

APPENDIX

New York State Public Officers Law:  
Ethical Standards, Examples of Violations, and Penalties

All quotations are from Section 74 of the New York State Public Officers Law, which is retrievable at [www.dos.state.ny.us/ethc/ethics.html](http://www.dos.state.ny.us/ethc/ethics.html).

The examples go with the specific standards listed in New York State Public Officers Law, Section 74. The examples are meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive.

*"2. Rule with respect to conflicts of interests. No officer or employee of a state agency, member of the legislature or legislative employee should have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in any business or transaction or professional activity or incur any obligation of any nature which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his duties in the public interest."*

*"3. Standards.*

*"a. No officer or employee of a state agency... should accept other employment which will impair his independence of judgment in the exercise of his official duties."*

One accepts a position with or a paid consultancy to a company that is a candidate for a contract which one has the power to award or a company that is owned by one's supervisor, colleague, student, teaching assistant or work-study student.

*"b. No officer or employee of a state agency... should accept employment or engage in any business or professional activity which will require him to disclose confidential information which he has gained by reason of his official position or authority."*

A professor sells a list of his or her students' phone numbers to telemarketing companies.

*"c. No officer or employee of state agency... should disclose confidential information acquired by him in the course of his official duties nor use such information to further his personal interests."*

[Note: See federal privacy guidelines (FERPA).]

One tells unauthorized individuals details of a confidential personnel review, judicial proceeding, or investigation.

One posts student grades in such a way that the students' confidentiality might be violated.

One fails to safeguard appropriately personnel or student files containing other confidential information (e.g., Social Security numbers).

*"d. No officer or employee of a state agency.... should use or attempt to use his official position to secure unwarranted privileges or exemptions for oneself or others."*

One uses one's power to grant contracts to acquire discounts on personal purchases from potential recipients of such contracts.