

Section 23: Supplemental provisions; standards of conduct

Section 23. (a) In addition to the other provisions of this chapter, and in supplement thereto, standards of conduct, as hereinafter set forth, are hereby established for all state, county, and municipal employees.

(b) No current officer or employee of a state, county or municipal agency shall knowingly, or with reason to know:

(1) accept other employment involving compensation of substantial value, the responsibilities of which are inherently incompatible with the responsibilities of his public office;

(2) (i) solicit or receive anything of substantial value for such officer or employee, which is not otherwise authorized by statute or regulation, for or because of the officer or employee's official position; or (ii) use or attempt to use such official position to secure for such officer, employee or others unwarranted privileges or exemptions which are of substantial value and which are not properly available to similarly situated individuals;

(3) act in a manner which would cause a reasonable person, having knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to conclude that any person can improperly influence or unduly enjoy his favor in the performance of his official duties, or that he is likely to act or fail to act as a result of kinship, rank, position or undue influence of any party or person. It shall be unreasonable to so conclude if such officer or employee has disclosed in writing to his appointing authority or, if no appointing authority exists, discloses in a manner which is public in nature, the facts which would otherwise lead to such a conclusion; or

(4) present a false or fraudulent claim to his employer for any payment or benefit of substantial value.

(c) No current or former officer or employee of a state, county or municipal agency shall knowingly, or with reason to know:

(1) accept employment or engage in any business or professional activity which will require him to disclose confidential information which he has gained by reason of his official position or authority;

(2) improperly disclose materials or data within the exemptions to the definition of public records as defined by section seven of chapter four, and were acquired by him in the course of his official duties nor use such information to further his personal interest.

(d) Any activity specifically exempted from any of the prohibitions in any other section of this chapter shall also be exempt from the provisions of this section. The state ethics commission, established by chapter two hundred and sixty-eight B, shall not enforce the provisions of this section with respect to any such exempted activity.

(e) Where a current employee is found to have violated the provisions of this section, appropriate administrative action as is warranted may also be taken by the appropriate constitutional officer, by the head of a state, county or municipal agency. Nothing in this section shall preclude any such constitutional officer or head of such agency from establishing and enforcing additional standards of conduct.

(f) The state ethics commission shall adopt regulations: (i) defining substantial value; provided, however, that substantial value shall not be less than \$50; (ii) establishing exclusions for ceremonial privileges and exemptions; (iii) establishing exclusions for privileges and exemptions given solely because of family or friendship; and (iv) establishing additional exclusions for other situations that do not present a genuine risk of a conflict or the appearance of a conflict of interest.