

East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority

Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

To define for all employees the Authority's policy for the receipt and provision of gifts, benefits and hospitality.

For the purpose of this policy, employees includes: Senior Managers, Board members, employees, contractors, consultants and any individuals or groups undertaking activity for or on behalf of the Authority.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Define the Authority's position in relation to the receipt of, and provision of, gifts, benefits and hospitality:
 - Minimise gift offers made to, and prohibit acceptance, of gifts to employees. This helps to protect and promote public confidence in the integrity of the Authority. Gift offers are discouraged and must not be accepted.
 - Ensure decisions relating to the provision of gifts, catering and alcohol are made on a case-by-case basis.
 - Ensure the Authority's Gifts Benefits and Hospitality procedure defines the position and processes all employees must comply with in regard to the gifts, benefits and hospitality.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees includes: Senior Managers, Board members, employees, contractors, consultants and any individuals or groups undertaking activity for or on behalf of the Authority.

This policy complies with the DELWP model policy for agencies and boards – Gifts, Benefits and hospitality.

KEY PRINCIPLES & ACCOUNTABILITIES

Impartiality:

Employees have a duty to place the public interest above their private interests when carrying out their official functions. They will not accept gifts, benefits or hospitality that could raise a reasonable perception of, or actual, bias or preferential treatment.

Accountability:

Employees are accountable for:

- declaring all offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality;
- declining offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality; and
- The responsible provision of gifts, benefits and hospitality.

Employees with direct reports are accountable for overseeing management of their direct reports' refusal of gifts, benefits and hospitality, modelling good practice and promoting awareness of gifts, benefits and hospitality policies and processes.

Integrity:

Employees strive to earn and sustain public trust through responding to offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality in a manner that is consistent with community expectations. Employees will refuse all offers of non-token gifts, benefits and hospitality.

Risk-based approach:

The Authority, through its policies, processes and Audit and Risk Board Sub-Committee, will ensure gifts, benefits and hospitality risks are appropriately assessed and managed. Employees with direct reports will ensure they are aware of the risks inherent in their team's work and functions and monitor the risks to which their direct reports are exposed.

Accountabilities

Under the Instructions supporting the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance 2016, the Victorian Public Sector Commission has set binding minimum accountabilities for the appropriate management of gifts, benefits and hospitality. These can be found in the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Procedure - Schedule A.

BACKGROUND

Employees can be subject to offers of Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality in the course of their normal duties. This policy ensures that Authority has a transparent and consistent policy and procedure framework that fulfils the requirements and accountabilities of DELWPs model policy for agencies and boards – Gifts, Benefits and hospitality.

REFERENCES, RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION

- Authority's Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality Procedure
- Authority's Gifts Register
- Authority's Conflict of Interest Policy
- Authority's Purchasing Policy
- Authority's Board Charter
- Authority's Administration & Finance Policy
- Authority's Travel and Associated Expenses Procedure
- Victorian Public Sector Standards Commission Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Framework (the framework)
- VPSC - Code of Conduct for Victorian public sector employees
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) Guide to Good Governance – board members
- VPSC- Directors' Code of Conduct and guidance notes
- VPSC Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Guide
- *Public Administration Act 2004.*

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Last Review Date	October 2019
Frequency of Review	Annual
Next Review Due Date	October 2020
Responsible Officer	CEO
Approved by	The Board