



Honesty - Integrity - Character

**Palm Beach County
Commission on Ethics**
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News Release

For immediate release:
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January 10, 2019
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Summary of Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics Meeting Held on January 10, 2019

The Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics (COE) took the following actions at its monthly public meeting held on January 10, 2019.

The Executive Director presented the Annual Report to the commissioners.

Three advisory opinions were approved. The full opinions are published and available at: <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/opinions.htm>.

RQO 18-017: The attorney for the Board of Trustees of the City of Boca Raton Police and Firefighters' Retirement System (BRPFRS) asked if the BRPFRS members who are either City of Boca Raton (city) officials or employees would violate the prohibited conduct section or the gift law section of the Palm Beach County Code of Ethics (code) if BRPFRS accepts reimbursement of travel expenses from their investment consultant for the members' attendance at his conference. **The COE opined as follows:** Because the investment consultant who will provide the reimbursement for the conference is not a city vendor and is not a lobbyist or principal or employer of a lobbyist who lobbies the city, the code does not prohibit the city employees who serve on the BRPFRS from accepting any gift over \$100 from the investment consultant. Further, because the investment consultant is also not a city contractor, service provider, bidder, or proposer, the code does not prohibit the city employees and officials serving as BRPFRS trustees from accepting travel expenses, directly or indirectly, from the investment consultant. Further, the reimbursement meets the requirements of Section 2-444(g)(1) h. of the code, and the reimbursement to BRPFRS from the investment consultant is not considered a "gift" under the code and does not need to be reported by the trustees.

RQO 19-001: The attorney for the City of Delray Beach (City) asked if it would violate the contractual relationships section of the code for the father-in-law of a city employee to enter into an agreement with the city to rent a residence he owns to an unrelated person, and accept funds from the city's rental assistance program on behalf of the potential renter, where the city employee himself or his wife has no ownership or other legal interest in the subject property. **The COE opined as follows:** Such an arrangement would not violate the contractual relationships section of the code because the city employee has no ownership or other legal interest in the subject property. However, the city employee must refrain from taking any official actions to assist his father-in-law or the proposed renter in this arrangement or to influence the approval or disbursement process, as such actions could violate the code.

RQO 19-002: An employee of the Village of Tequesta (village) asked if village employees may accept a discounted gym membership rate from a local business without violating the code. **The COE opined as follows:** So long as the local business is offering the discounted rate to all village employees and it is not offered as a quid pro quo for an official public action or the past, present or future performance of any legal duty, village employees would not be prohibited from accepting this discount unless the provider was a lobbyist, principal, or employer of a lobbyist who lobbies the village and the discount value exceeds \$100 annually in the aggregate.

A detailed explanation of all agenda items is available at <http://www.palmbeachcountyethics.com/meetings.htm>.

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