

PROCEDURE LIT.1.04.01
BENEFITS, GIFTS AND HONORARIA

SCOPE: Faculty and Staff

In accordance with policy LIT.1.04 *Ethics*, Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT) employees shall not use their positions to secure special privileges for themselves, their relatives, or friends.

1. **Definition.** "Benefit" is anything reasonably regarded as pecuniary gain or pecuniary advantage, including benefit to any other person in whose welfare an employee has a direct and substantial interest.
2. **Bribery.** An employee shall not solicit, offer, or accept any benefit in exchange for his or her decision, opinion, recommendation, vote, or other exercise of official power or discretion.
3. **Prohibited Benefits.** An employee shall not solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit from any person the employee knows is interested in or is likely to become interested in any contract, purchase, payment, claim, or transaction involving the employee's discretion. This prohibition does not apply to (1) gifts or other benefits conferred on account of kinship or a personal, professional, or business relationship independent of an employee's status as an employee; (2) a fee prescribed by law to be received by an employee or any other benefit to which he or she is lawfully entitled or for which he or she gives legitimate consideration in a capacity other than as an employee of LIT; (3) a gift, award, or memento that is received from a lobbyist who is required to make reports under Government Code, Chapter 305 and, (4) items having a value of less than \$50, not including cash or negotiable instruments. An employee who receives an unsolicited benefit that he or she is prohibited from accepting by law may donate the benefit to a governmental entity that has the authority to accept the gift or may donate the benefit to a recognized tax-exempt charitable organization formed for educational, religious, or scientific purposes.
4. **Food, Lodging, Transportation, and Entertainment Received as a Guest.** An employee may accept food, lodging, transportation, or entertainment from persons or entities he or she knows or reasonably should know are interested in or likely to become interested in a contract, purchase, payment, claim, decision, or transaction involving the exercise of the Board's discretion only if the employee is a "guest" as defined by Texas law. An employee is a "guest" if the person or a representative of the entity providing the food, lodging, transportation, or entertainment is present at the time the food, lodging, transportation, or entertainment is received or enjoyed by the employee. The President is required to report any such benefits valued at over \$250 on his or her annual disclosure statement filed with the Texas Ethics Commission.
5. **Gifts or Benefits from Friends, Relatives, and Associates.** Employees may accept gifts or benefits from personal friends, relatives, or business associates with whom they have a relationship independent of their official status, so long as the benefit is not offered in exchange for official action or decision.
6. **Gifts or Benefits from Outside Donors.** A gift or benefit from an outside donor designated to supplement the salary of a specific LIT employee shall be subject to approval by the President, before being presented to the Board of Regents for approval, as required by Chapter III, Paragraph 1.33. Gifts for the President shall be subject to the Chancellor's

approval prior to presentation to the full Board. Such gifts shall be made to LIT directly and earmarked for distribution to the employee through the payroll process. Salary supplements shall be reported to the State Auditor's Office and the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as required by law. The employee receiving the salary supplementation shall comply with the conflict of interest provisions for employees outlined in Subparagraph 4.2 of the System's Code of Ethics.

7. **Awards.** Employees may accept plaques and similar recognition awards.
8. **Honoraria.** Employees may not solicit, accept, or agree to accept an honorarium in consideration for services they would not have been asked to provide but for their official position or duties. This prohibition includes a request for or acceptance of a payment made to a third party if made in exchange for such services. However, they may accept the direct provision of or reimbursement for expenses for transportation and lodging incurred in connection with a speaking engagement at a conference or similar event, provided the employee's participation is more than merely perfunctory. Meals provided as a part of the event or reimbursement for actual expenses for meals may also be accepted.

Related Policies: LIT.1.04

Relevant Forms/Documents:

Relevant TSUS Policies/Forms/Documents: TSUS Rules and Regulations, Chapter VIII.
Ethics Policy for Regents and Employees of the Texas State University System

Relevant Statutes:

Relevant SACSOC Standards:

Document History:

Adopted:

Reviewed:

Revised: April 2025