

November 8, 2005

By Electronic & Interoffice Mail

Re: IO-05-69

You inquired whether the 60 employees who work in the county's summer child care programs may accept a gift of free bowling games from a vendor with whom your agency contracted to provide a bowling outing for the children last summer. You plan to hold a staff meeting at the bowling center and after the meeting, the bowling center staff will demonstrate the use of the computerized scoring system. After the demonstration, the vendor has offered free shoe rental and two free games to each employee. The retail value of this gift per person is in the range of \$10, or for the group, \$60.

Under the ethics law, §5-106(b), employees may not accept gifts from controlled donors unless they are of nominal value, and then only if the gift would not tend to impair the impartiality and independent judgment of the recipient. The ethics commission advises that the proposed gift is of nominal value, both to the recipients, and to the donor. There is no evidence to suggest that the proposed gift would impair the judgment of any of the summer staff. For this reason, the ethics commission advises that the gift may be accepted.

Sincerely,

Betsy K. Dawson
Executive Director