

COIC FAQs

- 1. Susan works in Human Resources Department and has access to the home phone numbers and addresses of all TTUHSC employees. Susan is thinking about working on the weekends with a telemarketing company. The telemarketing company manager is going to require Susan to give him the home phone numbers and addresses of employees at TTUHSC. Is it okay to accept this job?**

No. Susan cannot accept the job with the telemarketing company because this second job would require Susan to disclose confidential information she learns through her job at TTUHSC.

- 2. A pharmaceutical representative visited our clinic and brought us some coffee and two dozen of donuts for our staff members. Can we accept these free coffee and donuts?**

No. These are gifts from health care vendors and according to HSC OP 52.16, we cannot accept gifts from health care vendors. You should ask the vendor to take them back.

- 3. I see a vendor wandering around the hallways in our clinic trying to find a doctor. He is not wearing a Vendormate ID badge. Should I do anything?**

Yes, you should ask him if he has checked in to the Vendormate system. If not, you should ask the vendor to register with Vendormate and wear a Vendormate ID badge. Remember, reps should always wear Vendormate ID badges when they are on TTUHSC premises.

- 4. Our department would like to send one of our employees to attend training sessions on the use of equipment already owned by TTUHSC. Can we receive reimbursement for travel and lodging from that vendor?**

In general, reimbursement for travel and lodging is not allowed if we are not providing a service or actively participating in the event/conference/meeting (giving lectures or presentations). However, if the training has been written into the purchase contract, travel and lodging may be covered by the vendor.

- 5. A pharmaceutical company would like to sponsor a cookout for new residents who will be joining our program this summer; is this allowed?**

No, this would be considered an "entertainment event". TTUHSC OP 52.16, paragraph 4a states: Faculty, other employees, students and departments shall not seek or accept, from Health Care Vendors any compensation to travel to and/or attend sporting or entertainment events, all-expense paid trips to vacation resorts, or similar activities.

6. A faculty member has been asked to be a speaker at an event sponsored by a Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Company to present information about its products. What are the restrictions under HSC OP 52.16?

The faculty member must present materials he/she has prepared or has had active input in their development. The faculty member cannot use the DME Company's prepared slides or materials prepared by someone else on behalf of the DME Company.

7. May health care vendors provide refreshments or food for educational activities sponsored by our department, such as Journal Clubs, seminars and lecture series?

Yes. Food and refreshments provided by the health care vendors for educational meetings may be accepted by TTUHSC Schools or Departments. However, health care vendors shall not select the speaker and shall NOT be allowed to discuss their products or services as part of the educational meetings. In addition, the meals shall be modest, and they must be coordinated with TTUHSC Schools or Departments, and shall be approved by the designated faculty representative in the School or Department.

8. Can a faculty member attend an educational conference that is organized by a professional society and sponsored by health care vendors? The conference registration includes breakfast, lunch and refreshments. Can the faculty member accept the meals and refreshments provided during the conference?

Yes. When a conference complies with the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) standards, the food and meals are allowable, because the health care vendors are not directly paying for the meals and refreshments.

- *After the conference, a health care vendor invites our faculty member to dinner, which will be paid for by the vendor. Can our faculty member accept this invitation?*

If the dinner is not part of the conference and it is paid for directly by the health care vendor, the faculty member who attends must either decline the invitation or pay for his/her own share of the cost because no personal gifts (including meals) shall be accepted from health care vendors.