



Administrative Policy No. 18.60

Title: Employee Relationships with Clients, Vendors, and Outside Organizations

Applies To: All Department of Social and Health Services Employees

Authorizing Source: [Chapter 42.52 RCW](#)

Information Contact: DSHS Human Resources

Effective Date: July 1, 2005

Revised: September 30, 2010

Approved By: original signed by Glen G. Christopherson
Senior Director, DSHS Human Resources

Purpose:

This policy sets standards related to potential conflict of interest in Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) employee relationships with clients, contracted service providers, and outside organizations conducting business or seeking to conduct business with the DSHS. The policy identifies prohibited activities and actions related to financial or personal interest.

Scope:

This policy applies to all DSHS employees.

Definition:

Person: A client, contracted service provider, officer, or other individual representing an outside organization.

Policy:

A. Employee Responsibilities

DSHS employees must not:

1. Seek, solicit, receive, accept, or take, either directly or indirectly, anything of economic or personal value such as a gift, gratuity, or favor from any person if the employee has reason to believe any of the following:

- a. The person has, or is seeking, a contractual, business, or other financial relationship with DSHS.
 - b. The person is involved with an operation or activity regulated by DSHS.
 - c. The person has interests that may be substantially affected by the employee's performance or non-performance of official duties.
 - d. The person offered the gift, gratuity, or favor because of the employee's ability to influence activities regulated by the DSHS.
2. Use the power or authority of his or her position in a manner intended to induce or coerce another person to provide the employee or someone else with anything of economic or personal value, directly or indirectly.
 3. Engage in a transaction with a person that may result in a conflict of interest.
 4. Accept, maintain, or disburse client funds except as authorized.
 5. Work on a DSHS client's case to whom the employee is related, or with whom the employee has or had:
 - a. A significant personal or non-official relationship.
 - b. A counseling relationship outside DSHS, either paid or unpaid, unless approved in writing by the employee's Director or designee prior to beginning the relationship. The employee shall immediately notify his or her supervisor if such a case is assigned.
 6. An employee must immediately notify his or her supervisor if the employee becomes aware of a real or potential conflict of interest resulting from:
 - a. The employee's own relationship with a client, contracted service provider, and/or outside organization.
 - b. Another employee's relationship with a client, contracted service provider, and/or outside organization.

B. Management Responsibilities

When a supervisor or manager becomes aware of an employee's real or potential conflict of interest he or she must contact DSHS Human Resources and collaboratively develop a plan to remove the possibility of a conflict of interest between the employee and the client, contracted service provider, and/or outside organization. The employee may be an active participant in the collaborative process.