



ETHICS COMMISSIONERS

Kerry E. Rosenthal, Chairperson
Charles A. Hall, Vice Chairperson
Elizabeth M. Iglesias
Knovack G. Jones
Robert H. Newman

ROBERT A. MEYERS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CHRISTOPHER R. MAZZELLA
INSPECTOR GENERAL

ARDYTH WALKER
STAFF GENERAL COUNSEL

December 20, 1999

Andy Young
Division Director
Office of Youth and Family Development
11025 S.W. 84th Street
Miami, Florida 33173

RE: REQUEST FOR ADVISORY OPINION 99-57

Dear Mr. Young:

The Commission on Ethics and Public Trust considered your request for an advisory opinion at its meeting on December 15, 1999 and rendered its opinion based on the facts stated in your letter.

You requested an opinion regarding contributions to a unit of his department by a county vendor.

In your letter, you advised the Commission that the Life Education Unit of the Department of Human Services will hold a graduation for several parents on December 16, 1999. The landlord for the building, a county vendor, has offered to pay for the reception for the parents at a cost of five hundred dollars (\$500).

The Commission found that the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance does not prohibit the department from accepting gifts from a vendor for use in conducting official county business. Section 2-11.1(e)(2)(e) exempts from the definition of gifts in the ordinance, items received by a department in the performance of their official duties for use solely by the County

in conducting its official business.
Therefore, the department may accept the donation of five hundred dollars from the landlord to pay for the graduation party.

Therefore, the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics ordinance permits the Life Education Unit of the Department of Human Services to accept five hundred dollars from a county vendor to pay for the graduation party because it is not a gift as defined by the ordinance.

This opinion construes the Miami-Dade Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics ordinance only and is not applicable to any conflict under state law. Please contact the State of Florida Commission on Ethics if you have any questions regarding possible conflicts under state law.

If you have any questions regarding the opinion, please call the undersigned at (305) 579-2954 or Ardyth Walker, Staff General Counsel at (305) 579-2653.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert Meyers", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

ROBERT MEYERS
Executive Director