



DENTON COUNTY  
PURCHASING DEPARTMENT  
PURCHASING POLICY

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**SUBJECT: CODE OF ETHICS**

**Policy: 12.1 General Ethical Standards**

*Public employment is a public trust. It is the policy of Denton County to promote and balance the objective of protecting government integrity and the objective of facilitating the recruitment and retention of personnel needed by Denton County. Such policy is implemented by prescribing essential standards of ethical conduct without creating unnecessary obstacles to entering public service.*

*Public employees must discharge their duties impartially so as to assure fair and competitive access to governmental procurement by responsible contractors. Moreover, they should conduct themselves in such a manner as to foster public confidence in the integrity of the Denton County Purchasing Department. Denton County employees will avoid the appearance of unethical or compromising practices in relationships, actions, and communications.*

- A. It shall be a breach of ethics to attempt to realize personal gain through public employment with Denton County by any conduct inconsistent with the proper discharge of the employee's duties.
- B. It shall be a breach of ethics to attempt to influence any public employee of Denton County to breach the standards of ethical conduct set forth in this code.
- C. It shall be a breach of ethics for any employee of Denton County to participate directly or indirectly in a procurement when the employee knows that:
  - 1. the employee or any member of the employee's immediately family has a financial interest pertaining to the procurement;
  - 2. a business or organization in which the employee, or any member of the employee's immediate family, has a financial interest pertaining to the procurement; or

3. any other person, business or organization with whom the employee or any member of the employee's immediate family is negotiating or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment is involved in the procurement.
  4. If such conflicts of interest exist, the employee shall notify the Director of Purchasing in writing and remove him/herself for the County procurement process.
- D. It shall be a breach of ethics to offer, give or agree to give any employee or former employee of Denton County, or for any employee or former employee of Denton County to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a program requirement or purchase request, influencing the content or any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing, or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract, or to any solicitation or proposal therefore pending before this government.
- E. It shall be a breach for any payment, gratuity or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor for any contract for Denton County, or any person associated therewith, as an inducement for the award of a subcontract to order.
- F. The prohibition against gratuities and kickbacks prescribed above shall be conspicuously set forth in every contract and solicitation therefore.
- G. It shall be a breach of ethics for any employee or former employee of Denton County knowingly to use confidential information for actual or anticipated personal gain, or for the actual or anticipated gain of any person. Employees will keep County procurement information obtained from an RFP or RFQ confidential until after contract award if the solicitation provides for it to be kept secret.

Adopted by Commissioners Court - March 19, 1996  
Revised by Commissioners Court - November 4, 1997  
Revised by Commissioners Court - September 21, 1999