



A WORD ABOUT ETHICS

CONDUCT RULES FOR EMPLOYEES OF CONTRACTORS

Do Government ethics rules apply to employees of agency contractors (contract workers)?

- No; most Government ethics rules do not apply to contractor employees.

What conduct rules apply to contractor employees?

- Contractor employees cannot accept bribes, misuse Government resources, use non-public Government information for personal purposes; use their Government affiliation to obtain personal benefits for themselves or others; or misrepresent their relationship with the Government.
- Other ethics rules may be imposed by the terms of the Government contract.

Can Federal employees accept gifts from employees of contractors?

- Yes, but only if the gift is based on a personal relationship or is less than \$20 in value (and all gifts from workers of the same company are less than \$20 per occasion and less than \$50 per year).

Can Federal employees give gifts to contractor employees?

- Yes.

Can a contractor employee be hired as a Government employee?

- Generally, yes. However, ethics rules bar the individual from working as a Government official on any matter in which the contractor company has a financial interest.

Can Federal employees work for contractors after leaving Government service?

- Generally, yes. However the type of duties the former Federal employee may perform for the contractor will be limited by Government ethics rules concerning post-employment activities. Employees should consult with an attorney from the Ethics Law and Programs Division (202-482-5384 or ethicsdivision@doc.gov) regarding how the rules will apply to a specific situation.

Ethics Law and Programs Division – Office of the General Counsel – United States
Department of Commerce

202-482-5384 – ethicsdivision@doc.gov – www.commerce.gov/ethics

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