

## **Purchasing Frequently Asked Gift/Awards/Incentives Questions As of July 2009**

1. What is the Gifts/Award/Incentive Matrix?

*The Gift/Award Matrix provides information about purchasing retirement gifts, recognition gifts, bereavement recognitions, program incentives, and promotional items. Information about appropriate gifts, authorized amounts, timing limitations, and required approvals are readily available via the Gift/Awards/Incentive Matrix.*

[http://finad.boisestate.edu/images/appendix\\_A\\_awardsgifts.pdf](http://finad.boisestate.edu/images/appendix_A_awardsgifts.pdf)

2. What if the gift selection exceeds the authorized amount?

*This could become a personal expense to the recipient. Exceptions to policy limits are granted rarely and on a case-by-case basis. If your purchase falls outside policy, you must seek preapproval from Alicia Estey, Senior Policy Analyst & Regulatory Compliance Officer ([aliciaestey@boisestate.edu](mailto:aliciaestey@boisestate.edu)), in the VPFA's office.*

3. What if my Dean signs off on a purchase outside of the Gift/Award/Incentive dollar limits?

*Exceptions to the dollar limits may only be approved by Alicia Estey, Senior Policy Analyst & Regulatory Compliance Officer ([aliciaestey@boisestate.edu](mailto:aliciaestey@boisestate.edu)) in the VPFA's office.*

4. Can I use my p-card to purchase gifts or promotional items?

*Promotional items purchased in bulk (10 or more of the same item) where each item costs less than \$20 dollars and the entire purchase is less than \$2,000 may be procured using a p-card. It is against policy to use your p-card for other gift purchases.*

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5. I want to buy an appreciation plaque for outstanding service by one of our employees— what is the dollar limit for this purchase?

*This would be an appreciation or recognition gift for an employee. You are limited to \$50 for this purchase—including any engraving. Alternative gift ideas include a donation to a BSU scholarship in honor of the employee or adding a new nameplate to a perpetual plaque in honor of the employee. Because this is not a gift given to an individual, it does not fall within the parameters of the Gifts/Awards policy.*

6. My department wants to offer program incentives for participants in an educational event we are hosting at the park. The event is open to the public. Because of that, we really don't know how many participants to expect. How do we know what incentives we can offer?

*If you have hosted this event or a similar event in the past, you should use previous attendance at that event to help you estimate the number of participants to expect. If this is the first time you are hosting an event like this, you will need to use your best judgment. Keep in mind that if your prizes are excessive based on the number of actual participants, you may be asked to defend your estimate.*

7. Our department would like to purchase bereavement flowers for a colleague who has lost a member of their family. We would like to spend around \$125 dollars. Is this an allowable purchase?

*The purchase of bereavement flowers is allowed as per the Gift/Awards/Incentive Matrix. However, any amount over the approved \$75 limit would have to be funded with personal funds.*

8. Can I purchase an appreciation gift at the end of the year for outstanding employees?

*Appreciation or recognition gifts for employees may be purchased no more than once per year. Dean or VP approval is required. There is a \$50 limit and suggested items include BSU logo items, gift certificates, or tickets to BSU events (must be tangible personal property or gift certificate with no cash value).*

9. Our department is holding an open house to introduce new students to our program. Can we give away multiple door prizes to attract more participants?

*There is a \$75 door prize limit per event. We recommend pens, small gift baskets, or other small BSU logo items be given away at these types of events.*

10. Are student employees subject to the same policies and FT or PT regular employees?

*Yes. A student employee is treated as a regular employee with regards to policies and the Gifts/Award/Incentives Matrix.*

11. What is a program incentive? How much money can I offer as an incentive?

*Program incentives are intended to encourage participation in quasi-academic/research projects that do not require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Examples include writing contests, focus groups, or surveys that require individuals to commit time and effort to participate.*

*In these cases, the dollar amount of the incentive depends on the number of participants: 1-10 participants \$40 maximum for each participant, 10-75 participants \$400 total, 75-500 participants \$500 total, 500 + participants \$600 total incentive/prizes. Exceptions require approval from Alicia Estey, Senior Policy Analyst & Regulatory Compliance Office ([aliciaestey@boisestate.edu](mailto:aliciaestey@boisestate.edu)), in the VPFA's office.*

12. Our department wants to purchase a football season pass to thank an individual for donating their time and talents to our program.

*This would be an appreciation gift for non-employees. There is a \$150 limit for this type of gift. A football season pass would exceed the allowable \$150 limit. Gift suggestions include BSU logo items, plaques, or individual tickets to BSU events. A Gift/Award form would have to be submitted for the recipient.*

13. We have an employee with 28 years of service who is retiring at the end of the semester. We would like to purchase a \$500 American Express gift card to show our appreciation for their hard work and dedication—can we do this?

*No. There is a \$400 maximum for retirement gifts. The gift amount is determined by the number years the employee has worked for the University (minimum of 5 years of service). A 28-year employee would be eligible for a \$280 retirement gift. Gift cards with cash value (such as the American Express card) are taxable to the employee. Gift cards with no cash value (such as a card to a specific vendor) would not be considered taxable. A Gift/Award form would need to be submitted for the recipient.*