

# Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality Policy

For Australian Small & Medium Enterprises

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## Important Notice

This template is provided as a general guide only. Customise the dollar thresholds and approval processes to suit your organisation's size, industry, and risk profile.

## 1. Policy Statement

[Company Name] is committed to ethical business practices. The giving and receiving of gifts, benefits, and hospitality is a normal part of business relationships, but must be managed carefully to avoid any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, corruption, or undue influence.

This policy sets out the rules and expectations for offering, accepting, and reporting gifts, benefits, and hospitality.

## 2. Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Protect the integrity and reputation of [Company Name] and its employees
- Ensure gifts do not influence business decisions
- Provide clear guidance on acceptable practices
- Establish transparent reporting and approval processes
- Support compliance with anti-bribery and corruption laws

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and anyone acting on behalf of [Company Name]. It covers:

- Gifts given or received
- Benefits (non-cash items of value)
- Hospitality (meals, entertainment, travel)
- Both personal and business relationships where connected to your role

## 4. Definitions

### Gift

A gift is any free item of value, including physical items, vouchers, tickets, or services. It does not include modest promotional items such as branded pens or calendars.

### Benefit

A benefit is a non-cash advantage of value, such as discounts, free services, preferential treatment, or access to facilities not available to others.

### Hospitality

Hospitality includes meals, drinks, entertainment, accommodation, or travel provided in a business context.

## 5. Guiding Principles

When deciding whether to accept or offer a gift, benefit, or hospitality, consider:

- Would it influence or appear to influence a business decision?
- Would you be comfortable if it were made public?
- Is it proportionate to the business relationship?
- Would a reasonable person see it as a bribe or inducement?
- Does it comply with the other party's policies?

If in doubt, decline or seek approval before accepting.

## 6. What is Acceptable

### 6.1 Generally Acceptable

The following are generally acceptable without prior approval:

- Token gifts of nominal value (under \$50) such as promotional items
- Modest hospitality (coffee, lunch) as part of normal business
- Invitations to networking events or industry functions
- Gifts from colleagues for personal occasions (birthday, farewell)

### 6.2 Requires Approval

The following require prior approval from your manager or designated approver:

- Gifts or hospitality valued between \$50 and \$200
- Attendance at events where travel or accommodation is provided
- Hospitality that includes partners or family members
- Gifts from suppliers or contractors during procurement processes

### 6.3 Never Acceptable

The following are never acceptable:

- Cash or cash equivalents (gift cards, vouchers that can be exchanged for cash)
- Gifts or hospitality over \$200 without senior management approval
- Gifts that are lavish, extravagant, or excessive
- Anything offered in exchange for favourable treatment
- Gifts during tender or procurement processes from participating parties
- Secret commissions or kickbacks
- Anything illegal

## 7. Giving Gifts and Hospitality

When offering gifts or hospitality on behalf of [Company Name]:

- Ensure it serves a legitimate business purpose
- Keep it modest and proportionate
- Ensure it complies with the recipient's organisation's policies
- Never offer gifts to influence a decision or as a bribe
- Obtain approval for expenditure in accordance with financial delegations
- Record the gift or hospitality appropriately

## 8. Declining Gifts

If a gift or hospitality is not appropriate to accept:

- Decline politely, explaining that company policy prevents acceptance
- If declining would cause offence, accept and report immediately
- The gift may be donated to charity or shared among the team
- Report the matter to your manager

## 9. Reporting and Registration

All gifts, benefits, and hospitality valued at \$50 or more (whether accepted or declined) must be reported using the Gifts Register or reporting form.

The report should include:

- Date received/offered
- Description and estimated value
- Giver/recipient details
- Business context
- Approval obtained (if required)

[Company Name] maintains a Gifts Register that is reviewed periodically to identify patterns or concerns.

## 10. Special Circumstances

### Government and Public Sector

If dealing with government agencies or public officials, be aware that strict rules apply. Many public servants cannot accept any gifts. Always check before offering.

### International Business

When working internationally, be aware of local customs and laws. What is acceptable in Australia may be inappropriate elsewhere, and vice versa. When in doubt, seek guidance.

### Procurement

During procurement or tender processes, employees involved must not accept any gifts or hospitality from participating suppliers. This includes meals, entertainment, and promotional items.

## 11. Responsibilities

### Employees

- Apply good judgment and this policy to all situations
- Seek approval where required
- Report gifts and hospitality as required
- Decline gifts that are inappropriate

### Managers

- Model appropriate behaviour
- Assess and approve requests
- Monitor compliance within their teams

### HR/Finance

- Maintain the Gifts Register
- Review reports and identify concerns
- Provide guidance on policy interpretation

## 12. Consequences

Breaches of this policy may result in:

- Disciplinary action, up to and including termination
- Requirement to return gifts or repay value
- Reporting to relevant authorities in serious cases

Accepting bribes is a criminal offence in Australia.

### 13. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to ensure it remains effective and reflects current legislation and best practice.

## Employee Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understood [Company Name]'s Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality Policy. I agree to comply with the requirements of this policy.

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_