

WAVERLEY RSL SUB-BRANCH INC

Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality Policy

Overview & Scope

The Waverley RSL Sub-Branch Inc. is an Incorporated Association under Victorian State legislation. This policy applies to all workplace participants. For the purpose of this policy, this includes: Committee members, staff, volunteers, contractors, consultants and any other individuals or groups undertaking activity for or on behalf of the Sub-Branch.

The Sub-Branch recognises that gifts may, on occasion, be made or received in carrying out its charitable purposes and activities.

This policy states the position on:

- Responding to offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality
- Providing gifts, benefits and hospitality.

This policy is intended to support individuals and the Sub-Branch to avoid conflicts of interest and maintain high levels of integrity and both member and public trust.

Policy

Principles and Accountability

The Sub-Branch is committed to upholding the following principles in applying this policy:

Public interest: Individuals have a duty to place the public interest above their private interests when carrying out their official functions. They will not accept gifts, benefits or hospitality that could raise a perception of, or actual, bias or preferential treatment. Individuals do not accept offers from those about whom they are likely to make business decisions.

Accountability: Individuals are accountable for:

- Declaring all non-token offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality
- Declining non-token offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality or, where an exception applies under this policy, seeking approval to accept the offer
- The responsible provision of gifts, benefits and hospitality.

Management of offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality

This section sets out the process for accepting, declining and recording offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality.

At no time, should any gift, benefit, whether token or non-token, or whether given to an employee or volunteer or received by an employee or volunteer, be in the form of a cash payment.

Token offers

A token offer is an offer of a gift, benefit or hospitality that is of inconsequential or trivial value to both the person making the offer and the individual. It may include promotional items such as pens and note pads, and modest hospitality which would be considered a basic courtesy, such as light refreshments offered during a meeting.

Whilst the primary determinant of a token offer is that it would not be reasonably perceived within or outside the organisation as influencing an individual raising an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, it cannot be worth more than \$50. If token offers are often made by the same person or organisation, the cumulative value of the offers, or the perception that they may influence the recipient, may result in the offers becoming non-token.

Individuals may accept token offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality without approval or declaring the offer on the *Sub-Branch Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register*.

Requirement for refusing non-token offers

Individuals should consider the GIFT test at Table 1 and the requirements below to help respond to a non-token offer.

Individuals are to refuse non-token offers:

- likely to influence them, or be perceived to influence them, in the course of their duties or raise an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest
- by a person or organisation about which they will likely make a decision (also applies to processes involving grants, sponsorship, regulation, enforcement or licensing)
- likely to be a bribe or inducement to make a decision or act in a particular way
- that extend to their relatives or friends
- with no legitimate business benefit
- of money, or used in a similar way to money, or something easily converted to money
- where, in relation to hospitality and events, the organisation will already be sufficiently represented to meet its business needs
- where acceptance could be perceived as endorsement of a product or service, or acceptance would unfairly advantage the sponsor in future procurement decisions
- made in secret.

If an individual considers they have been offered a bribe or inducement, the offer must be reported to the Sub-Branch General Manager/President.

Table 1. GIFT test

G	Giver	Who is providing the gift, benefit or hospitality and what is their relationship to me? Does my role require me to select contractors and/or award grants/donations? Could the person or organisation benefit from a decision I make?
I	Influence	Are they seeking to gain an advantage or influence my decisions or actions? Has the gift, benefit or hospitality been offered to me publicly or privately? Is it a courtesy or a token of appreciation or valuable non-token offer? Does its timing coincide with a decision I am about to make or endorse a product or service?
F	Favour	Are they seeking a favour in return for the gift, benefit or hospitality? Has the gift, benefit or hospitality been offered honestly? Has the person or organisation made several offers over the last 12 months? Would accepting it create an obligation to return a favour?
T	Trust	Would accepting the gift, benefit or hospitality diminish public trust? How would the public view acceptance of this gift, benefit or hospitality? What would my colleagues, family, friends or associates think?

Requirements for accepting non-token offers

There will be some exceptions where there is a legitimate business reason for accepting a non-token offer. All accepted non-token offers **must** be approved in writing by the individual's Manager or Committee delegate, recorded in the *Sub-Branch Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register* and be consistent with the following requirements:

- It does not raise an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest or have the potential to bring the individual or the Sub-Branch into disrepute (the 'GIFT' test at **Table 1** is a good reminder of what to think about in making this assessment); and
- There is a legitimate business reason for acceptance. It is offered in the course of the individual's official duties, relates to the individual's responsibilities and has a benefit to the Sub-Branch.

Individuals may be offered a gift or hospitality where there is no opportunity to seek written approval from their Manager or Committee delegate prior to accepting. For example, they may be offered a wrapped gift that they later identify as being a non-token gift. In these cases, the

individual must seek approval from their Manager or Committee delegate within five business days.

Recording non-token offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality

All non-token offers, whether accepted or declined, must be recorded in the *Sub-Branch Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register*. The business reason for accepting the non-token offer must be recorded in the register and provide sufficient detail to link the acceptance to the individual's work functions and benefit to the Sub-Branch.

Ownership of gifts offered to individuals

Non-token gifts accepted by an individual for their work or contribution may be retained by the individual where their Manager or Committee delegate has provided written approval. Employees must transfer to the Sub-Branch official gifts or any gift of cultural or commemorative significance.

