

Gifts, discounts and hospitality

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Policy statement and principles	3
What	3
Why	3
How	3
What to do if offered a gift or hospitality	4
Guidance on reporting and approval of gifts and hospitality	4
Anticipating gifts at special visits and functions	6
Gifts and Hospitality Reports and Register	7
Gift and Hospitality Reports	7
Gifts and Hospitality Register	7
What to do if a discount is offered	7
Incentive or reward schemes	7

Policy statement and principles

What

The guidance in this chapter ensures common principles are considered when our people are deciding what to do in response to an offer of a gift, discount or hospitality from someone outside Police. While the best way of avoiding any perception of influence or impropriety is to refuse all such offers, this is not always workable in practice; and staff and supervisors are trusted to exercise their judgment appropriately in individual cases.

The chapter also sets out the requirements for recording offers of gifts or hospitality in a consistent manner; and the level of approval required for different values and categories of gifts and hospitality. Further guidance from the Office of the Auditor-General can be viewed in this animated video on [Accepting gifts and hospitality](#).

This chapter does not apply to New Zealand Police gifts to others (including koha or meaalofa - see the Office of the Auditor-General's [Controlling sensitive expenditure: Guide for public organisations, Part 9](#) for guidance), nor to any gifts between employees.

Why

Offers of gifts, discounts or hospitality can give rise to actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest. Moreover, offers that are not well managed could bring Police's integrity into question, which in turn could undermine public trust and confidence.

How

In the interests of transparency and accountability, New Zealand Police maintains a central Gifts and Hospitality Register.

All offers of gifts or hospitality that could create an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest should be reported by way of a [Gift and Hospitality Report](#), regardless of their value and whether or not they were accepted. And all offers of gifts or hospitality of a value greater than \$50 should also be reported, whether or not they were accepted.

Gifts, discounts or hospitality should never be accepted if it appears an inducement or reward is being offered, or if acceptance will result in a real or perceived obligation to the donor or host. Absolute vigilance must be exercised if the employee is involved in decision-making on tender processes, procurement, enforcement or licensing that affects the donor or host.

What to do if offered a gift or hospitality

The following principles should be applied when determining whether to accept a gift or hospitality:

- Gifts should be declined unless they are of nominal value or refusing them will cause embarrassment or offence to the donor
- Gifts of cash, vouchers or alcohol should be declined whenever possible. Where acceptance of cash or vouchers is unavoidable, it must be donated. Where alcohol is accepted, it must be donated or repurposed. It cannot be retained by an individual or shared amongst a workgroup.
- Hospitality should be declined unless the business benefit to Police exceeds any personal benefit to the Police employee
- Police employees must not obtain personal gain solely due to their position as a Police employee
- Acceptance of a gift, discount or hospitality should not give rise to a real, perceived or potential conflict of interest
- Gifts presented to Police employees should be viewed as belonging to Police.

Timing and frequency are also relevant. Offers of gifts or hospitality, even if of nominal value, may be of concern if offered repeatedly and/or at times when they could be seen to influence or reinforce a particular decision or action.

Guidance on reporting and approval of gifts and hospitality

Offer	Examples (non-exhaustive)	Approval required to accept/retain	Possible actions if it cannot be retained by individual (or declined or returned)	Gift and Hospitality Report required?
Inexpensive (<\$50) or infrequent gifts (as a guide, offered less than twice a year)	Tie pins, chocolates, cuff links, plaques, pens, badges, calendars or other small items	Apply SELF CHECK	Share with workgroup	No, unless gift/s offered frequently or could create a conflict of interest
Money or vouchers	Cash, Prezzy card, goods or services voucher	Wherever possible, such gifts should be declined. Any such gifts must always be on-donated. The recipient of the donation should be approved at District Commander/ Director level or above.	Donate to a registered charity, or a charitable community organisation	Yes
Alcohol	Bottle of wine or spirits, beer	Wherever possible, such gifts should be declined. Any such gifts must always be on-donated or repurposed for organisational benefit. The recipient of the donation or repurposing should be approved at District Commander/ Director level or above.	Donate to a registered charity, or a charitable community organisation (e.g. local RSA, rest home) or repurpose for organisational benefit (e.g., to host a visiting delegation - not for an individual or workgroup)	Yes

