

CAN ONTARIO MPPS ACCEPT GIFTS?

Ontario's Members of Provincial Parliament are prohibited from accepting a gift, fee or benefit.

There are only limited exceptions to this rule:

Is the gift received as part of protocol, customs or social obligation?

While gifts received in instances of protocol, customs or social obligation are exempted from the 'no gift' rule, these situations are specific and must meet certain criteria.

Protocol

A gift offered on behalf of a level of government (Canada or international) during a meeting, conference or official visit.

Customs

A gift or benefit, usually of nominal value, that is customarily offered as a way to express gratitude or commemoration for participation in an event.

Social Obligation

A benefit, usually a meal or refreshment, offered as a matter of courtesy when attending an event in an official capacity.

Is the Integrity Commissioner of the opinion it is unlikely the gift or benefit was given in order to influence the MPP?

Exceptions beyond protocol, customs or social obligation may be granted by the Integrity Commissioner in certain instances.

Checking with the Office of the Integrity Commissioner is the best way to ensure accepting a gift is allowed under the rules.



MPP GIFT GUIDANCE

These scenarios will help MPPs determine whether a gift can be accepted. Contact the OIC when the circumstances of the offered gift vary.

Item or benefit offered	Is it offered as part of protocol, customs or social obligation?	Can it be accepted?
MPP gives a speech and receives a mug, pen or an item of nominal value as thanks.	✓	✓
MPP is offered a sculpture by government official from another country.	✓	✓
MPP has been invited to be the keynote speaker at an event and is provided with a meal as part of the evening's schedule.	✓	✓
MPP has been invited to be the keynote speaker at an event in another city, with airfare and accommodation offered by the organizers.	Possibly	Seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner.
MPP is offered a meal at a restaurant paid for by government stakeholder, during which official matters are discussed.	✗	Generally not allowable. Decline offer or seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner.
MPP is offered a clock by a company on a trade mission to another country.	✗	Generally not allowable. Decline offer or seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner.

Item or benefit offered	Is it offered as part of protocol, customs or social obligation?	Can it be accepted?
MPP is offered a ticket to a cultural, sporting or charity event by a government stakeholder where the MPP does not speak or have an official role.	✘	Generally not allowable. Decline offer or seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner.
MPP is offered a donation of food or supplies from a government stakeholder for a community event in the riding.	✘	Generally not allowable. Decline offer or seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner.
MPP takes a tour of a company's facility in the riding and is presented with a large gift basket of products.	✘	Generally not allowable. Decline offer or seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner.
MPP is offered a ticket to attend a cultural event hosted by a community organization.	Possibly	Seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner.
MPP wins a raffle at an event while attending in official capacity.	✘	Seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner.
MPP is invited to attend, but not participate, in a reception commemorating an event that is connected to the riding or responsibilities at Queen's Park.	Possibly	Seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner.
MPP is offered a trip to another country or part of the province as a "fact-finding" tour.	✘	Seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner.

WHEN MUST A GIFT FORM BE FILED?

If the Commissioner has provided an exemption for an MPP to accept a gift, AND it has a value of \$200 or more, then a gift form must be submitted to the Office. If the total value of gifts and benefits from one source exceeds \$200 in any 12-month period, these gifts must also be disclosed.

Gift forms must be filed with the Office within 30 days of receipt of the gift or benefit. Forms are available on the website at: www.oico.on.ca

Office of the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario

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www.oico.on.ca

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