ETHICS REMINDERS

Tis the Season...
To remember the ethics rules for gifts

If a person or company that has dealings with your agency offers you a gift or invitation to a party during the holiday season, please remember the gift regulations.

- A person or company that has dealings with your agency includes: vendors; potential vendors; lobbyists; recent grant applicants and recipients; and entities your agency licenses or regulates.

Can I accept the following gifts or party invitations?

- **Promotional items with no substantial resale value – YES**

  Mugs, pens, paperweights, calendars and other similar items that have a company's logo or name are examples of promotional items.

- **Invitations to Parties – NO (In most cases)**

  You may be able to accept an invitation to a holiday party from a person or company that has dealings with your agency only if, under the regulations, the party is considered a "Widely Attended Event," a "Bona Fide Charitable Event," or a "Bona Fide Political Event." Check with your Ethics Officer if you think the party might be one of these events.

- **Items worth more than $15 – NO (including fruit baskets, beverages, cookies, and other food)**

  A perishable gift must be either returned to the sender, donated to charity, or placed in the common area of the office where it is available to all employees.

  Non-perishable gifts must be returned to the sender

Additional Information

- The rules above apply in most situations. There may be some special circumstances though, that warrant different results. If you think special circumstances apply to you, contact your Ethics Officer.

JCOPE WISHES YOU HAPPY AND HEALTHY HOLIDAYS

Remember:

The Joint Commission on Public Ethics periodically releases Ethics Reminders. Each reminder is a brief and easy to understand synopsis of the laws and rules under the Commission's jurisdiction. Ethics Reminders are issued to assist those subject to the Commission's jurisdiction in understanding and complying with their obligations under the law.