

Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority Ethics Policy

Employees of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority are charged with regulating the rates and services of Connecticut's investor-owned electricity, natural gas, water and telecommunication companies and is the franchising authority for the state's cable television companies. As regulators of utilities throughout the state, the judgments of Authority commissioners and staff must be beyond reproach. For this reason, Authority commissioners and staff are held to the high ethical standards prescribed by the Code of Ethics for Public Officials and State Employees. See Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 1-79 through 1-89.

Authority commissioners and staff engage with public utilities and private sector businesses and individuals to perform the Authority's regulation, licensing, monitoring, inspection, and enforcement duties. Authority commissioners and staff may not use their positions or offices for any personal financial gain. For this reason, the Code of Ethics prohibits, with limited exceptions:

- Accepting gifts from lobbyists, anyone seeking or doing business with or seeking or receiving grants from the Authority, or anyone involved in a proceeding with the Authority;
- Soliciting or accepting of anything of value with the understanding that professional judgments will be altered;
- Accepting outside employment that will create a conflict of interest with Authority duties or impair the independent judgment required to perform those duties; and
- Using information gained while in the public trust for the financial benefit of the employee or commissioner, their relatives, or any business associated with the employee, commissioner, or their relatives.

The Authority balances the public's right to safe, adequate and reliable utility service at reasonable rates with the provider's right to a reasonable return on its investment, and also keeps watch over competitive utility services to promote equity among the competitors while customers reap the price and quality benefits of competition and are protected from unfair business practices. To ensure that the Authority can perform these roles effectively, there must be no actual conflict of interest or any appearance of impropriety in its work or interaction with citizens, businesses, or any other regulated entities. The Authority is committed to ensuring impartiality in all of its proceedings and avoiding conflicts of interest that would undermine its duties to Connecticut ratepayers and utilities.

Certain provisions of the Code of Ethics also apply to public officials and state employees after they leave state service and it is important that commissioners and staff remember these provisions if they leave their current employment. If there is any doubt regarding an ethics matter, please seek guidance from your supervisor, the Authority's ethics liaison, or the Office of State Ethics regarding your ethics concerns.