

STATE OF VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE & MANAGEMENT			
Policy Title:	Personal Greetings / Acknowledgements	Policy #: Issue Date:	3.0 September 2007
Applicable to:	All State Agencies, Departments, and Offices	Revision #: Revision Date:	N/A N/A
Issued by:	James Reardon, Commissioner Department of Finance & Management	Page:	1 of 2

Policy Statement:

The State of Vermont will not make purchases for any type of personal greetings or acknowledgments. This policy applies to all such purchases regardless of funding source or amount.

A. Definitions:

(1) **Personal greetings or acknowledgements** include but are not limited to the following:

- Get-well greetings
- Bereavement acknowledgements
- Holiday greetings or celebrations
- Birth acknowledgements
- Congratulatory greetings or celebrations for graduations, birthdays, marriages, anniversaries, retirements, etc.

These greetings or acknowledgements can take many forms, all of which are prohibited, for example:

- Floral arrangements
- Plants
- Greeting cards
- Balloon bouquets
- Food / Meals
- Gift certificates
- Any type of purchase where the intent is to extend a "personal" greeting/acknowledgement

(2) **State Funds:** Any and all funds authorized by the State Legislature to include all governmental funds (*e.g. general, transportation, special, federal, petty cash*), proprietary funds (*e.g. enterprise, internal service*), and fiduciary funds (*e.g. trust, agency*).

B. Guidelines:

Each employee authorized to make an expenditure decision involving state funds is responsible for ensuring that the expense is for authorized purposes and is a responsible and appropriate use of state funds. While it is not reasonable to expect that every item of expenditure be specified in the appropriations act, appropriations of state funds are enacted to finance public purposes, not personal expenses for, or on behalf of, state employees.

This policy applies even when the personal greeting or acknowledgement identifies the entire agency, department, or office as the source or giver.

C. Related Federal Regulations:

For organizations that expend federal funds further clarifying guidance is provided by the Office of Management & Budget's *Circular A-87: Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments - Selected Items of Cost (attachment B)*:

14. Entertainment. Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs (such as tickets to shows or sporting events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities) are unallowable.

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20. Goods or services for personal use. Costs of goods or services for personal use of the governmental unit's employees are unallowable regardless of whether the cost is reported as taxable income to the employees.

D. Exceptions:

This policy does not apply to any employee recognition and merit programs as allowed under collective bargaining agreements and personnel policies. Exceptions include, but are not limited to, recognition of employees for outstanding performance or years of State service, public service recognition events, and any departmental policies where the purpose is to recognize employees for their work-related activities and accomplishments.

E. Waivers:

The Commissioner of Finance & Management will not waive any of the provisions of this policy. Purchases of this nature may be made directly from voluntary employee contributions.

F. Effective Date:

Immediately