

14 August 2025

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Proactive Release

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Tēnā koe

Thank you for your email of 28 July 2025 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

- "1. A copy of your agency's gift register covering the period 1 January 2023 to today, including:
  - o Date gift was received and by who
  - o Description of the gift
  - o Estimated value (if known)
  - o Name of the person or organisation who provided the gift
  - o Recipient's role or team within the agency
  - o Whether the gift was accepted, declined, or otherwise disposed of
2. A copy of your agency's current policy or guidelines relating to the acceptance, declaration, or handling of gifts, hospitality, or koha."

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (the Ministry) Gift Register is published as part of the Annual Review process. The 2024/25 gift register will be published in early December 2025 and will be available on the parliament website. Accordingly, part one of your request is refused under section 18(d) of the OIA, as the information is, or will soon be, publicly available. You can find the information at the following links:

2022/23 register: [https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/submissions-and-advice/document/54SCFADT\\_EVI\\_7117164d-cb66-493f-83e6-08dbff6cce5c\\_FADT349/ministry-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade-responses-to-annual](https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/submissions-and-advice/document/54SCFADT_EVI_7117164d-cb66-493f-83e6-08dbff6cce5c_FADT349/ministry-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade-responses-to-annual)

2023/24 register: [https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/submissions-and-advice/document/54SCFADT\\_EVI\\_b6328bb6-20a3-4752-6501-08dcfd0f043f\\_FADT1010/ministry-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade-appendices-to-written](https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/submissions-and-advice/document/54SCFADT_EVI_b6328bb6-20a3-4752-6501-08dcfd0f043f_FADT1010/ministry-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade-appendices-to-written)

The response to part two of your request is attached in **Appendix 1**.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website:  
[www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/)

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: [DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz](mailto:DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz). You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC' with a stylized flourish.

Sarah Corbett  
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

# Receiving gifts and hospitality standard

STANDARD

UNCLASSIFIED

## Purpose

This standard sets the Ministry's expectations for receiving gifts and hospitality in the course of conducting Ministry business.

This standard must be read in conjunction with the [Sensitive expenditure policy](#).

## Standard Categories

[Receiving gifts](#)

[Receiving hospitality](#)



[Recording gifts and hospitality](#)

[Accepting external funding to events](#)

## Standards

### Receiving gifts

1. Staff must not solicit any form of gift from any person, organisation or firm who the staff member is in contact with because of their official position.
2. The Ministry retains ownership of all gifts received, except for mere tokens of appreciation.
3. Where possible staff must anticipate and mitigate the possibility of receiving gifts so as to avoid any perception of personal gain.
4. Staff can accept gifts at their discretion where:
  - the item's value is less than NZD\$100 or foreign currency equivalent, and
  - there is no potential to create an obligation or conflict (real or perceived), and
  - it would cause cultural offence to decline the gift, and
  - it would not create a security risk.
5. Staff must seek approval for all gifts valued at NZD\$100 (or foreign currency equivalent) or more in accordance with the approval table:


Beneficiary	Approver
Staff at post	HOM/P
HOM/P	<a href="#">Divisional Manager, AUR</a> 
Staff in New Zealand	<a href="#">Divisional Manager, AUR</a> 



6. If in doubt about the monetary value of a particular gift or the appropriateness of accepting it, staff must consult their line manager or the [Divisional Manager, Audit and Risk \(AUR\)](#) .

7. Gifts accepted which are of business significance must reside either in Wellington Head Office or in the Chancery.

8. Gifts from foreign governments and businesses can introduce vulnerabilities to our work areas and must not be stored, used, or displayed in the restricted areas of our offices, at post or in Wellington.

9. Staff must consult the [Security Division](#)  before displaying a gift of business significance in a non-restricted area.

10. Staff must send the gift back to New Zealand for inspection if requested by Security Division. The intrusive inspection process may damage the item and make it non-returnable.

11. Staff must not accept electronic devices of any value as gifts, including USB devices.

12. Staff who receive unapproved gifts with no business significance must dispose of these securely and in a manner that does not identify the gift-giver.


## Receiving hospitality

1. Staff can accept non-diplomatic hospitality under NZD\$100 where:

- it progresses the goals of the post or division, and
- there is no potential to create an obligation or conflict (real or perceived), and
- it would cause cultural offence not to accept hospitality.

2. Staff must seek approval for all non-diplomatic hospitality valued at NZD\$100 (or foreign currency equivalent) or more in accordance with the approval table:

Beneficiary	Approver
Staff at post	HOM/P
HOM/P	<a href="#">Divisional Manager, AUR</a> 
Staff in New Zealand	<a href="#">Divisional Manager, AUR</a> 

3. If in doubt about the monetary value of hospitality or the appropriateness of accepting it, staff must consult their line manager or the [Divisional Manager, AUR](#) .

