

Griswold Ethics Commission

2013 Training Program

Why Have A Code of Ethics?

- **§ 35-2. Statement of purpose.**
- Public office is a public trust. The trust of the public is essential for government to function effectively. Public policy developed by government officials and employees affects every citizen of the Town of Griswold, and it must be based on honest and fair deliberations and decisions. This process must be free from threats, favoritism, undue influence, and all forms of impropriety so that the confidence of the public is not eroded.

Who does the Code apply to?

- **§ 35-3. Application.**
- This chapter shall be applied to and be binding upon every officer, official, agent, employee, consultant, agency and every member of any board, commission or committee of the Town of Griswold.

New Updates 2013

There were NO changes
made to the Griswold
Ethics code during
2013

Question:

- You are at a benefit and you meet a potential contractor that is being considered for hire by the town who offers to pay your meal ticket costing \$75.00. You should:
 - Let him pay, it is really generous.
 - Decline.
 - It is not a problem, since it is a benefit, you are only eating the meal.

Answer:

- You should decline.
- **A GIFT** is anything of value, including entertainment, food, beverage, travel, and lodging given or paid to a Town official or employee, unless consideration of equal or greater value is given by the Town official or employee in return.

Can you accept a gift from a contractor?

- **§ 35-10. Standards of conduct for current Town officials and employees.**
- **A.** No Town official or employee shall solicit or accept any gift from any person who, to his or her knowledge, is interested in any pending matter within such official's or employee's official responsibilities. If a prohibited gift is offered or given, the Town official or employee must refuse it, return it, or pay the donor the full value of the gift.

Question:

- You just retired from the town and are offered a consulting job in a company that earned more than \$100,000 per year from the Town of Griswold. Can you accept the position?
 - Yes, you retired and can do what you wish
 - You cannot accept any employment for a period of one year.
 - No, you are in direct violation of the code for a period of five years.

Answer:

- You cannot accept any employment from this contractor for a period of one year.
- § 35-12. Standards of conduct for former Town officials and employees.
- A. No former Town official or employee shall disclose or use confidential information acquired in the course of and by reason of his or her official duties to advance his or her own financial interests or those of other persons, except to the extent required by law.
- B. No former Town official or employee who participated substantially in the negotiation or award of a Town contract obliging the Town to pay an amount of \$100,000 or more, or who supervised the negotiation or award of such a contract, shall accept employment with a party to the contract other than the Town for a period of one year after such contract is signed.

Question:

- As a chairman of the a town committee, you have a question regarding the Code of Ethics and your committee. What are your options you can use?
 - Nothing, ethics is not part of your responsibility
 - As the Chairman, you discuss your concerns with the committee members, asking their opinion
 - You submit a request to the Ethics Commission for an Advisory Opinion on the matter

Answer:

- As the chairman, you have the right to ask the Ethics Commission for an Advisory Opinion.

Advisory Opinions

- Advisory Opinions are a written opinion of the Commission interpreting this Ethics Code or applying any of its provisions to a given statement of facts. They will only be given if properly submitted to the commission.
- A request for an advisory opinion shall be filed with the Town Clerk who, within two business days of receipt, shall notify the Commission Chairperson of the request and send such Chairperson a copy of the completed Form A and all attachments. The Commission shall issue an advisory opinion within 30 days of the Town Clerk's receipt of the request for such opinion. Such opinions, until amended or revoked, whether by subsequent request of a Town official, employee or consultant or on the Commission's own initiative, shall be binding on the Commission, and good faith reliance on such opinions shall be an absolute defense to any complaint filed pursuant to § [35-8](#).

Advisory Opinion

- The form is located attached to the Griswold Code (*Form A*)
Form A

Request for Advisory Opinion

A Town official, employee or consultant may request an advisory opinion with respect to the requirements of this code by using this form. This form should be completed and submitted in a sealed envelope. If mailed, it should be addressed to the Griswold Ethics Commission, c/o Griswold Town Clerk, Town of Griswold, 28 Main Street, Griswold, CT 06351. The completed form may be hand delivered to the Griswold Town Clerk's office in a sealed envelope.

State Statues for Zoning Authorities

- **There are two sections of the State of CT Statues that govern members of municipal zoning commissions, planning commissions, planning and zoning commissions and zoning board of appeal that address conflict of interest.**
- **The CT State Statues are 8-11 and 8-21.**

Your responsibility to the Code

- Every 2 years all those that are governed by the code are responsible to sign an updated copy of Form C, “Agreement to Comply with the Griswold Code of Ethics.” New employees/officials/contractors are required to sign this form at time of hire.
- Please read the attached ENTIRE Griswold Code of Ethics , print and complete form C, also attached. You are required to have the signed copy returned to the Town Clerk within the next 30 days. It is permissible for groups to hand in their copy to their supervisor or chairman, who will in turn assume the responsibility of filing it with the Town Clerk within the same time period.

Code of Ethics Information

- The CT Office of State Ethics offers periodic free training to community members and officials. You can access their education Web site at:
<http://www.ct.gov/ethics/site/default.asp>
- To access the Town of Griswold Ethics Code on Line:
<http://ecode360.com/8020012>

Thank-you!

