

15. Is it a violation if an employee is asked to speak at an event sponsored by a business interested in doing business with the district and receives an honorarium, registration fees, or door prizes?

If the employee is pay grade 6 and above or can influence purchasing decisions, any compensation must be returned. If the compensation is worth more than \$50, it should not be accepted or should be returned.

The payment of registration fees or expenses is the type of benefit that violates the policy if it amounts to more than \$50 in a single year.

16. What kind of social relationships would be considered inappropriate between an employee and a vendor?

The policy prohibits employee relationships that create the appearance of conflict in performing their duties, that cast doubt on the employee's ability to act with complete objectivity and loyalty on behalf of the district, and that are opposed to the interests of the district.

17. What if an employee accepts a gift from a vendor that was believed to be worth less than \$50 but later was discovered to be worth more?

The gift should be returned to the vendor.

18. Is it a violation of policy for an administrator to solicit a small gift for CILT members when the members return to open school?

Solicitation of support for district or school-related activities does not violate the conflict of interest policy. This would be considered a gift that was made to the district, and the administrators should consult and follow the policies and procedures in place for receiving gifts.

For answers to more questions, visit <http://inet.dallasisd.org>.



Doing the right

thing

Ethics is a set of standards or rules used to guide an individual's actions. Ethics have to do with what is right and what is wrong.

An ethical decision, which is based on personal and shared values, can affect an individual or a whole organization.

Organizational ethics is a set of standards based on an organization's values that individuals use to guide their actions in doing the right thing.



Message from the Superintendent




**Dallas
Independent
School
District**

Every day in their jobs and personal lives, people are faced with doing the right thing, making decisions that are in the best interests of others and the organization.

In the DISD, making an unethical decision can affect the district's financial health and the image of the entire district. It is crucial that all DISD employees conduct themselves as good stewards of the taxpayers' resources.

The district is entrusted with guiding the children of Dallas through their formative years and preparing them to face the future as responsible and productive citizens. The actions of employees as they conduct themselves daily present opportunities to model ethical behavior to students. Each and every employee represents the district and should be the ideal of good citizenship and responsibility that we want the youth of Dallas to have.


Michael Hinojosa, Ed.D.
General Superintendent

could cast doubt on their ability to act with total objectivity with regard to the district's interests.

11. Can I buy stock in a company that does business with the district?

Purchasing stock for market value is not prohibited by the policy as long as there are no advantages or benefits received as a result of employment with the DISD.

12. Can a vendor offer employment to an employee's relative?

It depends on the circumstances and involvement of the district employee in securing and maintaining employment for the relative. While not specifically prohibited by the policy, the situation could represent a violation if it causes a conflict of interest, casting doubt on an employee's ability to act with total objectivity with regard to the district's interests.

13. Are employees prohibited from working in other school districts or with colleges and universities?

The employment prohibitions do not apply to public entities or accredited institutions of higher education.

14. Is it a violation to attend social functions sponsored by organizations that are interested in doing business with the district?

There is no violation of policy if the event is open to the public or open to a broad category of individuals based on their attendance at a conference or based on another common factor that is unrelated to employment with the DISD.

Employees may attend a social function sponsored by an organization interested in doing business with the district or its representatives when the function is specifically for DISD employees or for a specific group of employees. However, employees attending those receptions must be aware that the \$50 limit per year per vendor applies in this instance and includes food, drinks, or other benefits.

similar timelines reference three days; however, continuing the relationship may be a continuous violation of policy.

The policy requires that those who believe they are in a situation that causes a conflict of interest notify their supervisor and the superintendent. There are no specific disclosure requirements associated with choosing to resign from employment in order to comply with this policy.

6. What are the consequences of violating the policy?

Disciplinary action will be taken for violations of policy up to and including termination.

7. Can you accept gifts from a relative's company even if the company does work for the district?

The policy against receiving things of value or benefit does not apply to those things received because of kinship.

8. Does the term "as an employee or otherwise" mean that employees cannot work as consultants or independent contractors?

District employees who are pay grade 6 and above and those who influence buying decisions are prohibited from working as employees, consultants, private contractors, holding any paid position, or accepting any form of compensation from companies interested in doing business with the district.

