



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

*We Protect Hoosiers and Our Environment.*

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Eric J. Holcomb  
Governor

Brian Rockensuess  
Commissioner

To: Katherine Noel  
Chair, Indiana State Ethics Commission

Sean Gorman  
Ethics Director, Office of the Indiana Inspector General

From: James French  
Ethics Officer, Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management

Date: September 13, 2023

Re: Waiver of 42 IAC 1-15-1

FILED

SEP 13 2023

INDIANA STATE  
ETHICS COMMISSION

In accordance with 42 IAC 1-5-1(c), as IDEM's Ethics Officer, I am filing this waiver of the application of the gift rule based on the following facts.

Vanessa Williams is a Cloud Solutions Manager for IDEM. Her daily duties include, among others, oversight of design and development of IDEM's cloud environments; aid in the design of IDEM's production, staging, QA, and development of Cloud infrastructures; leadership in infrastructure migration methodologies and techniques within the agency; and support of project managers and IDEM's Finance department on enterprise IT and project budget planning.

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Vanessa was offered a gift from the Microsoft Corporation to attend the second Microsoft Power Platform Conference in Las Vegas, NV. The Microsoft Power Platform Conference is an educational and networking event where industry leaders, government officials, consultants and developers will gather to learn and share success stories from the field.

Specifically, Vanessa Williams will receive (at a market value of \$1875.00):

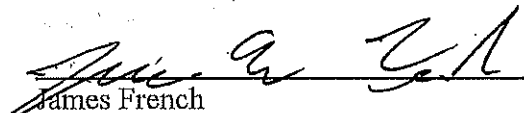
- o One Conference Pass including:
  - 150+ of keynotes, sessions and breakouts dedicated to Microsoft Power Platform products: Power Automate, Power Apps, Power BI, Power Pages, and Power Virtual Agents
- o Three continental breakfasts
- o Three lunches
- o One T-shirt
- o One Backpack.

Attached to this waiver of the application of the gift rule as Exhibits A and B are a copy of the award letter from Microsoft, as well as a letter detailing the ethics concerns Microsoft has for the gift. See **Exhibit A, Award Letter**, and **Exhibit B, Microsoft Gift Letter**, below.



IDEM does not currently have a business relationship with Microsoft, but Microsoft does have multiple contracts with the State Office of Technology. Though no business relationship exists between IDEM and Microsoft, IDEM is waiving this application of the gift rule nonetheless to avoid any appearance of impropriety.

Acceptance of the gift is consistent with the public interest. The conference will give Vanessa the opportunity to network with other State, federal, and local government, corporate and field professional entities and improve relationships between said entities and IDEM. Further, the opportunity for Vanessa to improve her own knowledge of Power Platforms will benefit the State when applied to her current position.

 9/13/2023  
James French  
Ethics Officer  
For the Indiana Department of Environmental Management