

## Ethics

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### **The Country Club Offer**

**Q.** The country club has offered the newly appointed county manager a free \$25,000 membership and dues to welcome him to the community. The manager has heard that many of the community's influential business leaders are members of this country club so it could be a good place to network. Are there ethical concerns to accepting the membership and free dues?

**A.** ICMA advises its members not to accept such gifts as it creates an image that managers may be receiving favors in exchange for promising preferential treatment to those with influence. Some local governments offer country club memberships as part of an employment package, which is a better way to provide such compensation.

Ethics advice is a popular service provided to ICMA members. The inquiries and advice are reviewed by the Committee on Professional Conduct, the ethics committee of the ICMA Executive Board. Some of the inquiries are revised and published as a regular feature in PM, to give guidance to members in the big and little ethical decisions they make daily. If you have a question about your obligations under the ICMA Code of Ethics, call Elizabeth Kellar at 202/962-3611; e-mail, [ekellar@icma.org](mailto:ekellar@icma.org); or Martha Perego at 202/962-3668; e-mail, [mperego@icma.org](mailto:mperego@icma.org).