4. Staff are not required to obtain approval under this standard to accept diplomatic hospitality.


**Note:** Diplomatic hospitality refers to the regular and reciprocal functions and meals on the diplomatic circuit. This includes events hosted or attended by other members of the diplomatic corps or other organisations which serve to progress a post or diplomatic goal.

## Recording gifts and hospitality


1. Staff do not need to record gifts valued at under NZD\$100 or foreign currency equivalent.

2. Posts and Divisions must keep an email and calendar record of all hospitality received including:

- Purpose of the event including how this progresses post or divisional goals where relevant
- Location
- Individuals attending (where practical).

3. Staff offered gifts or non-diplomatic hospitality valued at NZD\$100 (or foreign currency equivalent) or more, whether approved or declined must advise the [Divisional Manager, AUR](#) .

4. Staff must immediately disclose to the [Divisional Manager, AUR](#)  gifts or hospitality of NZD\$100 or more accepted without pre-approval where declining the gift or hospitality risked causing offence.

5. For recording on the gift register staff who have received gifts or hospitality of NZD\$100 or more must notify the [Divisional Manager, AUR](#) , recording the following details and submit by email:

- Your name
- Who the gift/hospitality was received from
- The date the gift/hospitality was offered and declined or received
- Description of the gift
- Approximate monetary value
- If the gift or hospitality was accepted or declined
- If accepted, circumstances justifying acceptance.

### Accepting external funding to attend events

1. In the normal course of business, the Ministry must meet the cost of attendance at events which go beyond what would be expected for diplomatic hospitality.

**Note:** This is to avoid any perception of influence or personal benefit. Costs of attendance include conference fees, travel, accommodation, meals etc.

2. The Ministry must only accept an offer for the cost of attendance at such events to be met by an external party when the following criteria have been met:


- There is a strong link to a Ministry strategic objective, such that the ministry would be at a disadvantage if it is not represented.
- Non-attendance would see us forgo a significant opportunity to protect or promote New Zealand's interests.
- The Ministry/group/division/or Post budget cannot meet the cost of attendance.
- There is no perception of personal benefit, conflict of interest, influence, or obligation in accepting an offer from an external party,
- The offer is NOT from a company the Ministry does or may do business with.
- There is no reputational risk in accepting funding from this government or organisation.

3. Approval to accept external funding to attend events must be granted by a Divisional manager or higher. Use the following table to determine who must approve attendance at such events.

Beneficiary	Approver
Staff up to and including HOM/P	Divisional Manager*
Divisional Manager	DepSec/DCE

\*The DepSec/DCE must be notified of all such decisions.

4. When a staff member receives an offer that meets the criteria for external funding, they must prepare a memo or an email to be sent to the approver, setting out an assessment of the offer against the criteria in this standard.

5. The approver must keep a record of their decision on GDM (this may be an email) and send an advisory to the [AUR divisional mailbox](#) .

6. [AUR](#)  must maintain a central register of all external funding approval decisions.

## Application

This standard will apply to all Ministry staff, including contractors, consultants, and New Zealand Agency staff seconded to MFAT. It will also apply to family members of the aforementioned where there is a clear link to Ministry duties or an official position (i.e. This standard would apply to the partner of a HOM/HOP who accepted gifts or hospitality that could be interpreted as a conflict of interest).

## Responsibilities

The following roles have specific responsibilities under this standard:

Role	Responsibilities
Divisional Manager, AUR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approve or decline qualifying hospitality and gifts for Wellington based staff and HOM/P</li><li>• Maintain the gift register</li></ul>
All Divisional Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approve acceptance of external funding for staff to attend events which incur substantial costs</li></ul>
HOM/P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approve or decline qualifying hospitality and gifts for post staff</li><li>• Notify AUR of all hospitality and gifts &gt;NZD\$100</li><li>• Arrange inspection and screening for qualifying gifts</li></ul>



Security adviser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspect and screen qualifying gifts</li> <li>• Advise disposal options for qualifying gifts</li> <li>• Authorise the appropriate disposal option for qualifying gifts</li> </ul>
All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and apply this standard</li> <li>• Seek approval for qualifying gifts and hospitality</li> <li>• Record receiving hospitality and gifts</li> </ul>

## Exceptions management and consequences of standard breach or non-compliance

This standard is mandatory and must be complied with. For details on exceptions management, please refer to [Sensitive expenditure policy](#).

## Related content

### Related Ministry documents

The following Ministry documents are also relevant/related to this standard:

- [Unacceptable Behaviours Policy](#) 
- [Unacceptable behaviours Guidelines](#) 

### Related training

The Ministry provides the following training related to this standard:

- Pre-posting briefing for HOMs/HOPs, all Ministry staff and NZ Inc Agency staff

**Disclaimer:** This is a printed version of the Business Process Portal (BPP) and as such may not be current. Please visit the BPP website for the most up-to-date information.