



# STATE CONTROLLER'S BULLETIN

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State Controller

Rebecca M. Wyke, Commissioner  
Administrative & Financial Services

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## SUBJECT: Code of Ethics for Government Financial Stewards

**DATE:** July 6, 2004  
**TO:** All Department and Agency Financial Officers  
**FROM:** Edward Karass, State Controller

The public, the Legislature and the Baldacci Administration have seen the need for highlighting ethical decision-making in Maine State Government. This need to focus on ethics does not imply that State government leaders lack any ethical foundation on an individual basis. Rather, there is a need to ensure that institutional ethical codes are in place across the breadth of State government. Accordingly, the Office of the State Controller partnered with financial management representatives from several agencies across all branches of government to develop the attached ***Code of Ethics for Government Financial Stewards***.

As financial stewards in government, we recognize the importance of establishing the ethical principles that guide the work and decision-making of those persons entrusted with the responsibility for the stewardship of public funds and resources. We influence and control collecting, distributing, safeguarding and accounting for public funds in a political environment that should be transparent to all citizens. We have a special obligation to ensure that public funds are properly managed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations for the public good in a manner that is beyond reproach.

The Code provides ethical ideals to which to aspire. The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision-making. It is a living document, meant to mature with experience and input from our membership. A clear statement of the Code of Ethics which guides financial stewards in Maine State Government is both an assurance to the People and an aid to our efforts towards strengthening internal controls and accountability. This Code of Ethics is being incorporated into the *State Administrative and Accounting Manual*, prepared by the OSC in accordance with Title 5 MRSA §1541-A. Agencies should make a copy of the Code available to all employees with financial responsibilities, ideally as part of the documentation of financial procedures in the Department Internal Control Plan.

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