A Message to Clover Park Technical College Employees

Integrity and respect in our College’s actions both collectively and individually remain a priority at CPTC. Our commitment to these and other important values is what makes CPTC a positive place to work and a place where we feel pride in what we do.

As we adhere to the values and high standards that define us, we will find guidance in publications such as this brochure, which outlines Washington state laws and guidelines for ethical conduct.

As public servants, we are expected to adhere to the highest standards of ethical conduct and to avoid even the impression of impropriety or conflict of interest. If there is any doubt about whether an action or decision is appropriate, or if you have a question about using state resources, you should discuss it with the Budget and Compliance Officer and/or the Vice President for Finance and Administration. General questions and answers may also be found on the Washington state ethics website: ethics.wa.gov.

Thank you for the good work you do and for making Clover Park Technical College an excellent place to work and learn.

Dr. Lonnie L. Howard
President

Reporting Suspected Violations

The College requires all supervisors/managers to report any suspected ethics violation to their administrator or directly to the chief financial officer. All other employees are strongly encouraged to use this same reporting process.

Washington State Ethics Board Information

The Executive Ethics Board was created in 1994 by legislation at the request of the Governor and Attorney General. The law, RCW 42.52, went into effect January 1, 1995.

The Executive Ethics Board has statutory responsibility to:

• Develop training materials.
• Adopt rules (WAC 292.100-130).
• Issue advisory opinions.
• Investigate and hear complaints.
• Impose penalties for violations.
• Recommend suspension or other disciplinary action.

If the Board determines that a state employee violated the ethics law, it can order the following:

• Penalties up to $5,000 per violation.
• Damages sustained by the state.
• Investigative costs.

Washington State Executive Ethics Board
PO Box 40149
Olympia, WA 98504-0149
360-664-0871
ethics@atg.wa.gov

For links to complaint forms, Board advisory opinions, online ethics quiz and FAQs, visit ethics.wa.gov.
**Basic Ethical Principle**
Public office, whether elected or appointed, may not be used for personal gain or private advantage.

**General Ethical Principles**
State employees may not:
1. Have a financial interest or engage in any activity that is in conflict with the proper discharge of the employee’s official duties.
2. Use his/her official position to secure special privileges for himself/herself, family, or any other person or entity.
3. Use state resources for personal benefit for themselves, their family members, or any other person or entity.
4. Receive compensation from any person, except the state of Washington, for performing his or her official duties.

**Use of State Resources**
A state employee may not use state resources for personal benefit or to benefit another person (e.g., conducting personal business at work with state resources). “State resources” include any state property (e.g., computers, office space, copier, fax, phones), vehicles, money, work time, other state personnel during work, etc.

**Financial Interests in Transactions Involving CPTC**
A state employee may not have a beneficial interest in a contract or purchase of goods/services that is made by, through, or is under their supervision. Employees are prohibited from using their official position to obtain benefits not available to the general public. This includes not accepting discounts provided through a state contract or vendor, or representing yourself as a state employee while conducting personal business. Employees are also prohibited from using confidential information for personal gain.

**“De Minimis” Use**
In very limited circumstances, state resources may be used if:
1. there is little or no cost to the state;
2. use is brief or infrequent (e.g., 5-10 minutes, occasionally or every once in a while);
3. the use does not interfere with the employee’s official duties;
4. the use does not disrupt other state employees;
5. the use does not compromise the security of state property, information or software.

Examples of acceptable de minimis use would be a brief local call to make an appointment or an email recognizing someone’s birthday. There is no de minimis exception to the use of state resources for activities related to a personal business or if the use violates other CPTC policies.

**Basic Rules for Gifts**
State employees are strictly prohibited from accepting, soliciting or actively seeking a gift for personal benefit or the benefit of another, from any other employee, student, or any vendor, community member, or company doing business with CPTC.

Under limited circumstances some state employees may accept a gift with a value up to $50 unless:
1. the gift could reasonably be expected to influence the performance or nonperformance of the employee’s official duties; or
2. the aggregate total from any one source during a calendar year exceeds $50.

In short, no gifts that might appear to have "strings attached" can be accepted.

Employees who regulate a contract or who are able to make vendor selection for the purchase or goods or services are more limited in what “gifts” they may receive. These limits are established to eliminate any potential influence or appearance of influence by a vendor contracting with the state. These employees are referred to as “Section 4” employees (RCW 42.54.150 section 4) and need to be careful about what they accept from vendors beyond unsolicited items of nominal value (e.g., logo pens or notepads) or in conjunction with their official duties.

**Honoraria**
An honorarium is any money or thing of value offered for a speech, appearance, article or similar items in connection with the employee’s official role at CPTC. An honorarium can only be accepted if specifically approved by CPTC (reference Policy and Procedures, Chapter 2, Section 5). However, employees may accept an honorarium for any activity that is not conducted during work hours and is not connected to his/her official CPTC role.

**Use of Information Technology Resources**
CPTC provides information technology resources (IT resources) to support the instruction and administrative activities of the College. IT resources will be used according to state laws and the policies and procedures of CPTC (Information and Communication Resources Acceptable Use Policy, Chapter 3, Section 9). This includes prohibiting use of IT resources for any personal business purpose, transmission of any harassing or discriminating material or personal use in excess of the de minimis standard.

IT resources include, but are not limited to: host computer systems, websites, desktop/laptop computers and workstations, communications networks, electronic software and/or hardware, library automation systems, multimedia equipment, electronic data, computer files, video networks, phones, voice mail, email, and internet resources.

**Use of State Resources for Political Campaigns**
CPTC employees have the right of free speech, but must be careful how they exercise that right while at work. Employees cannot use their official positions to influence votes for or against any candidate or ballot issue.

A state employee cannot use state resources for political campaigns or for the promotion/opposition to a ballot proposition. State resources include but are not limited to: postage, paper, computers, internet, employee’s work time, etc.