



## **Gifts and Favors**

The Code of Ethics for Government Service provides that a government employee should “never accept, for himself or his family, favors or benefits under circumstances which might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of his governmental duties.” (O.C.G.A. § 45-10-1).

Employees should consult the Department’s Code of Ethics policy for further direction concerning gifts and payment of expenses by third parties.

In addition, state law criminalizes as a misdemeanor gifts or other compensation to certain Department employees or their family members from any “schoolbook publishing house, corporation, individual, or agent or representative of either.”

The statute provides:

“No member or appointee of the State Board of Education or any other person having authority to select or aid in the selection of textbooks for the schools shall for himself or any member of his family receive any gift, compensation, or remuneration from any schoolbook publishing house, corporation, individual, or agent or representative of either; nor shall any such person, publishing house, or corporation offer, directly or indirectly, to any member of the state board or his family or appointees any gift, compensation, or remuneration. Should any such publishing house, corporation, or person offer to any such officers, their families, or appointees any compensation, remuneration, or gift, they shall report such offer to the grand juries of their respective counties. The judges of the superior courts in charging the grand jury from term to term shall give instructions concerning this Code section and article.” (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-10).

### Penalty

Any employee who violates Department policies concerning gifts or favors is subject to disciplinary action including termination of employment.