**West Sussex – Practice Guidance**

IROs are qualified social workers with at least five years’ experience, and who have acquired the right skills to carry out this role.

**Gift giving and receiving**

**Recognition of service**

* The general rule is that staff should tactfully refuse all offers of gifts from organisations or persons who do or might provide work, goods or services to the County Council or who need some decision from the County Council.
* Many staff are working in close proximity to individual recipients of services and their families and friends. The general rule in that case also is that staff should not accept gifts in any circumstances.
* Any offer of a gift should be reported to the line manager.

**Exceptions**

* Within residential services, it is common that families and children receiving support may wish to provide a small gift to individual keyworkers, or whole staff teams as a token of appreciation. These may be classed as exceptions (see below).
* Exceptions include **modest** gifts of a promotional character given to a wide range of people (such as calendars) or a small gift (up to a value of £25) on the conclusion of a service or recognised occasion (e.g. Christmas, Easter).
* It is, however, recognised that there are instances where to refuse a gift of small value would be hurtful to individual recipients of services. Acceptance, therefore, on an occasional basis, of such small personal gifts would not be seen as infringing the general rule.
* In such circumstances, the member of staff should report the matter to his or her manager, who will consider the circumstances of the gift and if he/she is satisfied that no undue influence has been exercised in obtaining the gift, shall approve the acceptance of it and record the acceptance and circumstances in a log book to be retained in the manager’s office.
* Gifts to the value of more than £25 should be returned to the service user by the manager.
* Staff should not enter into any commercial transactions with any service user and should not act on a service user's behalf in such transactions unless the specific action forms part of the staff member’s agreed duties.

**Links to related documents:**

Code of Conduct and Propriety

Officer Interests and form for declaring Gifts and Hospitality