

Oregon Ethics Law Policy

The Umatilla County Special Library District (UCSLD) shall fully comply with the Oregon Ethics Statutes in ORS Chapter 244 – Government Ethics

The UCSLD believes in treating people with respect and following ethical business practices. All UCSLD Board members, staff and volunteers are subject to the Oregon Ethics Laws. The purpose of this policy is to establish ethical standards of conduct for all District Board members, employees and volunteers.

This policy:

- Prohibits use of public office or position for financial gain
- Requires public disclosure of financial conflicts of interest
- Limits gifts that an official or employee may receive per calendar year
- Addresses limits of behavior by all UCSLD Board members, employees and volunteers, all of which will be referred to as public officials in this document.

Financial Gain:

Using the position as a public official, employee, or volunteer, to receive certain financial benefits if the opportunity for the financial benefit would not otherwise be available except for the position held is prohibited. In addition, using or attempting to use the position to obtain financial benefits for a relative or a member of the public officials, employees, or volunteers household is prohibited. It is also prohibited to use or attempt to use the position to obtain financial benefits for a business in which a relative or a member of the public official's household is associated.

The following are examples of financial benefits that do not fall under these rules.

- Official compensation
- Reimbursement of expenses
- Honorarium
- Unsolicited awards for professional achievement
- Some gifts

Gifts:

No public official shall solicit or receive any gifts(s) with a total value of more than \$50 from any single source that could reasonably be known to have a financial interest in the official actions of that public official. A gift is defined as something of value given to a public official, for which the official does not pay an equal value. Gift of entertainment are included in the \$50 gift limit.

The law only restricts gift from sources that have an administrative or legislative interest in the public officials' actions.

Umatilla County Special Library District

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A public official may accept unlimited gifts from a source that does not have a legislative or administrative interest in the public official, and the public official may accept unlimited gifts from specified relatives.

Conflict of Interest: Actual vs. Potential conflict of interest

An actual conflict of interest occurs when the public official participates in any action that would affect the financial interest of the official, the officials' relative or a business in which the official or an officials' relative is associated.

A potential conflict of interest occurs when the public official participates in any action that could affect the financial interest of the official, the officials relative or a business in which the official or an official's relative is associated.

If there may be an actual or potential conflict of interest, the public official must disclose the nature of the conflict.

In the case of an actual conflict of interest, the public official must announce the conflict and refrain from further participation in official action, including not participating in discussion or voting on the issue that gave rise to the conflict of interest.

In the case of a potential conflict of interest, the public official must announce the conflict, but may still participate in official action, including discussion and voting on the issue that gave rise to the conflict of interest.

If the number of votes required for official action by the governing body cannot be met without the vote of the public official with an actual conflict of interest, the public official may vote. This circumstance does not often occur. This provision only applies in circumstances when all members of the governing body are present and it is impossible for the governing body to take official action without the vote of the public official with the actual conflict of interest. In this case, the public official must still make the required announcement of the actual conflict of interest and cannot take part in the discussion, but may still participate in the vote to allow the necessary official action by the governing body. The provision does not apply in instances due to there being absent voting members of governing body.