Gifts, discounts and hospitality
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Perishable items of estimated value less than \$50	Baked goods, food hamper, flowers	Supervisor	Share with workgroup or donate (to a registered charity, or a charitable community organisation)	No, unless gift/s offered frequently or could create a conflict of interest
Perishable items of estimated value more than \$50	Baked goods, food hamper, flowers	Supervisor	Share with workgroup or donate (to a registered charity, or a charitable community organisation)	Yes
Gift of estimated value \$50 to \$200	Book, homeware, souvenirs, artwork, ceremonial items	Supervisor	Retained as heritage of office (generally displayed at workplace), donated to a registered charity, or a charitable community organisation	Yes, clearly setting out, if the gift was retained , why discretion was exercised in favour of the employee retaining gift
Gift of estimated value \$200 - \$500	Homeware, jewellery, artwork, ceremonial items	District Commander/ Director or above	Retained as heritage of office* (generally displayed at workplace), donated to a registered charity, or a charitable community organisation	Yes, clearly setting out, if the gift was retained, why discretion was exercised in favour of the employee retaining gift
Gift of estimated value greater than \$500	Flights and accommodation to attend a conference, course attendance, equipment for Police use	Commissioner of Police or a delegate (Deputy Commissioner, Deputy Chief Executive)	Retained as heritage of office (generally displayed at workplace), donated to a registered charity, or a charitable community organisation	Yes, clearly setting out if the gift was retained, why discretion was exercised in favour of the employee (or Police) retaining gift/equipment/accepting flights/accommodation/conference fees
Hospitality that includes a modest refreshment	Morning tea or afternoon tea	None		No
Working meals provided by an external party	Multi-agency meeting, function or gathering (i.e. presentation to a community group), conference, training exercise, course, an operation or incident	None		No

Substantial meal provided by external party (with or without alcohol)	Dinner provided by external party	Supervisor approval, discretion if further approval required		Yes - in advance unless not possible. Otherwise, as early as possible post-event, setting out benefits to Police.
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*Where a gift's value is more symbolic (rather than monetary), a position holder may retain the gift as 'heritage of office', where the gift is held by the position holder rather than the individual.

Anticipating gifts at special visits and functions

There are situations where the offering of gifts or hospitality to Police employees may be anticipated. These include VIP visits from certain countries where the provision of gifts and hospitality to officials is culturally expected and standard practice.

It is the responsibility of the operation commander, or Police employee delegated by the commander, where practicable and appropriate, to make advance contact with the visiting delegation or host to explain New Zealand Police's policy, and dissuade such offers being made.

Gifts and Hospitality Reports and Register

Gift and Hospitality Reports

If it is decided a gift should be donated to another organisation where practical some form of acknowledgement from the organisation should be obtained and attached to the [Gift and Hospitality Report](#) submitted.

Gifts and Hospitality Register

Once a [Gift and Hospitality Report](#) is submitted, the details are collated in the central Gifts and Hospitality Register. The Register allows a national overview to be maintained, and assists with audit requirements and the ability to answer any information requests.

The Register is maintained by the Chief Assurance Officer and is subject to periodic scrutiny by District Commanders, Directors, members of the Executive and Police's independent Assurance and Risk Committee. Submissions to the Gifts and Hospitality Register are audited on a regular basis by PNHQ's Assurance Group. Submitters and their supervisors may be contacted if follow-up is required.

What to do if a discount is offered

Where a Police employee is offered a discount on the basis of their employment with New Zealand Police, the discount must be declined.

A discount may be accepted, however, if it is offered on the basis of the employee's membership in a discount scheme, group or organisation (including the New Zealand Police Association, the Police Welfare Fund and the New Zealand Police Leaders' Guild).

Incentive or reward schemes

Police employees are not eligible for, and must not accept, any prize or other reward scheme benefit linked to activities which are funded by Police. Examples include fuel company competitions and the collection of Flybuys reward points.

Extra guidance is available in relevant Police Instructions (for instance, the inability to accrue Air Points™ from Police-funded travel for personal use is covered by the [National Travel Policy](#)).
