

INQ 01-18

Meyers, Robert (COE)

From: Meyers, Robert (COE)
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2001 10:28 AM
To: Williams, Robert (PWD)
Subject: RE: Ethics in County Government Questions

Mr. Williams,

Let me do my best to address the ten questions listed below.

1. If you are meeting with a vendor and it's not a public meeting and the Cone of Silence is in effect, you have a problem. The Cone of Silence prohibits you from meeting with a vendor unless it is a duly-noticed public meeting. If the meeting is exempt from the Cone of Silence, you have no legal duty to inform competitors, unless there is some in the department's policies on bids and solicitations that would require such notification.
2. I don't see any reason why you would have to advise the vendor's competitors. The question I would ask is who is paying for you to attend the seminar, are these seminars out-of-town, etc.
3. I'm not sure I understand what you mean by accepting products. As a general rule, you should not accept gifts from vendors. If you do and the gift exceeds \$25, you must report it.
4. It isn't the amount of the gift that is the issue -- it's whether a connection can be made between the gift and an official action to take that specifically favors the vendor who gave you the gift. Technically, it would not be a violation of the gift rule to accept a gift under \$1.
5. I can't answer this question. Please call Karon Coleman in the County Attorney's Office.
6. Assuming you have the time to assist the municipalities and you have the expertise to do so, it seems to me this is part of your responsibilities as a public servant.
7. As long as no pressure is placed on employees to purchase any items, tickets or good and you don't devote too much time to solicitations of employees at work, it's probably okay.
- 8 and 9. You should check with Risk Management.
10. I'm not a big fan of employees giving gifts to one another because of the reasons you stated, however, it doesn't violation the gift subsection of the ordinance.

I hope this helps. If you have any follow-up, I'd be happy to provide you with additional information.

Robert Meyers

-----Original Message-----

From: Williams, Robert (PWD)
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2001 7:51 AM
To: Prkic, Christina (COE)
Cc: Meyers, Robert (COE); Urrechaga, Joaquin (PWD)
Subject: RE: Ethics in County Government Questions

I enjoyed reading your article in last week's County newspaper. It reminded me of two matters which I need to have addressed. Perhaps you can help me, or direct me to who can do so. I desperately need an answer to the first one sometime today.

1. My profession is having its national convention on Miami Beach this week. Tomorrow evening, a banquet for all representatives from Florida is being held at the Fontainebleau Hotel. Given my Division's shortage of budgeted funds for attending such events, I'll be unable to attend. An engineering consultant, with whom I do much business on behalf of the County, has purchased a whole table for this banquet and wants me to attend as their guest and sit at their