

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND OFFERS OF REWARD

It is of vital importance that Canadian public servants not only have, but be seen to have, no connections or obligations that might influence the objective performance of their duty. Accordingly, no employee may accept money, gifts, goods, presentations, or any other form of reward for services provided or to be provided by virtue of his official position. This restriction does not, however, preclude the acceptance of small personal gifts which may be a normal expression of courtesy or hospitality and are not such as to bring suspicion upon the employee's objectivity. It is recognized that while abroad, local customs may dictate the occasional exchange of gifts of more than nominal value. Where there is no opportunity to dissuade the donors or return such gifts, the Office of the Chief of Protocol at Headquarters should be consulted regarding their disposition.

Some employees or their dependants may be offered the opportunity of free or shared transportation and/or expenses as part of inaugural flights, promotions, or even for official functions if the employee is to be the guest of some other agency. Since the event for which the employee is being offered free or shared transportation or expenses is often in the line of official or representational duties, it may be difficult to distinguish a program-related requirement from what might otherwise be viewed as a personal gift or offer of reward. Treasury Board has taken the view that the acceptance of free or shared transportation can offend against the accepted standards of behaviour in the public service, and in certain circumstances might even constitute a criminal offence (cf. c.110 of the Criminal Code). Heads of Post, before accepting or authorizing acceptance of such invitations which are not local and clearly program-related, should refer the matter to Headquarters for consideration and advice. For the purpose of this paragraph, free or shared transportation includes the pre-arranged offer to individual employees and their dependants of free upgrading of travel class or the accordance of special privileges as a consequence of an employee's position or responsibilities.