



Acceptability of Event Invitations and Tickets

Members are sometimes offered invitations or tickets to attend, free of charge, various events. The events may be organized by associations, special-interest groups or other organizations, or Members' attendance at them may be sponsored by third parties.

I remind you that these offers fall within the definition of "benefit" set out in subsection 3(1) of the [Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons](#). They are therefore subject to the Code's acceptability test:

14. (1) *Neither a Member nor any member of a Member's family shall accept, directly or indirectly, any gift or other benefit, except compensation authorized by the law, that might reasonably be seen to have been given to influence the Member in the exercise of a duty or function of his or her office.*

The Code provides an exception for "gifts or other benefits received as a normal expression of courtesy or protocol, or within customary standards of hospitality that normally accompany a Member's position" (subsection 14(2)). This exception would apply if, during the event, you are performing a ceremonial or representational role, for example as a speaker, presenter, host or parliamentary representative. This may also be the case when you are invited, in your capacity as the local Member, to attend events held in your riding or organized by your constituents.

The aim of the organization offering free tickets or organizing an event, or the worthiness of the cause that it represents, are not factors in deciding whether or not a gift is acceptable under the Code. Most relevant is whether the person or entity offering the gift is seeking or may in future seek support in the exercise of a duty or function of your office.

I have issued advisory opinions under the Code about offers of invitations and tickets to several specific events that were brought to my attention. Because this is a self-reporting system, however, I am not aware of all event invitations and tickets that Members may be offered.

I remind you that even if an event invitation/ticket or other gift or benefit is acceptable under the Code, you still have to publicly declare it if it has a value of \$200 or more, by filing a [Public Statement of Gifts or other Benefits](#) with my Office within 60 days of acceptance. This requirement also applies if the total value of all gifts or benefits that you receive from one source in a 12-month period is \$200 or more.

I encourage you to seek advice from my Office before accepting invitations or tickets to attend, free of charge, events such as charity soirées, award galas, concerts, plays, operas, dance performances, fundraising dinners and sporting events. We can help you determine whether you should accept the invitation or ticket, pay for it or decline. You can reach an advisor by telephone at 613-995-0721 or by [e-mail](#).

Mary Dawson
Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner

Ce document est également disponible en français.

<http://ciec-ccie.parl.gc.ca/>