

To:
From: Robin Parker, General Counsel
RE: Holiday Gift Giving

During the holiday season many people have questions about University rules for giving and receiving gifts. The Office of General Counsel prepared this FAQ to help answer some of those questions. If, after reading, you still have questions, please consult the Office of General Counsel at 529-6734 or generalcounsel@miamioh.edu. Thank you and have a wonderful and happy holiday season!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

I Want To Give

1. Should I buy my supervisor a gift?

No - The University discourages employees from giving gifts to their supervisors or others who exercise authority over their employment.

2. Can I use unrestricted or gift funds to buy gifts for employees?

No - Holiday gifts are personal. No university funds (including unrestricted or gift funds) may be used to purchase holiday gifts. University credit cards may not be used to purchase gift cards or other gifts.

3. I have great employees who have worked hard all year. Is there anything I can do to honor them?

Yes - There are lots of activities to help celebrate the hard work and dedication of your employees over the past year. An office pot-luck lunch, a white elephant/gag gift exchange or even a simple thank you note will let people know their efforts are appreciated.

I Want To Receive

1. What if I receive a gift from my supervisor?

The University does not encourage or discourage supervisors from giving gifts to those they supervise. If you receive a gift from your supervisor, accept the gift graciously. Saying thank you is all that is necessary.

2. Sometimes vendors send gifts. Is it okay to accept them?

It depends on whether the gift is of more than nominal value. Ohio's ethics laws prohibit University employees from soliciting or accepting anything of value from a person, company, organization, or other public agency if the source of the gift is doing or seeking to do business with, regulated by, or interested in matters before the University.

The Ethics Commission has concluded that items of nominal value may be accepted as long as the gift will not have a substantial influence on the employee.

Vendors who wish to express their appreciation are encouraged to make donations to the Miami University Foundation Annual Fund in lieu of gifts.