

DISASTER RELIEF QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Background: Generally, CG employees may not solicit or accept a gift from a prohibited source or accept a gift given to them because of their official status unless some gift exclusion or exception applies. CG employees are permitted to accept opportunities and benefits available to a large group (such as all military members or all government employees) or to a group that is not defined in a manner that specifically discriminates on the basis of official responsibility or in a manner that favors those of higher rank or rate of pay, and the source is not a prohibited source.

Disaster Relief: During disaster relief scenarios, Coast Guard Mutual Assistance (CGMA), the Coast Guard Foundation (CGF), and the Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association (CPOA), as well as other private organizations, routinely seek to support affected personnel. The following provides a quick reference for such scenarios. Consult the *Ethics Guiding Principles for Supporting Organizations Playbook* (“the Playbook”) for complete guidance and direct questions to the servicing legal office:

- **Coast Guard Mutual Assistance.** All members of the CG family may accept any benefit directly from CGMA. Private donors offering gifts to the CG or CG people should be directed to CGMA as the CG’s only statutorily authorized military aid society. CGMA loans or grants do not require legal review.
- **Coast Guard Foundation.** Members of the CG family may accept gifts directly from the CGF during disaster relief scenarios using the streamlined process contained in The Playbook. When the CGF intends to provide direct assistance to employees and families, the CGF will notify the affected District Commander(s) who will assign a liaison officer to work with the CGF to identify needs of affected employees and families, facilitate connection between the CGF and beneficiaries, and provide information to employees to allay concerns about their ability to accept help. The CGF will also notify the Office of the Vice Commandant to provide awareness about the support it intends to provide. Gifts distributed by the CGF through either the Fallen Heroes Fund or the Disaster Relief Fund are generally authorized and may be provided “in kind” or may be made through the distribution of cash cards or store cards. CGF gift offers to CG units will continue to be processed by CG-8 for acceptance.
- **Chief Petty Officers Association.** The CGF may authorize members of the CPOA or CG Enlisted Association (CGEA) acting in their personal (off-duty and non-CG) capacity to assist eligible CG members of a defined class to complete a disaster relief application; to serve as a verifying official of damages incurred or to serve as a point of distribution for CGF aid. Additionally, members of the CPOA or CGEA may engage in fundraising as authorized by the CG Standards of Ethical conduct and described in the Playbook, including soliciting gifts from non-prohibited sources; and accept gifts on behalf of the CPOA and CGEA, including unsolicited gifts from prohibited sources. The Playbook describes best practices on gift acceptances and employment of retired CPOA members. CG active duty members (preferably senior enlisted members), acting in their official capacity, may provide factual information to allow the CGF or CPOA to make an assessment regarding a beneficiary.
- **Other Private Organizations.** District(s) should engage with other private organizations that wish to support member of the CG family to ensure compliance with Standards of Conduct.
- **In-Kind Donation Centers.** CPOA, CGEA, or other members of an affiliated private organization may organize an in-kind donation center onboard a CG facility with the approval of the Commanding Officer on a basis that does not interfere with CG operations as described in the Playbook.