9. What constitutes a year for the purposes of determining whether the aggregate value of gifts exceeds \$50?

The year is from Sept. 1 through Aug. 31.

10. Can a district employee volunteer for the board of directors or the management committee of community organizations even if they have a contract with the district?

There are no prohibitions against working without compensation or donating time to a company or organization. However, employees should avoid any situations that

Policy Provisions DBD (Local) and DBD (Legal)

- ◆ All employees shall avoid any circumstances that could cast doubt on their abilities to act with total objectivity with regard to the district's interests. They should avoid any conflict between their personal interests and the interests of the district in dealing with suppliers, customers, and all other organizations or individuals doing or seeking to do business with the district.
- ◆ Employees are prohibited from accepting anything of value or benefit beyond an aggregate of less than \$50 in any one school year, including but not limited to entertainment, travel, food, and lodging from any person or entity the employee knows is interested in or likely to become interested in any contract, purchase, payment, claim, or transaction with the district.
- ◆ A public servant commits a Class A misdemeanor offense if the public servant solicits, accepts, or agrees to accept an honorarium in consideration for services that the public servant would not have been requested to provide but for the public servant's official position or duties.
- ◆ Full-time district employees in pay grade 6 and above are prohibited during their employment from working as an employee or otherwise for any person or entity that the employee knows is interested in or likely to become interested in any contract, purchase, payment, claim, or transaction with the district. This prohibition does not apply to public entities or institutions of higher education.

To see the complete DBD (Legal) and DBD (Local) policies, visit <http://inet.dallasisd.org>.

Principles of Public Service

- Trustworthiness
- Caring
- Fairness
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Citizenship

Employee Support

Training will be available to all employees through:

- Meetings
- PowerPoint presentation
- Videotape
- Brochure
- Intranet site

Each division in the district will have a person designated to receive questions from employees about ethical issues and to respond to the questions. The persons appointed to respond to ethical questions and issues will be employees in a supervisory capacity who have performed their duties ethically and have an overall good professional performance. The highest-ranking administrators in each division will be ultimately responsible for providing direction to employees on issues that involve ethical decision making.

Questions that can affect employees districtwide will be referred to an Ethics Review Committee. The committee will ensure there is consistency in the direction employees receive to make ethical decisions and a consensus in the approach divisions have to the same ethical issues. Decisions made by the committee will be publicized through *DISD E-News*, *DISD Notices*, the district's intranet site, *Communicator*, and *Inside Track*.

Employees can make anonymous reports of unethical situations and activities by calling the Fraud Hotline: (972) 925-3175.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is it a violation to work for a vendor during the summer break?

The policy prohibits employment with a vendor for employees who are pay grade 6 and above or for any employee who is involved in or has influence on the purchasing or procurement process. The prohibitions apply at all times while employed by the DISD, including breaks, vacations, or leaves of absences.

2. How can employees find out their pay grade?

Employees can find their pay grade on the Statement of Earnings form and the Notification of Assignment and Salary letter, both of which are available on the DISD Employee Self-Service section of Oracle.

3. Does the ethics policy define what a vendor is?

Vendors are generally those individuals, companies, or organizations who have received contracts, purchases, payments, claims, or transactions from the district, but the policy is not limited to vendors. It applies to any entity "interested in or likely to become interested in doing business with the district."

4. Does an employee violate the policy if he or she is not aware that the business is interested in or likely to become interested in doing business with the district? How would an employee know if a company is considering doing business with the district?

The policy applies to entities that an employee knows are interested in or may become interested in doing business with the district.

This applies to a business that has expressed an interest in offering services used by the district and whose past or current business activities, advertisements, solicitations, or other communications indicate they would do business with the district if the opportunity existed.

The extent of an employee's knowledge will vary depending on the circumstances. Employees receiving gifts from businesses or working for businesses shall be held responsible for violations of policy if the circumstances are such that they either knew or should have known that the entity was interested in or likely to become interested in doing business with the district.

5. What is the time limit for disassociation from a conflict of interest situation, and must a supervisor be informed?

Employees should disassociate as soon as they become aware a conflict of interest exists. Other policies with