



Ontario

Ministry of
Consumer and
Commercial
Relations

Property
Rights
Division

BULLETIN NO. 72041

DATE: December 15, 1972

To: All Offices
Property Rights
Division

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS
BY EMPLOYEES
FROM SUPPLIERS AND CUSTOMERS
PROHIBITED

Officials and other employees of the Property Rights Division of the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations must not accept gifts of any kind, even tokens of appreciation from members of the legal profession or other "customers", from suppliers, or from other persons or firms with whom they transact business. This policy applies to gifts, not only in the Christmas Season, but also at any other time, and to the "hospitality" traditionally provided by suppliers at regular meetings of officials. However, the policy is not intended to apply to functions and gifts given to officials or employees at the time of their retirement in recognition of long periods of service to the public; nor should it be construed as precluding the hospitality extended by relatively impersonal donors, for example County Law Associations.

The acceptance of gifts by public servants creates the impression that the donors have received, or will receive preferential treatment. Mr. F.W. Callaghan, Q.C., Deputy Attorney General, in a memo dated October 25, 1972, addressed to all "Court Officials and Staff" stated that, as a basic policy of the Ministry of the Attorney General, all services rendered to the public in relation to the operation of court offices must not only be rendered impartially, but must appear to be so rendered, and accordingly has taken the position that gifts must not be accepted by employees of that Ministry who deal directly with the public and legal profession. Senior officials of the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations agree that the same policy must apply to the officials and employees of Land Registry offices and other offices in the Property Rights Division.

The Purchasing Policy that has been approved for the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, under the heading "Relations with Suppliers," states:

- "(a) Employees are not permitted to accept any gifts from any supplier.

- (b) Employees must not become obligated to any supplier.
- (c) Employees shall not conduct any Ministry transaction from which they may benefit either directly or indirectly."

Any gift received in contravention of the policy set out above, including a gift delivered to an employee's home, must be returned to the donor, preferably with a note expressing appreciation for his thoughtfulness and the reason for returning the gift. A copy of this bulletin may serve that purpose. Employees will be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in returning gifts, if the expenditures are reasonable.

The policy of the Ministry of the Attorney General with regard to the acceptance of gifts by court officials and employees has already been brought to the attention of most practicing lawyers, and the policy applicable to the offices in the Property Rights Division was mentioned in my letter of December 5, 1972. However, to ensure that this policy comes to the attention of all customers and suppliers, you are requested to post a copy of this Bulletin in the public area of your office and to deliver a copy to your County or District Law Association.

The co-operation of all officials and employees of the Property Rights Division is requested in the enforcement of this Policy.



Richard E. Priddle
Executive Director.

REP:kmk

NOTE:

In addition to the head offices in Toronto, the Property Rights Division of the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations includes the following:

Land Registry Offices
(formerly Land Titles Offices and Registry Offices)

The Registrar of Personal Property Security and the employees of his Central and Branch Offices.

The Director of Titles and the staff of the Legal Services Branch.

The Director and the staff of the Legal Surveys Branch, including Assistant Examiners of Surveys.