

Frigo, Victoria (COE)

From: Frigo, Victoria (COE)
Sent: Thursday, August 01, 2013 3:16 PM
To: Heisler Jr., James (MDT)
Cc: Murawski, Michael P. (COE); Ramos, Miriam S. (COE); Centorino, Joseph (COE); Diaz-Greco, Gilma M. (COE)
Subject: Travel expenses from County Contractors (INQ 13-190)
Attachments: port_promotion_7-13.pdf; RQO_04-165_Gibboney.pdf

Mr. Heisler,

Mike Murawski has asked me to respond to your questions.

Regarding the Bimini SuperFast and Norwegian Cruise Lines discounts, County employees cannot accept travel discounts from County contractors such as Bimini SuperFast and Norwegian Cruise Lines unless the Board of County Commissioners waives the prohibition by a majority vote in a public meeting. *See* Sec. 2-11.1 (w) of the County Code and the attached memo from the Ethics Commission Executive Director.

You are correct that you may use frequent flyer miles acquired through County travel, but these miles should be disclosed as a gift in their value exceeds \$100 in any one quarter. *See* RQO 04-165, attached.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

VICTORIA FRIGO, SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEY

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From: Heisler Jr., James (MDT)
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2013 10:03 AM
To: Murawski, Michael P. (COE)
Subject: RE: ethics questions

Good morning Michael-

Bimini SuperFast: On Sunday, July 7, 2013, I visited PortMiami after church to tour the *Bimini SuperFast* after being told being told, in a group setting, by [a non-Miami-Dade County employee] church friend, that there were ship tours/vouchers being offer to all who visited. Upon arrival, all adults present were asked to provide a government issued photo ID (I provided my Florida Class B CDL) and were given a card, similar to a credit card. This card is to be used every time a reservation is made, and offers 50% off the card holder's first voyage. Full prices apply to all subsequent

sailings. I did not receive anything that was not made available to anyone else who visited the ship that day, and what I received was most definitely not related to my status as a Miami-Dade County employee.

Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) Family & Friends: I was employed by NCL from May 2000-March 2003, during which time, before I ever thought of leaving the company and going to work for the county, I met a friend who is still employed there, currently serving as an remote reservation agent in New Port Richey, Florida. We were both employed in the reservations area, and neither of us had anything to do with itineraries, deployments, or negotiations with any entity controlling any port. Several years ago, this friend added me to her Family & Friends list, and she has since added more of my friends & some of my family members. Having Family & Friends status means that there are discounts offered on [only] the cruise fare on random sailings, usually close to the sail date, and only on vessels with a lot of open staterooms...I've always thought of Family & Friends as a "fire sale" to fill open staterooms, at any cost. There are no discounts in the gift shop, bars, restaurants, or on shore excursions offered due to Family & Friends status. All gratuities, government taxes/fees, and other charges that must be paid all other passengers must also be paid by guests having Family & Friends status. I have not received anything that is not available to anyone else who happens to have a friend working for any cruise line, and what I received was most definitely not related to my status as a Miami-Dade County employee.

Frequent Flier miles used to fly out of MIA: I understand that there is no problem with using frequent flier miles to fly out of/into MIA because the logic here is that one *earns* frequent flier miles.

I anxiously await your reply. Thanks for your assistance.

J.A. "Jim" Heisler, Jr., Transit Safety Officer
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"Delivering Excellence Every Day"

From: Murawski, Michael P. (COE)
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2013 3:23 PM
To: Heisler Jr., James (MDT)
Subject: ethics questions

Hi Jim:

My preliminary inquiry so far doesn't look good. According to my Deputy General Counsel, you would be prohibited from using the 50% discount card and you could not travel under the Norwegian Cruise Lines Friends and Family plan.

I think it would be helpful for you to outline your inquiry with as much detail as possible in writing. You can e-mail it straight to my attention.

Thanks

Michael P. Murawski
Advocate
Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust
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