



Recent Ethics Fines and how they could impact UConn Employees

The Office of Audit, Compliance and Ethics frequently updates faculty and staff on recent fines issued by the Office of State Ethics (OSE) against employees and contractors for alleged violations of the State Code of Ethics. These fines are often signs of areas of the Code of Ethics that the OSE is paying particular attention to. Many of these recent fines involve employees using their state positions for financial gain, either for themselves or for a family member:

January 6, 2009—An independent state contractor agreed to pay a \$2,500 civil penalty for allegedly directing real estate business

to his wife while working for the State of Connecticut.

June 15, 2009—A Capital Community College Professor agreed to pay a \$2,500 civil penalty for allegedly soliciting students under her supervision to work for Pre-Paid Legal Services, a company she was affiliated with. The Professor also allegedly facilitated recruiting meetings between Pre-Paid Legal Services and students during class time.

June 2, 2009— A former Department of Corrections employee agreed to pay a \$500 fine for allegedly providing confidential information he obtained

during the course of his employment to an outside party for personal financial gain.

These fines can be used to help educate our faculty and staff on the possible repercussions of our interactions with outside entities. Whenever there are interactions with financial gain where the line between your state position and outside endeavors could be blurred, it is always best to check with the Compliance Office **first** to prevent a potential OSE fine down the road.

Article by Kimberly Fearney

Retirement Gifts Update



The Office of State Ethics recently amended its State Code of Ethics regulations. The amended regulations, effective June 24, 2009, now recognize retirement from public service or state employment as a major life event. For practical purposes, this means

that supervisors and subordinates may pool money to give a retirement gift of up to \$1,000.

This means that except for those doing or seeking to do business with the University, individuals may give state employees gifts for the following major life events:

ceremony commemorating induction into religious adulthood; wedding or civil union; funeral; birth or adoption of a child; and now retirement from public service or state employment. Please contact OACE with any gift questions.

Article by Kimberly Fearney



The "Compliance Courier" is a quarterly newsletter issued by the Office of Audit, Compliance & Ethics. For questions or concerns, please contact Kimberly Fearney at (860) 486-6195 or Kim.Fearney@uconn.edu.

Internal Controls: Information Technology

When performing IT audits, we often evaluate the controls that have been implemented to protect data that is used or managed by the department. As part of this review, we evaluate the department's policies and procedures to assess whether or not they achieve the required level of protection. The two most common hindrances to achieving data protection goals are a lack of user knowledge of the existing controls and a lack of understanding as to why the controls are important.

Providing users with information on how to protect the data that they have been granted access to will help ensure that users understand the importance of security. For example, knowing never to share user account

names and passwords, never send confidential data such as social security numbers through email, or never access University records for non-business related purposes are all critical principles needed to be followed by all users.

In order to assist employees with understanding their role in security, the next Annual Compliance Training will include a component on IT security as well as data privacy.

October is Security Awareness Month. For more information on information security, University IT policies and data protection, please contact UITS.

Article by Carrie Gray

Thank You!
**The University
achieved 100%
completion for
our 2008-2009
Annual
Compliance
Training**

NEW

**Non-Retaliation
Policy**

<http://policy.uconn.edu/>



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Freedom of Information Reminder

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides members of the public the right to access certain records of public agencies, including those of public Universities. These records can include *any* record created or maintained by University staff or faculty.

As a public agency, the University receives numerous requests for records from any number of sources. Since January 1, 2009 the University has received and processed approximately 170 FOIA requests. These requests, if not processed

correctly, can result in formal complaints, hearings and possible sanctions from the Freedom of Information Commission. **It is critical that any faculty or staff member who receives a request for information pursuant to the FOIA immediately contact the OACE and forward a copy of the request as these matters are time sensitive.** Requests can be emailed to Rachel Krinsky Rudnick at Rachel.Krinsky@uconn.edu or by fax to (860) 486-4527.

Article by Kimberly Fearney