

Corruption – Prevention and Protection for Employees

Corruption?

From the many reports in the media, we can all see that the topic of corruption is very relevant today. This issue concerns all of us, because nobody is exempt from becoming the target of corruption attempts.

It is often only small privileges that draw employees into corruption, for example reduced prices, interest-free or interest-favorable loans, free use of vehicles, construction machines, or vacation homes..., being taken for a free meal, offers of money, items of monetary value (e.g. vouchers), gifts, hotel stays, tickets for admission...

The TV-L (Section 3), the Civil Service Status Act (Section 42), and the NRW Civil Service Act (Section 59) stipulate that employees and civil servants may not demand, be promised, or accept any rewards, gifts, or other advantages or benefits for themselves or third parties. This would be considered accepting privileges, which can be prosecuted with a prison sentence of up to three years according to Section 331 of the Criminal Code and can also lead to disciplinary action or labor law consequences (e.g. immediate termination).

RWTH would therefore like to take this opportunity to give you advice on how to protect yourself against corruption:

Illegal Preference

If someone asks you for a dubious favor: refuse to comply and, if necessary, get a colleague as a witness and inform your superiors of the incident immediately. This ensures you will not be suspected of corruption. Considering we are an institution where public contracts are awarded, you should be intensely aware of corruption attempts by third parties.

Remember: anyone who violates their official duties by accepting privileges (see above) is liable to prosecution for corruption (prison sentence of up to five years).

Structure Your Work in Such a Way That It Can Easily Be Checked at Any Time

Document your work transparently and comprehensibly for everyone. Avoid creating any additional files to rule out any impression of dishonesty from the outset.

Private Endeavors vs. Official Duties?

Make a strict distinction between your private endeavors (including secondary employment) and your official duties and ensure that you do not give anyone grounds to suspect corruption. Corruption attempts often begin when third parties extend official contact to private contact. It is a well-known fact that it is particularly difficult to refuse "favours" if you get along very well with someone personally and you or your family receive special privileges (concert tickets, cheaper vacations, being taken for an expensive meal that you cannot refuse, etc.)

The 25-Euro Limit

You may accept gifts/signs of appreciation up to a limit of 25 euros.

Exceptions:

- You may never accept cash or vouchers!
- You may accept a business lunch up to a limit of 50 euros.

If you have any doubts or know that the gift is worth more, please obtain permission to accept the gift/signs of appreciation from Department 9.0 Legal Affairs. The same applies to business lunches.

Never give the impression that you are open to "small gifts". Do not be afraid to give a gift back or forward it to a charitable organization and inform the person who gave you the present. You will find the respective documents on the Intranet.

Take Advantage of Training Offers on Preventing Corruption

RWTH offers seminars on this topic. Specialized lecturers will explain the facts of corruption as well as the legal basis and give you useful tips on how to react if someone offers you a privilege and asks you for dubious favors.

Further Information

You will find further information on this topic at [**www.rwth-aachen.de/corruptionprevention**](http://www.rwth-aachen.de/corruptionprevention).