14 General Principles

5 C.F.R. § 2635.101(b)

Principles of Ethical Conduct

The following general principles apply to every employee and may form the basis for the standards contained in this part. Where a situation is not covered by the standards set forth in this part, employees shall apply the principles set forth in this section in determining whether their conduct is proper.

1 Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws and ethical principles above private gain.

2 Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.

3 Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.

4 An employee shall not, except as permitted by subpart B of this part, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.

5 Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.

6 Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.

7 Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

8 Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

14 General Principles

9 Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

10 Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.

11 Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.

12 Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those--such as Federal, State, or local taxes--that are imposed by law.

13 Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

14 Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or the ethical standards set forth in this part. Whether particular circumstances create an appearance that the law or these standards have been violated shall be determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts.

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The principles of ethical conduct were issued by George H.W. Bush, in Executive Order 12674, as amended by Executive Order 12731. The principles were subsequently issued in the *Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch* at 5 C.F.R. § 2635.101(b). Each executive branch agency has a Designated Agency Ethics Officer responsible for oversight of the agency's ethics program.