



State of Ohio
Office of the Governor
Executive Order 2007 – 01S

Establishing New Ethics Requirements

1. **Limits on Gifts.** The job of the officials and employees of the State of Ohio is to serve the people of Ohio. When those who want contracts or grants or other benefits from the State give gifts or meals or tickets or trips to state officials or employees, the people of Ohio have every right to be suspicious that official government decisions aren't being made based on the merits. Accordingly:
 - a. The only gifts my wife and I, and the Lieutenant Governor and his wife will accept during my time as Governor of Ohio are those given by:
 - i. close family members, or
 - ii. personal friends who are not lobbyists, who have no contracts with the State, and who do not receive grants from the State, or
 - iii. individuals or groups who, on occasion, present one of us an inexpensive, token gift such as a t-shirt, cap, mug or lapel pin as an expression of kindness or friendship, or an inexpensive meal or refreshment worth \$20 or less, or
 - iv. a government official from another state or country as a gesture of friendship to one of us and the people of Ohio, in which case we would accept the gift for the State of Ohio.
 - b. We will not accept any of the gifts listed above unless Ohio's ethics laws permit us to, and any gifts we do accept will be fully reported in the way the law requires.

- c. Members of my Staff, my Cabinet, the State employees in those Cabinet agencies and those employed at or appointed to State of Ohio boards and commissions are directed to follow the same rules about accepting gifts that I will be following. Close family members include parents, children, siblings, spouses and domestic partners. Failure to comply with this Executive Order will result in appropriate discipline.

2. **Ethics Training and Compliance.** Sometimes people don't follow the rules because they don't understand them and sometimes people don't follow the rules because they're trying to get away with something. We need to make it easier for state officials and employees who are trying to follow the rules to do so and we need to work harder to catch those breaking the rules. Accordingly:

- a. Each member of my Cabinet is directed to designate a senior staff person to serve as the Chief Ethics Officer for the agency. The Chief Ethics Officer is responsible for helping those trying to follow the rules do so by making sure that employees can easily get answers to questions about what is permissible and what is not. The Chief Ethics Officer is also responsible for making sure that appropriate Ethics Training is provided to help prevent wrongdoing from occurring.
- b. My Chief Legal Counsel, in consultation with the Ohio Ethics Commission and the Chief Ethics Officers at the various agencies, will, over the next 60 days, develop an Ethics Education program to provide appropriate Ethics Training to officials and employees of the State and to the employees of and appointees to various State of Ohio boards and commissions. In addition, he will assure that an adequate mechanism exists for anonymous reporting of wrongdoing or apparent wrongdoing and that the Ethics Education program include training on how to access that anonymous reporting system.
- c. All State officials and employees are directed to report any wrongdoing or apparent wrongdoing by a State official or employee to the Ethics Commission or the Inspector General or through the anonymous reporting system. They are also directed to fully cooperate with any investigation of potential wrongdoing and to seek advice from a Chief Ethics Officer or the Ethics Commission when unsure about the propriety of a contemplated action. Finally, all State officials and employees are strongly urged to make suggestions to their Chief Ethics Officers about how to increase official and employee compliance with Ohio's ethics and conflict of interest laws,

this policy and my expectation that State officials and employees serve the people of Ohio.

- d. No person serving on a board or commission may try to influence any decision by that board or commission on behalf of a client while a member of the board or commission or within two years of leaving that board or commission.
3. **Vendor and Grantee Ethics.** Those who have contracts with the State or who get grants from the State should also play a role in making sure that State officers and employees follow the law and this order. Accordingly:
 - a. My Chief Legal Counsel, in consultation with the Ohio Ethics Commission and the Chief Ethics Officers at the various agencies, will, over the next 60 days, develop a program which requires those doing business with the State of Ohio or receiving grant funds from the State of Ohio to certify, before they can receive any money from the State, that they know and understand Ohio's ethics and conflict of interest laws, are aware of this order, and that they will not do anything inconsistent with those laws or this order.
 - b. Whenever any Cabinet agency or State of Ohio board or commission awards any contract without a competitive bid for the products or services provided by that contract, the reason the contract was awarded without bids must be stated in writing by the agency, board or commission in a document that is available to the public.
 4. **Increasing Access to Government Decisions.** The people of Ohio have a right to witness what occurs at meetings of public bodies. The more accessible those meetings, or recordings of those meetings, are, the more Ohioans will be able to keep an eye on how their business is being handled by State officials and employees. Accordingly, all Cabinet directors are directed to find ways to increase access to public meetings held at their agencies, including finding ways to present them on the Internet live and recorded.
 5. **Improving this Order.** Any requests for clarification of this Executive Order should be conveyed to the Chief Ethics Officers who should discuss them, as needed, with my Chief Legal Counsel. Clarifications may be periodically posted on the State of Ohio website. This Executive Order will be periodically updated as good, new suggestions about increasing ethical compliance come to my attention.

6. I signed this Executive Order on January 8, 2007 in Columbus, Ohio and it will expire on my last day as Governor of Ohio unless rescinded before then.



Ted Strickland
Ted Strickland, Governor

Jennifer Brunner
Jennifer Brunner, Secretary of State