Management of the provision of gifts, benefits and hospitality

This section sets out the requirements for providing gifts, benefits and hospitality. Gifts, benefits and hospitality may be provided to welcome guests, facilitate the development of business relationships, further Sub-Branch business outcomes and to celebrate achievements. When deciding whether to provide gifts, benefits or hospitality or the type of gift, benefit or hospitality to be provided, individuals must ensure:

- Any gift, benefit or hospitality is provided for a business reason, in that it furthers the conduct of official business or other legitimate organisational goals
- Any costs are proportionate to the benefits obtained by the Sub-Branch, and would be considered reasonable in terms of community expectations (the 'HOST' test at **Table 2** is a good reminder of what to think about in making this assessment)
- It does not raise an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest.

Table 2. HOST test

H	Hospitality	To whom is the gift or hospitality being provided? Will recipients be external business partners, or individuals of the host organisation?
O	Objectives	For what purpose will hospitality be provided? Is the hospitality being provided to further the conduct of official business? Will it contribute to staff wellbeing and workplace satisfaction?
S	Spend	Will charity funds be spent? What type of hospitality will be provided? Will it be modest or expensive and will alcohol be provided as a courtesy or an indulgence? Will the costs incurred be proportionate to the benefits obtained?
T	Trust	Will public trust be diminished or enhanced? Could you publicly explain the rationale for providing the gift or hospitality? Will the event be conducted in a manner which upholds the

Containing costs

Individuals should contain costs involved in the provision of gifts, benefits and hospitality wherever possible. The following questions may be useful to assist individuals when deciding the type of gift, benefit or hospitality to provide:

- Will the cost of providing the gift, benefit or hospitality be proportionate to the potential benefits?
- Is an external venue necessary or does the organisation have facilities to host the event?
- Is the proposed catering or hospitality proportionate to the number of attendees?
- Does the size of the event and number of attendees align with intended outcomes?
- Will providing the gift, benefit or hospitality be viewed by the public as excessive?

Recognition of staff and individuals

When acknowledging achievements, the Sub-Branch may choose to recognise staff and/or volunteer service to the organisation.

When considering recognition of staff for long service contributions, Table 3 provides guidance and appropriate spending limits per milestone.

Table 3. Staff Long Service

Years Service	\$
10 years	\$200

Other Eligible Employee Gifts

The Sub-Branch recognises that it is further appropriate to show gratitude, sympathy or condolences as the situation would dictate for other work and non-work-related milestones including retirements or departures, sickness or passing. In these instances, the gifts are to not exceed \$1000.00 in value and, as guidance, appropriate gifts may be of the nature of flowers, books or other token gestures.

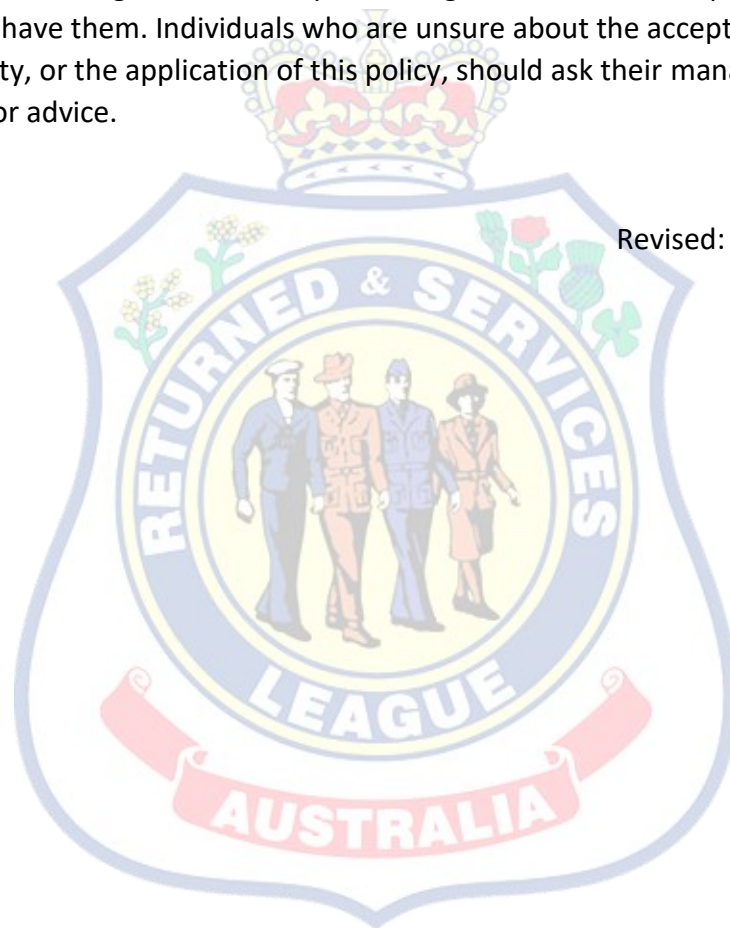
To avoid a possible conflict of interest and/or embarrassment, the subject of such a grant or gift is to be in absentia at the meeting when such a decision is made.

Breaches

Disciplinary action consistent with the relevant industrial instrument and legislation, including dismissal, may be taken where an individual fails to adhere to this policy. This includes where an individual fails to avoid wherever possible to identify, declare or manage a conflict of interest related to gifts, benefits and hospitality in accordance with the Sub-Branch Conflict of Interest policy.

Contacts for further information

Conflicts of interest resulting from the acceptance of gifts, benefits or hospitality is not always clear to those who have them. Individuals who are unsure about the acceptance of a gift, benefit or hospitality, or the application of this policy, should ask their manager or the Sub-Branch President for advice.



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