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April 1, 1993

C O N F I D E N T I A L

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Department of [REDACTED]  
2451 S. Ashland Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60608

Re: Case No. 93012.0  
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

This letter is in response to your letter of March 18 asking whether, under the Governmental Ethics Ordinance, the Department of [REDACTED] may accept the offer by the manufacturer and distributor of some of the City's traffic control equipment to send two [REDACTED] employees to attend a three-day training course about the equipment sponsored by the manufacturer and distributor. It is the opinion of the staff, based on the information you and your staff provided, that the Governmental Ethics Ordinance does not prevent your department from accepting the offer by the two companies to send two departmental employees to the course, and to pay for their expenses.

You provided the letter from the distributor, [REDACTED], describing the training course and inviting participation in it. In addition, Board of Ethics staff spoke with two members of your staff who described the intent of the training course, and the City's existing contract with the distributor for the traffic control equipment.

The information provided indicates that the course offered by the manufacturer and distributor is designed to improve the ability of those who have the traffic control equipment in place to repair the equipment and use up-to-date technology. The course will take place in Indianapolis, Indiana. It will be taught by the training engineer of the manufacturer, [REDACTED]. The two who will attend the training course on behalf of the City's [REDACTED] department [REDACTED] are employees who do repair work on the equipment.

The manufacturer will pay for the cost of the course itself, and the distributor, the cost of



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the food and lodging. The offer was made to the department, not to individual employees. In the opinion of a member of the ~~department~~ while the contract for the traffic control equipment does not require the supplier and distributor to provide this training course and to sponsor attendance of City employees, their providing this course is related to their contractual duties with the City.

It is the opinion of the staff, based on previous Board decisions, that the Ethics Ordinance does not prohibit the department from accepting the offer of the manufacturer and distributor who are sponsoring the training course to pay the course costs and costs of travel, food and lodging for two City employees to attend the course. One previous case, Case No. 91075.Q, is a staff opinion that is also in response to a request from you on behalf of the ~~department~~ in the Department ~~department~~; it was the opinion of the staff in that case that the Ordinance did not prohibit your department from accepting a very similar offer from a City supplier of equipment.


The staff opinion in this case is based on the application of the City's Governmental Ethics Ordinance to the facts stated in this letter. If the facts presented are inaccurate, please notify us, as any change in the facts may alter our opinion.

We appreciate your inquiry and your willingness to comply with the ethical standards embodied in the Governmental Ethics Ordinance. If you have any further questions, please contact us.

Sincerely,

  
Ellen M. W. Sewell  
Legal Counsel

Approved:

  
Dorothy J. Eng  
Executive Director

cc. Susan Sher, Corporation Counsel

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