

IN THE TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR THE STATE OF FLORIDA

IN RE: ORDER ESTABLISHING POLICY )  
PROHIBITING COURT EMPLOYEES ) ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER  
FROM ACCEPTING GIFTS FROM ) NO. 2.21  
LAWYERS, VENDORS OR OTHER )  
THIRD PARTIES )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

Pursuant to the applicable Canons of the Code of Judicial Conduct and this Court's inherent authority to regulate the courts of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit as provided by Fla. R. Jud. Adm. 2.050(b), the Court hereby establishes the following policy prohibiting the acceptance of gifts by court employees from lawyers, vendors or other third parties.

1. Pursuant to the applicable Canons of the Code of Judicial Conduct, a judicial officer or quasi-judicial officer may not accept gifts, favors, bequests or loans from lawyers or their firms if those lawyers or firms are likely to come before the judicial officer or quasi-judicial officer.

2. In addition, a judicial officer or quasi-judicial officer is prohibited from accepting gifts, favors, bequests or loans from clients of lawyers or their firms when the clients' interests have come or are likely to come before the judicial officer or quasi-judicial officer.

3. Indeed, the receipt of any gifts whatsoever by judicial officers or quasi-judicial officers is specifically regulated and limited by Canon 5 of the Code of Judicial Conduct. In the case of any gift from any other source, if its value exceeds \$100, the judge must report its receipt in accordance with the applicable provisions of Canon 6 of the Code of Judicial Conduct.

4. While the Code of Judicial Conduct does not specifically apply to judicial staff, which would include staff attorneys, judicial assistants, bailiffs, and other court personnel, Canon 3C(2) provides that "A judge shall require staff, court officials, and others subject to the judge's direction and control to observe the standards of fidelity and diligence that apply to the judge...."

Based upon the foregoing, and in accordance with the authorities cited above and Opinion 2000-08 of the Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee issued March 1, 2000, it is

**ORDERED AND ADJUDGED** as follows:

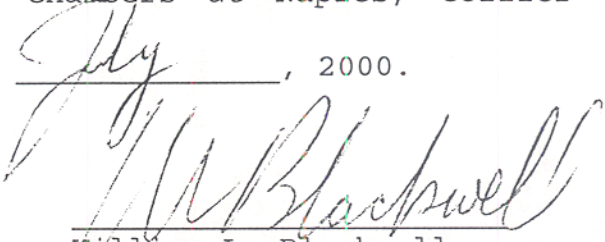
1. All court employees, including staff attorneys, judicial assistants, bailiffs, and other court personnel, whether directly or indirectly employed by or subject to the supervision of the judges of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit Court, are hereby directed by this Court not to accept gifts of any kind from



lawyers, vendors or other third parties who have or are likely to have any business of any kind before the Court.

The purpose of this order is to ensure that no judicial officer, quasi-judicial officer or court staff of any kind convey or permit others to convey the impression that they are in a special position to influence the court.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers at Naples, Collier County, Florida, this 18<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2000.

  
William L. Blackwell  
Chief Judge

History. - Administrative Order 2.21 (July 13, 2000).

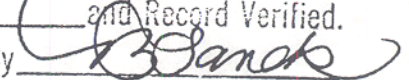
I CERTIFY THIS DOCUMENT TO BE A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF THE ORIGINAL ON FILE IN MY OFFICE, CHARLIE GREEN, CLERK CIRCUIT COURT LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA.

DATED: JUL 21 2000

BY:   
Deputy Clerk

STATE OF FLORIDA, COUNTY OF LEE

FILED FOR RECORD

This 21 Day of July 2000 Record in Circ. Ct. Minute  
Book 44 Page      and Record Verified.  
CHARLIE GREEN By   
Clerk Circuit Court Deputy Clerk