care provider, because this is an incidental and minimal use of City resources for a personal purpose.

*Example.* An officer or employee may not use City computers to plan, design or schedule personal projects.

Nothing in this Statement shall exempt any officer or employee from complying with more restrictive policies of the Department regarding use of City resources, including, without limitation, the Department's e-mail policy.

**B. USE OF CITY WORK-PRODUCT**

No officer or employee may, in exchange for anything of value and without appropriate authorization, sell, publish or otherwise use any non-public materials that were prepared on City time or while using City facilities, property (including without limitation, intellectual property), equipment and/or materials. For the purpose of this prohibition, appropriate authorization includes authorization granted by law, including the Sunshine Ordinance, California Public Records Act, the Ralph M. Brown Act as well as whistleblower and improper government activities provisions, or by a supervisor of the officer or employee, including but not limited to the officer's or employee's appointing authority. Nothing in this subsection shall be interpreted or applied to interfere with, restrict or supersede any rights or entitlements of employees, recognized employee organizations, or their members under state law or regulation or pursuant to provisions of a collective bargaining agreement to use public materials for collective bargaining agreement negotiations.

**C. USE OF PRESTIGE OF THE OFFICE**

No officer or employee may use his or her City title or designation in any communication for any private gain or advantage. The following activities are expressly prohibited by this section.

**1. USING CITY BUSINESS CARDS**

No officer or employee may use his or her City business cards for any purpose that may lead the recipient of the card to think that the officer or employee is acting in an official capacity when the officer or employee is not.

*Example of inappropriate use.* An employee's friend is having a dispute with his new neighbor who is constructing a fence that the friend believes encroaches on his property. The friend invites the employee over to view the disputed fence. When the neighbor introduces herself, the employee should not hand the neighbor her business card while suggesting that she could help resolve the dispute. Use of a City business card under these circumstances might lead a member of the public to believe that the employee was acting in an official capacity.

*Example of acceptable use.* An employee is at a party and runs into an old friend who has just moved to town. The friend suggests meeting for dinner and asks how to get in touch with the employee to set up a meeting time. The employee hands the friend the employee's business card and says that he can be reached at the number on the card. Use of a City business card under these circumstances would not lead a member of the public to believe that the employee was acting in an official capacity. Nor would use of the telephone to set up a meeting time constitute a misuse of resources under subsection A, above.

## **2. USING CITY LETTERHEAD, CITY TITLE, OR E-MAIL**

No officer or employee may use City letterhead, City title, City e-mail, or any other City resource, for any communication that may lead the recipient of the communication to think that the officer or employee is acting in an official capacity when the officer or employee is not. (Use of e-mail or letterhead in violation of this section could also violate subsection A of this section, which prohibits use of these resources for any non-City purpose.)

*Example.* An officer or employee is contesting a parking ticket. The officer or employee should not send a letter on City letterhead to the office that issued the ticket contesting the legal basis for the ticket.

## **3. HOLDING ONESELF OUT, WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION, AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT**

No officer or employee may hold himself or herself out as a representative of the Department, or as an agent acting on behalf of the Department, unless authorized to do so.

*Example.* An employee who lives in San Francisco wants to attend a public meeting of a Commission that is considering a land use matter that will affect the employee's neighborhood. The employee may attend the meeting and speak during public comment, but should make clear that he is speaking in his private capacity and not as a representative of the Department.

## **V. PROHIBITION ON GIFTS FOR ASSISTANCE WITH CITY SERVICES**

State and local law place monetary limits on the value of gifts an officer or employee may accept in a calendar year. (Political Reform Act, Gov't Code § 89503, C&GC Code §§ 3.1-101 and 3.216.) This section imposes additional limits by prohibiting an officer or employee

from accepting any gift that is given in exchange for doing the officer's or employee's City job.

No officer or employee may receive or accept gifts from anyone other than the City for the performance of a specific service or act the officer or employee would be expected to render or perform in the regular course of his or her City duties; or for advice about the processes of the City directly related to the officer's or employee's duties and responsibilities, or the processes of the entity they serve.

*Example.* A member of the public who regularly works with and receives assistance from the Department owns season tickets to the Giants and sends a pair of tickets to an employee of the Department in appreciation for the employee's work. Because the gift is given for the performance of a service the employee is expected to perform in the regular course of City duties, the employee is not permitted to accept the tickets.

*Example.* A member of the public requests assistance in resolving an issue or complaint that is related to the City and County of San Francisco, but that does not directly involve the Department. The employee directs the member of the public to the appropriate department and officer to resolve the matter. The member of the public offers the employee a gift in appreciation for this assistance. The employee may not accept the gift, or anything of value from anyone other than the City, for providing this kind of assistance with City services.

As used in this Statement, the term gift has the same meaning as under the Political Reform Act, including the Act's exceptions to the gift limit. (See Gov't Code §§ 82028, 89503; 2 Cal. Code Regs. §§ 18940-18950.4.) For example, under the Act, a gift that, within 30 days of receipt, is returned, or donated by the officer or employee to a 501(c)(3) organization or federal, state or local government without the officer or employee taking a tax deduction for the donation, will not be deemed to have been accepted. In addition to the exceptions contained in the Act, nothing in this Statement shall preclude an employee's receipt of a bona fide award, or free admission to a testimonial dinner or similar event, to recognize exceptional service by that employee, and which is not provided in return for the rendering of service in a particular matter. Such awards are subject to the limitation on gifts imposed by the Political Reform Act and local law.

In addition, the following gifts are de minimis and therefore exempt from the restrictions on gifts imposed by section V of this Statement:

- i. Gifts, other than cash, with an aggregate value of \$25 or less per occasion; and
- ii. Gifts such as food and drink, without regard to value, to be shared in the office among officers or employees.

*Example.* A member of the public who regularly works with and receives assistance from the Department sends a \$15 basket of fruit to an employee as a holiday gift. Although the fruit may in fact be offered in exchange for performing services that the employee is expected to perform in the regular course of City duties, the employee may accept the fruit because the value is de minimis. (Because the reporting requirement is cumulative, an employee may be required to report even de minimis gifts on his or her Statement of Economic Interests if, over the course of a year, the gifts equal or exceed \$50.)

*Example.* A member of the public who regularly works with and receives assistance from the Department sends a \$150 basket of fruit to the Department as a holiday gift. Although the fruit may in fact be offered in exchange for performing services that the Department is expected to perform in the regular course of City duties, the Department may accept the fruit basket because it is a gift to the office to be shared among officers and employees.

## **VI. AMENDMENT OF STATEMENT**

Once a Statement of Incompatible Activities is approved by the Ethics Commission, the Department may, subject to the approval of the Ethics Commission, amend the Statement. (C&GC Code § 3.218(b).) In addition, the Ethics Commission may at any time amend the Statement on its own initiative. No Statement of Incompatible Activities or any amendment thereto shall become operative until the City and County of San Francisco has satisfied the meet and confer requirements of State law and the collective bargaining agreement.

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